

The Department of Education and Skills' vision for ICT integration in Irish schools is to:

“Realise the potential of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment so that Ireland’s young people become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens to participate fully in society and the economy. “

There are many ways in which our summer course can enhance the way teachers use ICT, hence equipping themselves with skills that can be transferred to their pupils in their own teaching and learning.

Schools around the country are involved in undertaking field studies, nature walks, history trails and mapping their locality, among countless other activities, where classes leave the school building and undertake active learning in their locality. While the children are actively learning through observation, and hands on manipulation of their environment, all trips are documented and discussed when classwork resumes in the classroom again. In the past, and currently it is often still the case, that this ‘post-trip analysis’ predominantly involves oral discussion and report writing.

This is not the process we encourage on our summer course. Teachers are discouraged from walking and carrying a pen and paper to record their experiences and observations. We actively demonstrate, promote and encourage teachers to digitally record their field trips. Teachers are encouraged to photograph and record video clips and to build up a digital bank of their memories and new observations following field trips.

We then tutor and demonstrate how to use these to create digital blogs, photo stories, PowerPoints and mini-movies to document their field trips. Teachers can apply these to whole class teaching and also to document the observations, timelines and experiences of SEN pupils for whom digital and visual learning is often more appealing and accessible.

<http://www.fisfilmproject.ie/> We also remind teachers of the Fís Project, which introduces school children to the film-making process. Our digital video blogs often act as a springboard for teachers to visit the fí’s website and undertake film-making in their schools.