



# HOW TO CREATE SCHOOL SPACES THAT FOSTER CREATIVE THINKING?

HANDBOOK FOR EDUCATORS





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# INTRODUCTION

Buildings called schools are spaces where we spend a large part of our lives. It is, in addition, the part where we shape ourselves as people. In school, we learn about our abilities and attitudes, we learn to live in community, we succeed, we fail, we make friends and we choose life paths. **We explore, we experiment, we experience.**

Does the space in which all this happens during the several years of our childhood and youth matter? Does the appearance of buildings, rooms, types and arrangements of furniture, distances, colours have a real impact on the comfort and quality of our learning? Can a building, a room, a studio trigger creativity and the desire to learn?

A sign of the 19th and 20th centuries in schools in Europe (and probably in most schools around the world) was the standardisation of space. The Prussian model of teaching indicated a single permitted and effective classroom layout, with desks arranged in several rows one behind the other, with a large teacher's desk and blackboard in front. This spatial arrangement was intended to enforce focus and concentration, as well as discipline based on hierarchy. The Prussian model pointed in the one and only direction of communication - from the all-knowing teacher to the concentrated pupils, passively absorbing successive portions of knowledge.

Although this traditional model of classroom layout still dominates in schools today (and is sometimes necessary and optimal), the changes that have taken place in the world in the 21st century have begun to force adjustments both in teaching methodology and in the way school spaces are organised. The change in the perception of the roles of participants in educational activities is of capital importance here. Widespread access to digital sources of knowledge has meant that the hierarchy that was dominant until recently, where the student was at the bottom of the hierarchy, no longer functions. Learning at school is starting to resemble the work of a team that sets common goals, seeks information and solutions, experiments and experiences. The role of the teacher (team leader) therefore becomes to inspire the group and individual members, to coordinate the work, but also to search and experience together, to learn together. The flow of information in this model is multidirectional and the teacher is one of its elements. This is due, for example, to the fact that the state of knowledge and information resources changes from day to day, and one person does not have the capacity to update this state on a regular basis.

The environment in which we live, work and learn consists of many spaces. There is, of course, the private space. Most often this is the home, the flat, the room. Here we have the chance to create for ourselves the space we need. The most important criteria are comfort and the opportunity for self-expression. The need to create a private space was particularly evident during the SARS-COV-2 pandemic. Being forced to stay at home triggered in many of us the need to "redecorate", to try to create a space that was now meant to accommodate both home and a place to study and/or work. Some discovered in such a change a new, sustainable, comfortable model of living, triggering their wellbeing and creativity. However, many, after a forced retreat, returned to schools and offices, to sharing space with others.

But let's return to school spaces. Designers of new, modern schools take into account the challenges of modern education. They are able to design buildings that incorporate classrooms where furniture arrangements can be shaped to suit current needs, subject-specific laboratories, common areas for relaxation, leisure, and even circulation routes that encourage networking and have a positive effect on the physical condition of pupils and teachers.

One of the most spectacular examples of a school designed in this way is Vittra Telefonplan in Stockholm. Open spaces, unusual furniture, colours and technology. The school space is divided into five zones: "Laboratory" - a place for experimentation, practical testing and application of knowledge, "Fire" - a zone for working in teams, "Waterhole" - a zone for relaxation, meetings and interaction, "Stage" - an open space for presenting students' work and skills, and "Cave" - a zone for individual relaxation. Importantly, the project was developed after numerous consultations and debates with students and teachers.

Not all, or rather few, can afford to have such a facility. Schools are usually housed in buildings whose architectural concept reflects the aforementioned Prussian standard of educational space. Does such a facility close the way for creative spaces in schools? Definitely not! It is an extraordinary opportunity to unleash the creativity and innovation of the entire school community, as well as the acquisition of new competences and skills.

Creating creative spaces in and around the school requires the involvement of different stakeholders in such a process - pupils, teachers, school management, other school staff as well as parents. The changes should be planned and thought through so that they fulfil the envisaged functions and are accepted by the whole school community. At this stage, it is important to have consultations and open debates that indicate the scope and direction of the innovation, as well as the necessary resources to implement it.

The very process of planning and implementing changes in the school space is an excellent way to develop many competences of students (and teachers too). In addition to developing the habit of consulting other stakeholders about the changes, the implementation of an architectural project fosters the strengthening of competences in planning, design, economics and financial management, and ecology, as well as social competences such as the ability to work in a team, to listen to each other, to work out compromises, to share responsibilities and accountability for their implementation. Students also acquire specific skills that are extremely useful in a variety of situations. These include, for example, the appropriate and safe preparation of the workplace, the selection and use of tools (traditional and digital), the correct execution of various works (carpentry, painting, installation), as well as the ability to obtain advice and support from professionals and specialists.

This publication has been produced precisely to present architectural concepts and solutions that can be implemented in any type of school, with the involvement of pupils, teachers and the rest of the school community. The examples, prepared by the Creating Spaces for Creativity project partners, present ideas for creative changes in the school space enriched with information on the impact of innovations on pupils' creativity and development, the skills and competences strengthened, as well as the costs of implementing innovations and ways to minimise them.

What about after the change?

Creative change in the school space, implemented by a team of students and teachers, strengthens the bonds within the group, as well as the level of mutual trust and sense of empowerment. The competences and skills acquired will remain and help to implement further creative and innovative projects in different areas. After all, they will be realised in a space that has been designed and created by its users.

**Enjoy your reading.**

**Handbook editors**

Maria Buczek, Tomasz Sobisz



# CLASSROOM AND LABORATORIES

## CHAPTER 1



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# WHAT SHOULD A SCIENCE LAB LOOK LIKE?



# FLEXIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE SCIENCE LAB

An ideal science laboratory is the one that provides flexibility and gives a secure and creative environment for both teachers and students. The 21st century calls for a shift in the way we teach our students and we are beginning to see a trend of positive learning environments commonly known as Self-Directed Learning (SDL) or in science, Self-Directed Research (SDR). Open and flexible laboratory spaces can be adapted to meet the needs of the students and teachers and provide opportunities for individuals to work and interact in a way that is most conducive to their own learning style.

## Key considerations in flexible science laboratory design:

Creative flexible space and furniture The opportunity for working alone, or in small, medium or large groups exist in the same space. This is mostly achieved through choice of furniture.

Multipurpose spaces Movable casework available which can be reconfigured to suit a multipurpose learning space.

Specialist focal points wet areas, gas turrets, and fume cabinets.

Considering STEM? Creating a collaborative learning environment for students and incorporating critical thinking across all disciplines.



[CLICK HERE](#)



## How this innovation fosters creativity

This science lab has everything you need for ideation, investigation, and creation

- planning and implementing new elements in the garden, making ongoing modifications;
- implementation of hands-on experiments into science teaching/learning involves basic processes that give rise to creativity
- promote the spark of genius, encourage new ways of thinking, and foster collaboration across disciplines.
- Learning by doing.

## Project target group

**Creation and maintenance of flexible science lab:** secondary school students, stakeholders around the school: parents, companies, institutions.

**Use of the innovative science lab:** all pupils, teachers

## References

## Strengthening skills and competences

- interacting directly with materials and data;
- laboratory teaching and experiments encourage deep understanding in students;
- it is believed that children are able to retain the knowledge for longer when they see the experiments being performed in front of their eyes;
- feeling confident becoming active learners;
- providing opportunities for solo practical experiments as well as the provision for collaborative group work.

## The impact of the properly designed and adequate of labs on our development Increased knowledge of:

- Student and teacher relationship
- Access to resources
- Professional learning opportunities for teachers
- Individual needs and interactions
- School atmosphere and culture
- Curriculum, pedagogy and pathways
- Occupational Health and Safety

## Costs: medium, Buy Supplies Smartly

### Ways to minimise costs:

- School FundRaising Activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid
- find grant programmes and write applications;
- organise a fundraising event;
- Do it yourself using recycled materials

# ART STUDIOS

Art Studio means an artist's workroom. This can be for the purposes of painting, pottery, ceramics, sculpture, scrap booking, photography, graphic design, cinematography, animation, or the creation of music or the practice of dance.

Some tips to bring more energy, abundance, magic, play and joy into art studios:

**Change the light bulbs:** Adding light and vibrant colours to a space is central to Joyful's first chapter, "Energy".

**Embrace the art materials:** Rather than storing art supplies like brushes and paints away, give them pride of place in the studio

**Bring order to the setup:** Bringing a sense of harmony into your space, enables flow

**Add something cute to the workspace:** Cute objects also tap into the aesthetic of play, students may get away from preconceived notions and tap into an open-minded, childlike mindset

**Blow bubbles:** developing a sense of magic in a studio can be inspiring and serves as a reminder to take things a little less seriously.

**Use flexible chairs and cushion**

[For more ideas click here](#)

How this innovation fosters creativity:

- When you are staring at a blank canvas, you have no choice but to create something that was not there originally;
- When artists draw from life, they create realistic images of subjects they can see while they create their art;
- Drawing from memory or imagination is a very valuable skill in an art studio.

Project target group

**Creation and maintenance of art studios:** Students from all ages, schools, stakeholders around the school: Parents, institutions, art galleries, culture centres, universities.

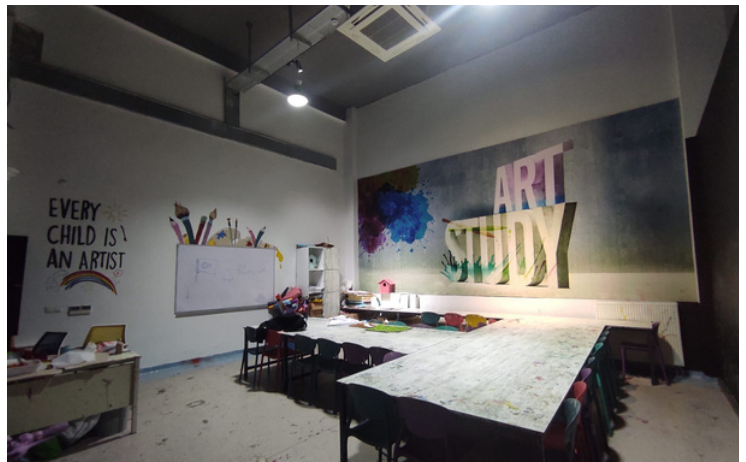
**Use of the innovation:** All pupils, teachers, school staff.

The impact of art studios on our development  
Increased knowledge of:

- Knowledge of art materials, including where to get them, how to use them and their effects is essential when creating art;
- Forms of arts: architecture, painting, performance, photography, printmaking, sculpture, video;
- Designing an art studio, storage, decorating;
- Understanding of perspective.

*In short, all good things are wild and free*

Henry David Thoreau



Strengthening skills and competences:

- Familiarising with the foundational art concepts of visual expression;
- Observation Skills: take things as they are, to really see their every detail, and to relay that on paper.
- Communication and collaboration;
- Feeling confident and discovering oneself;
- Computer knowledge for digital artists;
- Developing an independent studio practice, furthering their creative, conceptual and technical skills in both an area-specific medium and an interdisciplinary focus.

Costs: low

Ways to minimise costs:

- School Fundraising Activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid
- Find grant programmes and write applications;
- Aid from art galleries or universities
- Using recycled objects

## References

7 Skills Learned Through Art Education; richmondhillartschool.com/7-skills-learned-through-art-education/

Matthew P., Helmut L., Creativity in the Visual Arts, 2017; www.researchgate.net/publication/320347536\_Creativity\_in\_the\_Visual\_Arts



# FUTURE CLASSROOM LAB (FCL)

The Future Classroom Lab (FCL) - dividing the classroom space aiming to apply the active learning pedagogy and inspire flexibility- was created by European Schoolnet.

FCL is formed by six different learning spaces. Each space highlights specific areas of learning and teaching and helps to rethink different points: physical space, resources, changing roles of student and teacher, and how to support different learning styles. The FCL includes 6 learning zones: Investigate, Create, Present, Interact, Exchange, Develop.

All together the spaces form a unique way to visualise a new, holistic view on teaching. The zones reflect what good teaching should be about: being connected, being involved, and being challenged.



FIGURE 1. Floorplan of European Schoolnet Future Classroom Lab in Brussels, Belgium. Copyright 2015 European Schoolnet Future Classroom Lab.

[Take the virtual tour of the Future Classroom Lab and familiarize yourselves with the different zones!](#)



## How this innovation fosters creativity:

Starting a revolution in the classroom promotes:

- Learning by creating: actively involved in producing and creating students own content
- Using engaging technology to design, create
- Developing learners' soft skills through project based work presentation, planning, and teamwork;
- Giving students independence and ownership over their learning;
- Creating for real-life.

## Project target group:

**Creation and maintenance of FCL = "Living Lab":** policy makers, ICT suppliers, schools, teachers and educational researchers, stakeholders around the school.

**Use of the FCL:** students from all levels, teachers and school staff, institutions.

## Increased knowledge of:

- Model of 21st century classroom environments –with flexible furniture, collaborative space, and accessible digital technology aim to help students acquire 21st century skills and expand knowledge about them.

## Strengthening skills and competences:

- Working individually / in pairs or teams;
- Incorporating new visions on pedagogy, 21st century skills and technology-enhanced learning;
- Reading, observing, conducting science experiments, organising surveys, using robots to investigate, discover and become self-oriented learners.
- Encouraging students to interact with their peers during the lesson;
- The ability to collaborate, innovate, and share a learning community committed to help students experience the joy of becoming the best version of themselves!

*"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."*

Benjamin Franklin

[Watch this video to get more inspiration](#)

[Future Classroom Lab](#)



**Costs:** high - separate budget for implementation needed.

The project of transforming classrooms into future classroom labs can be carried out in stages. It may be difficult to construct all 6 zones at once. But we can try to create simple forms or by the time.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- Get sponsors;
- Find grant programmes and write applications;
- Organise a fundraising event to introduce these spaces to the public as well.
- Get private and public donations
- Involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff
- Investment from government

[Here are some FCL learning stories!](#)



## References

# TRANSFORMING LEARNING SPACES

Schools are full of students who want to engage, socialise, communicate, create, and collaborate in meaningful ways that reflect the world in which they live. Futurist [David Thornburg](#) identifies three archetypal learning spaces— the campfire, cave, and watering hole—that schools can use as physical spaces and virtual spaces for student and adult learning (Thornburg, 2014). The **campfire** is a space where people gather to learn from an expert. In the days of yore, wise elders passed down insights through storytelling, and in doing so replicated culture for the next generation. In today's schools, the experts are not only teachers and guest speakers, but also students who are empowered to share their learning with peers and other teachers. The **watering hole** is an informal space where peers can share information and discoveries, acting as both learner and teacher simultaneously (an incubator for ideas and shared culture). The **cave** is a private space where an individual can think, reflect, and transform learning from external knowledge to internal belief.



## How this innovation fosters creativity:

Flexibility in space, location and resources enhance creativity:

- Individual and group learning opportunities simultaneously;
- Cooperative, group-based activities, performances;
- Removed pressure from teachers to be in 'control' of a group and solely responsible for its overall behaviour;
- Facilitating new pedagogies;
- Space for instruction, presentations, discussion, talk and privacy, private study;
- Opportunities for learners to approach experts in various learning contexts;

## Project target group:

**Creation and maintenance:** all students, stakeholders around the school: parents, companies, institutions.

**Use of the campfire, watering hole, cave spaces:** pupils, teachers, guest speakers.

**The impact of campfire, watering hole and cave spaces on our development**

**Increased knowledge of:**

- storytelling, songs, poets;
- how to discuss issues of importance and substance.
- how to talk and listen to one another
- how to shift away from teacher-centred classrooms preparing students to participate in today's labour market.

## Strengthening skills and competences:

- The campfire (space to learn from an expert): classmates respecting each other, responding to questions, active listening.
- The watering hole (space to learn from peers): working in a team to interact, problem-solve, debate and collaborate.
- The cave (space to learn from introspection), and life (space to learn by doing): individual reflection, study, ideation. A place for introspection and learning from oneself.

*'We spend a lot of time trying to change people. The thing to do is to change the environment and people will change themselves.'*

*Les Watson, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Glasgow Caledonian University*

## Costs: medium

The campfire, watering hole and cave spaces can be all established in a classroom.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- Get sponsors – local institutions and companies;
- Use recycled furniture;
- Involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff - in the construction of the these spaces;
- Find grant programmes and write applications;
- Organise a fundraising event to introduce these spaces to the public as well.
- For more ideas [click here](#).

## Further reading:

- [21st Century Learning Space Design](#)
- [Re-imagining Learning Spaces to inspire contemporary learning – Part One: Models for Change](#)
- [David Thornburg on the Evolving Classroom \(Big Thinkers Series\)](#)
- [Is this Finnish school the perfect design?](#)
- [The school of the future has no doors](#)



## References

Thornburg, David D. "Campfires in Cyberspace: Primordial Metaphors for Learning in the 21st Century." October 2007, Thornburg Center for Professional Development, <http://epubgeneration.pbworks.com/f/campfires.pdf?ld=1>

Thornburg, D. (2014). From the Campfire to the Holodeck - Creating Engaging and powerful 21st Century Learning Environments. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass



# KEEPING CREATIVITY ALIVE - MAKERSPACES

A Makerspace is a place where you can make things. It's a place for hands-on learning with all the tools for creativity. Every school's Makerspace is different, but you might find a workshop, 3D printing, a computer lab, an art room, audio-visual equipment, and hand tools. You might also find computers and computing devices like Arduinos or Raspberry Pi computers.



This 330-sq.-ft makerspace includes a variety of furniture designed to facilitate meaningful making. 3D printers, large mobile tables, durable work surfaces, and plenty of storage, the small area is packed with technology and tools to help older students explore and create.

## How this innovation fosters creativity:

- Creative ways to design, experiment, build, and invent as they engage in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics)
- Experiment with school's curriculum, and develop real-world skills in creative project based activities
- More creative; learn by doing, not just by remembering what they are told; and learn to act independently from teacher;
- Encouraging digital citizenship, emotional digital intelligence and digital creativity

## Project target group:

**Creation and maintenance of the Makerspaces:** all students, stakeholders around the school: parents, companies, institutions.

**Use of the Makerspaces:** all pupils, teachers, parents

**The impact of Makerspaces on our development**

**Increased knowledge of:**

- Appropriate tools, equipment and materials needed for a specific work
- Sets of tablet computers, other mobile ICT devices and programmable robots, the type of storage required.
- Using the wood, metal, card and fabrics needed for Makerspace projects from local community recycling centres, local businesses or students' families. Learning about sustainable development
- Different types of activities are learned: Basic design and creation, sewing and textiles, joinery, metalworking, electronics, coding, robotics and digital fabrication

## References

Jill Attewell J. (2019) Building learning labs and innovative learning spaces. European Schoolnet. Belgium. [makered.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Makerspace-Playbook-Feb-2013.pdf](https://makered.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Makerspace-Playbook-Feb-2013.pdf)

## Strengthening skills and competences:

- Expressing oneself without fear of failure;
- Through making, students of varying abilities learn and develop new skills like critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration;
- Project-based learning builds life skills and workplace roles
- Do-it-yourself (DIY) ability boosts;
- Improved self confidence and self esteem;
- Better understanding of concepts from practical application;
- Acquisition of practical skills;
- Application of knowledge to real world problems.

## The maker movement in schools

Jason Wik & Gabriel Wilkes 

*In a gentle way, you can shake the world'.*

Gandhi

## Costs: medium

When setting up a large, permanent Makerspace the initial costs, which may include structural work, can be substantial. Some machinery and equipment for Makerspaces can also be expensive.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- Funding for this may come from European projects, national initiatives, local authorities or corporate sponsorship involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff
- Often the necessary funds are obtained s by accessing both public and private funding. In this case, it is advisable to create a design which includes a basic initial configuration of the Makerspace with the possibility of expanding it later, dependent upon the funding available find grant programmes and write applications;

# FLEXIBLE CLASSROOMS FOR FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Once teachers break away from a traditional classroom design, they often feel more effective and creative. There is no single blueprint for a creative classroom design. However, there should be an emphasis on flexibility. A creative classroom should allow for whole-group activities as well as small group and individual instruction. Since many classrooms have limited space, the furniture should be easily moved. Items on wheels make adapting learning areas much easier. Desks, tables, bean bags, chairs, sofas and more, can all be used in a creative classroom and give students choice, making them feel more invested in their education.



Learning space with movable furniture for collaboration and active learning. Image: Scholarfurniture.co.nz

## How this innovation fosters creativity:

The environment of learning is essential to the support of creativity.:

- Flexible classroom design makes students feel more valued and respected as it “erased the line between instructors and students.”;
- Developing critical thinking skills: students learn how to find quality
- A creative classroom is constructing an environment that encourages two things: discussion and collaboration.
- Students are encouraged to discover for themselves; they are given the opportunity to be active participants
- Learning by creating: the learners are actively involved in producing and creating their own content. This allows learners to exercise their imaginations, and to be innovative.

## Project target group:

**Designing a flexible future classroom:** teachers, trainers, educational authorities, stakeholders around the school

**Use of the classroom:** all pupils, teachers and school staff, institutions.

**The impact of creative learning spaces on our development**

**Increased knowledge of:**

- Active learning environments; decoration;
- Reconstructing, modelling, interpreting information, creativity
- New school designs in collaboration with new learning methods.

## References

Creative learning environments in education—A systematic literature review Thinking Skills and Creativity (2013)  
Hanna, D.; David, I. Analysing and designing learning environments for the 21st century, 2010,  
[www.researchgate.net/publication/281219774\\_Analysing\\_and\\_designing\\_learning\\_environments\\_for\\_the\\_21st\\_century](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/281219774_Analysing_and_designing_learning_environments_for_the_21st_century) (date of access: 02.09.2022)


## Strengthening skills and competences:

- Convenient and easy-to-use learning platform ;
- Allowing students to interact with others;
- Empowered students - having greater control over their learning as they work at their own pace;
- Flexible seating motivates students to learn;
- Learning is social and often collaborative;
- Using assessments that are consistent with its aims, with a strong focus on formative feedback; and encourages connections across activities and subjects, in and out of school (Dumont and Istance, 2010).”

*“Flexibility requires an open mind and a welcoming of new alternatives.”*

Dr. Deborah Day Psychologist

Have a look at [floorplanner](#) to design your favourite classroom virtually as the first.

Watch [this video](#) on Flexible Classrooms: Making Space for Personalized Learning 

## Costs: medium

A spacious classroom, movable furniture, bean bag chairs, stools, cushions or mats/carpets, couches, standing desk, low tables

**Ways to minimise costs:**

- Use school budget;
- Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTO): Your PTO may offer opportunities for classrooms or teachers to write a mini grant or use a certain amount of the PTO budget for special purchases.
- Find a business that offers funding for schools.
- Apply for fundraising projects: find grant programmes and write applications;
- Host an Event: Host a dinner, variety show, dance, or some other type of family event where you charge an admission donation to attend.

# SPECIAL EDUCATION ROOMS



More and more students have problems related to emotions, stress. Often we see these frustrations in very ambitious, successful students but especially in students with special educational needs. There is a need for a room where a psychologist or educator can help students de-stress, find calm and conduct individual or small group activities.

## How this innovation fosters creativity:

- Students can relieve stress and self regulate, which will translate into more effective learning
- Working individually or in small groups helps students focus
- Light, sound and pleasant atmosphere helps to open the mind to new ideas
- The teacher has the opportunity to establish a relationship with students who are reticent and need isolation
- Students receiving stimuli through different senses can strengthen creativity

## Project target group:

All types of schools- primary and secondary school students ( high school student)

## Elements of equipment:

- Comfortable armchair or sofa, seats , deck chairs, mattresses
- Teacher's desk with a computer
- Overhead projector
- Light curtains or lamps emitting spot colored light
- Light canopy
- Tape recorder, loudspeakers
- Aromatherapy device and oils
- Massage chair

## Strengthening skills and competences:

- Coping with emotions and stress
- Developing the senses
- Calming and relaxing
- Preparing for creative work
- Increasing social competence

## Costs: low

Equipment can depend on the school's budget and can be systematically expanded

## Ways to minimise costs:

- Cooperation with companies and institutions that lend equipment to work with people with special needs
- School fundraising activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid
- Find grant programmes and write applications;

## Impact on our development

- Increased parental confidence in the school because of its care for children with special educational needs
- Development of emotional and social competence
- Opportunity to create our own space by designing the classroom together

# MULTIMEDIA STREAMING ROOM



Media plays an important role in the lives of young people. In some schools students manage the school's social media, television and radio. Students get the opportunity to learn to use technology that allows them to use internet broadcasting, streaming, and journalism. These will prepare students for many professions that will be popular in the future.

## How this innovation fosters creativity:

- Students independently create scenarios, divide tasks according to interest and competence
- Students develop artistic and technological abilities, that is, they learn using both brain hemispheres
- Teamwork develops social competence, teaches compromise and decision-making

## Project target group:

All types of schools- primary and secondary school students ( high school student)

## Elements of equipment:

- Green screen
- Lighting
- Microphones
- Camera and camcorder
- Computers
- Software
- Tables and chairs

## Strengthening skills and competences:

- Students learn independence - they plan, design, organise,
- Students learn to work in groups, task forces,
- Develop information and technology skills, learn about/new technologies
- Acquire social competence
- Learn self-presentation

## Costs: medium

### Ways to minimise costs:

- School fundraising activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid
- Find grant programmes and write applications;

## Impact on our development

- Increased confidence of parents and students in the school due to the provision of development of students' interests
- Development of social technological competence
- Promotion of the school in the local area
- Opportunity to create and promote their own television, radio, social media



# CREATIVE CLASSROOM IN HIGH SCHOOL

A modern high school is a whole space that shapes both students and teachers. It inspires those in it and, above all, supports the learning process. Flexible classroom furnishing solutions put people at the forefront when designing learning rooms. As a result, the climate and comfort of teaching are improved, which translates into learning success.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

- High school students are already well-versed in their preferences for the position in which they learn, and are well aware of their individual ways of acquiring knowledge. With a variety of teaching models - and suitably flexible learning environments - they can acquire knowledge according to their strengths, and thus achieve a positive learning experience in every lesson.
- This space arrangement takes into account personalised learning.
- In addition to a dedicated desk, students have space for their personal station to store work materials, permanently installed desktop computers or mobile devices to also learn digitally, and of course a chair adapted to their height.
- Whiteboards in many parts of the room provide opportunities to work on many areas, topics
- Installing partitions will provide the necessary acoustic and visual shielding and allow them to work with full concentration.

## Project target group

secondary school students ( high school student)

**Costs:** low/medium

## Ways to minimise costs:

- get sponsors - local businesses;
- find grant programmes and write applications;

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Promoting independent and responsible learning for all students,
- Improving opportunities for individual support for children with learning difficulties or above-average gifted children,
- Implementation of a program of assistance and support for students with disabilities,
- Orientation to the special educational needs of students with a judgement and gifted students,
- Developing media skills by providing digital and analog media to support independent learning.

## The proposed spatial configuration is conducive to teaching:

- Foreign language teaching
- Art classes
- Working with the project method
- Classes developing interests, talents
- Specialised classes with students with special educational needs

 Co-funded by the  
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# WHAT SHOULD A CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?





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# LIBRARY

## CHAPTER 2



# DIGITAL LITERACY HUB

Although the students of present-day schools were already born into a digital society, too many lack the digital skills that go beyond gaming and social networks. Digital literacy is a pressing issue, due to its importance for communicating effectively in today's digital world, and for tackling fake news and plagiarism.

The very nature of school libraries - as places for reading, researching or conducting academic work, but also as dynamic and attractive spaces, capable of arousing curiosity, critical thinking and creativity – makes them natural allies and the perfect location for the creation of a Digital Literacy Hub.

This hub would allow and promote access to information and news through digital means but also resorting to the printed press, teachers or librarians helping users research, process and communicate information critically and responsibly, training them to recognize fake news and other online malpractices.

To achieve this, the space should be equipped with internet access and computers or tablets, which users can individually or in groups access information and quality publications. Conferences, debates and practical workshops on digital literacy and related topics could be held regularly. A news wall could be created where everyone would share news, thoughts and ideas regarding what they read or debated in this space.

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- By providing a space to become updated and informed about what is happening in the world today;
- By promoting critical thinking skills;
- By raising awareness and developing digital literacy;
- By fostering an active citizenship through debates and sharing of ideas and thoughts.

## Project target group:

- **Creation and organisation of the space:** library staff and library teachers, volunteer students.
- **Creation and building of the news wall:** arts and crafts senior students (cooperation with the community, for example, a Senior University).
- **Use of the space:** the entire school community.



## The impact of a Digital Literacy Hub in the Library Strengthening skills and competences:

- Writing and communication skills;
- Information literacy and ability to work with data;
- Digital content creation; communication and interaction in the digital society;
- Safety in the digital environment;
- Problem-solving in the digital environment;
- Critical thinking and lifelong learning.

## Costs: medium

Equipment and digital signatures, comfortable seating, desks, newspapers, magazines.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- Get sponsors - technological companies, newspapers and magazines;
- Find grant programs and write applications;
- Organise a fundraising event;
- Use recycled or upcycled furniture.

*“Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities.”*

R. David Lankes



Since libraries are traditionally regarded as reading spaces, and literature and cinema are so often hand in hand, a physical space in the school library that would allow for that interaction would surely be an asset.

To achieve this, a space in the library would be needed where books adapted to the cinema and their films would be available for loaning or viewing in a library movie theatre. Viewings would be followed by activities designed to promote discussion and debate of relevant issues. A wall panel could be used to show the latest news, releases, or awards, as well as to offer suggestions (If you liked this, try this - with book covers and movie posters).

Other activities to boost the potential of this space could include workshops on film production, meeting authors and actors, organising theme months (e.g., Environment / World War II), re-enacting scenes from a book or film and organising a short video contest, among others, potentially attracting users from younger age groups to an adult audience.

### How this space fosters creativity:

- By providing a bridge between the different languages of literature and cinema;
- By developing technical knowledge of films and literature;
- By sharing common interests, ideas and thoughts;
- By motivating to read.

### Project target group:

- Creation and organisation of the space: library staff and librarian teachers, volunteer students.
- Use of the space: the entire school community.

### The impact of a Books & Movies space in the library

#### Strengthening skills and competences:

- Critical and Creative Thinking skills;
- Multicultural awareness;
- Communication skills;
- Video and image editing skills;
- Attention to detail;
- Teamwork;
- Motivating to reading;
- Recognising the social role of art;
- Developing aesthetic and artistic sensitivity.



### Costs: medium

Image and sound equipment, comfortable oversized bean bags, projector.

#### Ways to minimise costs:

- Sponsors – local institutions and companies;
- Write applications and apply to grants;
- Organise fundraising events;
- Use recycled or upcycled furniture.

*"Librarians are tour-guides for all of knowledge."*

Patrick Ness

# PLASTIC ARTS & LITERATURE HUB

A space in the school library that encompasses and interconnects these two areas that over time have simultaneously embraced human thought and needs, mirrored in the various artistic movements that have taken place throughout history. An interactive space in which literature and art embrace.

## How does this innovation foster creativity?

A space to express emotions, feelings and thoughts creatively, one using images, the other with words. Both awaken the critical and analytical spirit and stimulate the process of learning to think, create and express.

## Project target group: Students, teachers

### The impact of the Art & Literature Hub in our development

This space would stimulate curiosity about artistic productions and allow for many creative activities involving:

- Research and library skills;
- Critical Reading and Thinking;
- Artwork analysis relating art with society, mentality and historical period;
- Text Production using creativity and intertextuality (e.g., writing different types of text inspired by what you see)
- Creation of a plastic work (drawing, painting or sculpture) based on the interpretation of a text, story or piece of news.

## Strengthening skills and competences:

- Critical thinking;
- Creativity;
- Teamwork
- Cooperation;
- Writing skills;
- Information literacy.

## Increased knowledge of

- Different artistic movements, authors and works.
- Aesthetic values and tastes other than their own.



## Costs: medium, staggered

### Furniture:

- Easily foldable and transportable tables and chairs;
- Space with exposure to natural light, with outdoor access and water installation.
- Materials for plastic arts.

### Ways to minimise costs:

- Get sponsors
- Find grant programs and write applications;
- Organise a fundraising event;
- Use recycled and upcycled materials and furniture.

**Creativity is “The ability to carry out a new production adapted to the context in which it manifests itself.”**

Todd Lubart, (2003)

## References

[www.asetreinamentos.com.br/a-importancia-da-arte-e-da-literatura.html](http://www.asetreinamentos.com.br/a-importancia-da-arte-e-da-literatura.html)

Designed to complement the role libraries play in allowing free specialised access to knowledge. It is an area designed to: host small-sized installations, exhibitions, talks or even musical performances; involving students or invited participants. This would extend access to new areas of knowledge and interest. Thus ultimately strengthening the importance of a library as a cultural community centre.

## How this innovation fosters creativity.

The implementation of a cultural events dedicated space in the library would broaden the school community's knowledge of different issues and topics. It would boost knowledge, cultural awareness and sensitivity. This space could be used for:

- Photo exhibits
- Art installations
- Film/video viewings
- Pop up choreographies
- Theme show cooking
- Theatrical sketches
- Stand-up comedy
- Workshops.



*"A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never-failing spring in the desert."*

Andrew Carnegie

## Project target group

The whole school community

**Event coordinators:** teachers, secondary school students, library staff.

**Target Audience:** students, teachers, school staff, parents and school guests.

**Involving secondary students in the organisation and planning of such events leads to strengthening skills and competences, such as:**

- teamwork
- problem-solving
- leadership
- communication
- people management
- organisational skills.

**Costs:** low to middle

**Ways to minimise costs:**

- Invite people for the activities for free;
- Avail of existing school equipment.
- Involve volunteers - teachers, students, parents and other school staff in the organisation of events.
- Establish partnerships with dance studios, art galleries, local restaurants, sports clubs/teams, etc..
- Integrate the events in ongoing Erasmus projects.
- Organise fundraising events.

**The impact of a Culture Corner in our development**

- Increased cultural awareness.
- Greater awareness of local cultural heritage.

**Foster active citizenship and cooperation within the community:**

- Collaborative work; cultural diversity; inclusion; values; respect for differences.

**Increased knowledge in the field of:**

- music; photography; dance; theatre; music, gastronomy; art; sports; cinema, event organisation, etc.

**Space setup:** creative, eco-friendly decoration with modern design, clever space organisation, staging area; recycled and upcycled pillows and bean bags made from used jeans and other colourful fabrics (ex. curtains); projector and empty wall to project on.

**Materials:** digital equipment; furniture according to the event (fold up chairs and desks, bean bags, benches, etc.)

The use of this space, its maintenance and organisation should involve students, besides teachers and library staff.

## References

# BRAIN BREAKS

Expectations of high academic achievements and easier access to university studies account for much of the academic and extracurricular activities of many of our students. Creating spaces for a "brain break" precipitates rest, relaxation and socialization. Engaging in creative stress-free activities, is beneficial for mental health and social well-being. Board games and easy manual activities address these needs and can be implemented in the space of a library without much difficulty.

## How this innovation fosters creativity.

- By providing a safe stress-free area for students to use as a brain break.
- Creating opportunities for collaborative social interaction and working without notebooks or phones for a while.
- Through using games and manual activities to deal with anxiety and pressure.
- Bringing people together and strengthening relationships.
- Boosting happiness and helping reduce stress

Puzzles, playing cards and boardgames (chess, scrabble, battleship, dixit, concept, apples to apples, etc.) would be made available in a section of the library, accessible by students and to be used in it freely, preferably in an area of the library more tolerant to some level of noise. Easy arts and crafts activities like Buddha boards, origami, colouring, strawbee challenges or making friendship bracelets, could also be made available, for students to be able to engage in stress-free creative social interactions.

## Costs: low to middle

A Brain Break Space can be organised in the library facilities, requiring only the existing furniture and a collection of board games, puzzles, and arts and crafts materials.

## Ways to minimise costs.

- Get sponsorship from local companies and the school community.
- Find grant programs and write applications.
- Reuse donated games, puzzles and playing cards.



## Project target group: students

### The impact of the Brain Break in our development:

**It is expected that with the creation of such a space students may learn about:**

- Stress management strategies and activities.
- Selfcare needs.
- The importance of taking a break for mental health.
- The potential of a library as a space for knowledge and imagination.

### It will improve the students':

- social skills
- self-confidence
- memory and cognitive skills
- problem-solving skills and response time
- creative critical thinking
- collaborative teamwork competencies

## References

- <https://dontyoushushme.com/2021/11/16/low-tech-makerspace-in-the-h-s-library/> date of access: 24/10/2022  
<https://creativeenso.com/15-fantastic-board-games-to-boost-creativity/> date of access: 24/10/2022



# CREATIVE BOOK CROSSING

Based on the concept of Book Crossing, which has been around since 2001. Creative Book Crossing in schools overflows the physical limits of the library, extending to the wider school grounds, even to the neighbouring areas. "Stations" would be created containing books left for anyone in the school community (or wider community if possible outside the school) to pick, read and return. Creative writing and post-reading activities would be available and encouraged for each book, which would be left, anonymously or otherwise, at each book station. Results of creative writing could be pinned to a board or enter a Blackout poetry competition.

## How does this innovation foster creativity:

- By taking the library to the community.
- Through provision of free equal access to books of different types.
- Involving the readers in creative reading and writing activities (Blackout Poetry, Book Spine Poetry, Poetry Slams, quizzes, video production etc.)

## Project target group: The whole school community

### The impact of a Creative BookCrossing initiative in our development:

#### It is expected that participants:

- Learn about literary styles, works and authors
- Develop a taste for reading
- Widen their worldview
- Strengthen their European Humanistic Values through literature
- Realise the potential of libraries for combining knowledge and imagination

#### It will help improve their:

- Creative skills
- Reading skills
- Writing skills



## Costs: low to medium

Books, markers, photocopies, board, materials for setting up stations.

### Ways to minimise costs

- Get sponsors for materials
- Use books donated by the community
- Recycle and upcycle materials for Creative BookCrossing stations (e.g., a fridge, a phone booth, a wardrobe)
- Volunteer work (staff, teachers, students, parents) for setting up Stations.



## References

[www.bookcrossing.com/](http://www.bookcrossing.com/) date of access: 24/10/2022

# GREEN LIBRARIES

The Online Dictionary of Library and Information Science (ODLIS) define a green library as follows. "Green/sustainable libraries as a library designed to minimise negative impact on the natural environment and maximise indoor environmental quality by means of careful site selection, use of natural construction materials and biodegradable products, conservation of resources like water, energy, paper, and responsible waste disposal recycling, etc."

## Some tips for the design of green libraries:

- Make improvements to the existing building: a healthy indoor space with plants.
- Energy Use: Renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal energy
- Green Roof Construction: It absorbs harmful substances in the air and rainwater. Helps clean the air. It provides energy saving by increasing heat insulation.
- Water Saving: The quality of the tap ends is improved in order to save water.
- Landscape: A green organic garden is being built outside the Green Library building.
- Hot Water: Since the libraries need less hot water, solar water heaters are preferred
- Lighting: Energy Star certified lamps and LED bulbs are used. Motion sensors are used to save energy. Large windows are used because it allows natural light to penetrate inside.

[For more ideas click here](#)

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Nature recharges our directed-attention which is needed when analysing and further developing ideas.
- The idea of a library that not only lends books, but also sees itself as a social point of contact in a relaxing atmosphere.
- Green libraries increase energy.
- Green libraries are more attractive and welcoming space for anyone in search of knowledge and innovation,

## Project target group

**Creation and maintenance of green libraries:** students of all age; schools stakeholders; teachers; and universities.

**Use of the innovative green libraries:** students, teachers and school staff.

## The impact of green libraries on our development

### Increased knowledge of:

- Green library movement.
- Climate change and its effect.
- How to design an eco-friendly library



The nature-themed library allows you to study and work next to nature in the most comfortable way. PHOTO CREDITS: FACEBOOK/NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD, SINGAPORE

## Strengthening skills and competences

- 'Walk the talk' and take personal responsibility for climate change crisis, and focus on the impact we are having on the environment. Many of us are wondering how we can make a real difference. Libraries are quite naturally places that we may turn to for ideas as well as answers.
- Promoting green library movement;
- Relevant and up-to-date information is easy to access for users, shared spaces, devices, and environmental education is offered, and operations are efficient. The library has a positive carbon hand-print..
- Empower schools and teachers to embed environmental sustainability into both the curriculum and their teaching practice,

*“We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us.”*

*Winston Churchill*

## Costs: Medium

### Ways to minimise costs:

- School FundRaising Activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid (municipality)
- Find grant programmes and write applications;
- Using recycled objects

## References

- Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science. Access: 05.03.2022 [https://products.abcclo.com/ODLIS/odlis\\_s#sustainablelib](https://products.abcclo.com/ODLIS/odlis_s#sustainablelib)
- Antonelli, M. (2008). The green library movement: an overview and beyond. Access: 05.03.2022 [https://green.nd.edu/assets/24828/escholarship\\_uc\\_item\\_39d3v236.pdf](https://green.nd.edu/assets/24828/escholarship_uc_item_39d3v236.pdf)
- Alpaslan H.K., Yasin Ş. (2020) The Importance of Green Libraries in Terms of Sustainability. Access: 02.04.2022 <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/1303130>

A digital library is a collection of documents available and organised in electronic form. These include: magazine articles, books, papers, images, sound files and videos. Compared to CD-ROM disks, Internet-based digital libraries have a plus: they can be updated on a daily basis. Many schools and institutions have already begun the task of converting their traditional collections of books and educational materials into electronic format. Some files become available in HTML format while others can be downloaded in PDF format, to be printed if necessary. The school digital library will include: eBooks, video courseware, newspaper cuttings, current affairs, school event videos and audios, teaching notes, poems and literature. Besides this, it also contains: animations, projects reports, question papers of previous years, famous speeches, nature club reports, videos and audios of cultural events, articles from other sources, student paintings and world classics.



Photo © Georgia Andromidas

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Nature recharges our directed-attention which is needed when analysing and further developing ideas.
- The idea of a library that not only lends books, but also sees itself as a social point of contact in a relaxing atmosphere.
- Green libraries increase energy.
- Green libraries are more attractive and a welcoming space for anyone in search of knowledge and innovation,

## Project target group

**Creation and maintenance of green libraries:** students, schools, school stakeholders, and universities.

**Use of the innovative green libraries:** all pupils, teachers and school staff.

## The impact of green libraries on our development

### Increased knowledge of:

- Green library movement,
- Climate change and its effect,
- How to design an eco-friendly library

## Costs: Medium

### Ways to minimise costs:

- School FundRaising Activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid (municipality)
- Find grant programmes and write applications;
- Using recycled objects

## Strengthening skills and competences

- 'Walk the talk' and take personal responsibility for the climate change issue and focus on the impact we are having on the environment. Many of us are wondering how we can make a real difference. Libraries are quite naturally places that we may turn to for ideas as well as answers;
- Promoting green library movement;
- Relevant and up-to-date information is easy to access for users, shared spaces, devices, and environmental education is offered, and operations are efficient. The library has a positive carbon footprint.
- Empower schools and teachers to embed environmental sustainability into both the curriculum and their teaching practice,

*“New digital library initiative needs to take a leaf out of others books”*

Stuart Lauchlan

[For more ideas click here](#)



## References

Witten, I.H. and Bainbridge, D. (2002) How to build a digital library. Morgan Kaufmann, San Francisco

# A NATURAL LIBRARY - YURT

A yurt is a portable, circular dwelling made of a lattice of flexible wood covered in felt. Libraries can be formed in traditional Mongolian yurt.

## Some tips for converting yurt into a relaxing library:

- A yurt outdoors - The opportunity to hear and join in with reading books outside in warm learning spaces. Creates interaction with friends.
- Think about lightning. A natural view of sky and light can help students feel relaxed, so the window on the top of the yurt will unveil your view of nature.
- Comfortable furniture. One cannot fully relax if there is no comfortable place to sit or lie down with the beloved book. This is why it is so important to decorate the library with furnishings which are not only stylish, but soft and comfy as well, like cushions or sheepskins. A wood burner might be used to be eco-friendly and relaxing.

Innovations: Whether for cataloguing, research, or accessing different literary works, making use of new technologies (internet access) is inevitable.

[Click here to have a look implemented samples at Millfield Library.](#) And [watch this video for a more sophisticated sample in China.](#)



From Istock image gallery.

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Natural libraries provide a peaceful refuge from everyday pressures, as well as exciting encounters with new and unfamiliar places, people, and ideas.
- Libraries can extend and reinforce what is taught in the classroom; consolidating knowledge and inciting a love for learning (self-oriented learning).
- Natural libraries also support pupils' well-being since they provide a haven away from the usual demands of everyday school life. Feeling relaxed, their creative abilities will blossom.

## Project target group

**Creation and maintenance of yurt libraries:** Students, school stakeholders, parent/ guardian committees, art galleries, culture centres, universities.

**Use of the innovative yurt libraries:** All students, teachers and school staff.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Libraries have been variously used for teaching, research, socialisation, individual study, and recreation. So it promotes different learning styles.
- Working individually / in pair or team
- Feeling confident and discovering oneself;
- Reading, doing searches or sharing in a warm learning atmosphere students will feel relaxed, think better without stress and share more with their peers.

## The impact of yurt libraries on our development

### Increased knowledge of:

- Outdoor/nature learning,
- More peer interaction,
- Learning the lifestyle of Mongolian people,
- Understanding the value of learning in a warm and natural atmosphere.

## Costs: low

### Ways to minimise costs:

- School FundRaising Activities
- Parents Association or Parental Contributions
- Local or regional government aid
- Find grant programmes and write applications;
- Aid from public libraries,
- Using recycled objects.

*“Bad libraries build collections; good libraries build services; great libraries build communities”*

*A quote from Professor R. David Lankes of the University of South Carolina*

## References

National Geographic; access: 06.04.2022 <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/yurt>





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# SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

## CHAPTER 3





Co-funded by the  
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# WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT LOOK LIKE?



# OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

If outside space around the school allows, it can be used in creative ways conducive to learning. The "outdoor classroom" facilitates lessons in foreign languages, geography, art and theatre, studies. Demonstrations and workshops for students can also be organised here.

## How to prepare for implementation

- Find a quiet place.
- Remove unnecessary objects.
- Purchase outdoor furniture. E.g.: benches, deck chairs, blankets, swings - you can use the help of parents, find sponsors.
- You can build or buy a ready-made garden shed.



## Benefits, strengthening skills

- Enabling lessons outside the school building, in the open air for all learners.
- Shaping healthy attitudes through direct contact with nature.
- Making school classes more attractive.
- Improving the quality of teachers' work through the introduction of innovative forms in classes.
- Expanding the educational space at school.
- Spreading the idea of green classes among other educational institutions.



## Project target group

All members of the school community.

Students, teachers.

School stakeholders: parents, companies, institutions.

## Costs: low

Implementation is possible within the school budget and in-kind support of parents, stakeholders.



# RELAXATION AND CALMING ZONE

Relaxation training strengthens attention, develops imagination, reduces anxiety and aggression.



## Project target group

**Creation of the relaxation and calming zone:**

**School stakeholders:** parents/ guardians, school trusts, board of management, institutions.

**Use of the relaxation and calming zone:** all pupils, teachers during the breaks between lessons

## Costs: medium

External financial and sponsorship/ donations support needed (local companies and institutions).

## Ways to minimise costs:

- Find local experts who can help you design and build the relaxation and calming zone.
- Get sponsors - DIY stores, garden farms, local businesses.
- Avail of grant programmes.
- Organise a fundraising event for the construction of the relaxation and calming zone.

Students spend about eight hours a day at school. Although we try to create quiet relaxation zones in school, young people need contact with nature, a place where they can rest and regenerate their minds.

A relaxation zone created outside the building will create contact with nature, relaxation in the fresh air.

A high number of students, especially since the Covid 19 pandemic, have experienced mental health problems. This creates a related need for tranquility. The project includes planting of appropriate plants, creation of benches and seats to ensure contact between students in groups but also a zone for individual tranquility.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Opportunity to relax in the fresh air, among greenery.
- Opportunity to talk with friends, establish relationships.
- For students with special educational needs-a chance to relax.
- Ability to plan free time
- For people who spend most of the day staring at a screen or books and whiteboards should go outside to give their eyes some time to regenerate. Above all, green colour is good for our sight, it helps our eyes relax.



# RAIN GARDEN

Rain gardens resemble ordinary gardens, but their main task is to catch rainwater which is used to maintain the greenery. This solution reduces the amount of rainwater flowing into the sewer system, and thus the risk of flooding. A rain garden helps increase the biodiversity of an area and create a favourable environment for both people and nature. This is a very cost-effective solution, as it leads to a reduction in green maintenance costs and improves the quality of rainwater and the aesthetics of adjacent areas. It is also an interesting form of popularising knowledge about ways to manage rainwater and space management to take care of the planet.

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- The creation and operation of a rain garden allows students to plan a common space and maintain it.
- Conducting lessons in nature, Geography, Biology in a creative, practical way.
- Participating in experiments helps to learn more effectively.
- Provokes the search for new solutions, functional improvements.
- Students are motivated to learn about plants.
- Students can participate in peer teaching.
- Learn to care for the environment.

## Target group of the project

Creation and maintenance of the garden: age of students does not matter-even kindergarten. Elementary school students, stakeholders from the school environment: parents, companies, institutions. Use of the garden: all students, teachers.



## Costs: low

### Ways to minimise costs:

Find a gardening company in your immediate area which can help you design and build a garden. With the support of specialists, students, teachers and parents you can create a garden together. Students can bring unused resources from home, such as pots, garden items, tools; you can get sponsors - DIY stores, garden farms, local companies; find grant programs and apply.

# SCHOOL ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY

At the level of primary and secondary education, one can see a trend that many young people shy away from science, considering them difficult or boring. Often difficult physical and mathematical issues can even discourage them. Within higher education, however, there is still a growing demand for graduates in mathematics, technology and science. Traditional methods of teaching are not conducive to increasing the interest in this field, though. The alternative is learning empirically, coming into contact with difficult issues on the level of direct sensations, visual observations, innovations.

## Costs: high

Separate budget for implementation needed.

### Minimum equipment for the beginning:

- Automatic astronomical dome
- Main telescope system
- Solar telescope system
- Additional telescopes for demonstrations

### Ways to minimise costs:

- Write a participatory budgeting project e.i. how to spend part of a public budget
- Collaborate with a university partner
- Look for a sponsor among nearby companies that could - promote themselves in this way



## The impact of the innovation on student's development: knowledge, competencies and skills

- Improving the quality of teaching,
- Finding talented students and supporting their development.
- Dissemination of knowledge of astronomy among children, youth and adults.
- Popularising the conduct of astronomical observations and research work through the use of innovative technologies.



- Increasing interest in science and natural sciences.
- Learning English in astronomical, technical and IT terminology.
- Dissemination of the use of information and communication technologies for acquiring and expanding knowledge.
- Raising winners of subject competitions and contests.
- Increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the school in the context of using its pedagogical and educational potential.



# AMPHITHEATRE

Immersion with The Arts develops creativity. Being innovative empowers students to better cope with problems, helps them make connections and break down barriers. Greek and Roman Amphitheatres are a wonderfully engaging alternative to traditional indoor theatre spaces. It provides unique opportunities. For instance, for a larger audience to participate in the performance, and a greater awareness of space in drama.

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- The development of imagination, through feelings and emotions while watching the play, learning such values as good, evil, love, friendship, justice or hope'
- Discovering talents in acting or related fields of art, co-creating the performance (music, art, dance, singing or stage movement).
- Confidence growth, inspiration for recitation contests or to create something of their own in the future.
- Promote curiosity about the world.
- Teaches perception, stimulates the development of the five senses.
- Helps develop memory.
- Develops social relationships
- Develops creativity.

## Target group of the project

**Creation of the amphitheatre:** stakeholders from the school environment: parents, institutions.

**Use of the amphitheatre:** all students, teachers and school staff, invited guests from other schools

## Costs - low

Implementation possible within the school budget and in-kind support of parents, stakeholders.

**Ways to minimise costs:** you can use fixed chairs but you can also bring them from the school building if needed. The amphitheatre can be made from bricks but it can also be wooden, which will reduce costs.



# OPEN-AIR LIBRARIES.

Children may have challenges with learning because of the lack of comprehension while reading. A core responsibility of schools is to foster a strong motivation to read through engaging methods. A differentiated approach for students needs (e.g. emotional and intellectual) is essential. There are many reasons why children do not want to read books. Among them is the lack of reading habits. Creating open-air bookcases, encouraging people to bring in books they have read and to use them during breaks between classes can promote reading among children and young people.

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Sharing of books builds relationships between students.
- Lending and returning books teaches responsibility for other people's property.
- Creating and assembling bookcases teaches Planning and responsibility for shared space.
- Reading stimulates curiosity about the world and helps students understand themselves and others.
- Reading stimulates speech development and improves memory.
- Reading shapes a child's moral sensitivity.
- Books shape a positive self-image.



## Project target group

**Creation:** students of the older grades of elementary and middle school, stakeholders from the school environment: parents, institutions.

**Use of libraries:** all students, teachers and members of the school community.



## Costs - low

You can use a variety of materials, e.g., used boxes, booths, art materials, book swaps, book donations.

## Strengthening skills and competencies

- Responsibility for oneself and others.
- Responsibility for common space and property.
- Working in a team - division of responsibilities, accountability.
- Giving advice and listening to others,
- Performing specific work: carpentry, decorating,
- Selecting appropriate tools and knowing how to use them.
- Combining theory and practice.
- Observing and formulating conclusions.



# JOYFUL GARDENS

Apart from Physical Education and Arts, outdoor learning is seldom used as an alternative to conventional classroom learning. Teachers do not normally see gardens as an asset when it comes to motivating students to willingly participate in a series of activities. To achieve this, school outdoor spaces must be attractive, appealing spaces, where students feel energetic and challenged, and where learning can benefit from this added motivation. Creating such a space can be done through games and game-like activities, from board-games painted on the ground (Hopscotch, Mazes, Chess/Checkers and Tic Tac Toe, Snakes and Ladders) to games that join technology and physical activity, such as geocaching i.e. an outdoor recreational activity.



## Project target group

**Creation and organisation of the space:** teachers, students, staff.

**Use of the space:** students, teachers, school staff, community.

## The impact of the creation and use of the Joyful Garden on our development

### Strengthening of skills and competences:

- Social skills;
- teamwork;
- collaborative work;
- cooperation;
- problem - solving;
- decision making;
- critical thinking;
- strategic thinking;
- leadership and people management skills;
- communication.
- Providing the school with space for alternative outdoor activities;
- Increased knowledge of board games, traditional games and sports;
- Creating emotional connections/memories with schoolmates and the school community.
- Health and cognitive benefits of games that require skill and physical activity.

## Costs: low and ecological

### Ways to minimise costs:

- Find sponsors for materials.
- Use school materials.
- Involve volunteers in setting up the space.
- Integrate activities in ongoing Erasmus projects.

*“A garden isn't meant to be useful. It's for joy.”*

*Rumer Godden*

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Reduces stress and allows students to relax in a fun, joyful environment.
- Creating an area for learning and socialising at the same time.
- Promotion of a healthy lifestyle;
- Encourages reduction in screen time;
- By increasing the students' confidence and self-esteem.





image: The Guardian

Using the school grounds to keep a pet animal or raise farm animals is not a new idea. Studies show great success of this, for example, a [few elementary schools in Switzerland](#). Or in a less recent past, school, in Madeira island, in which back in 1973, classes were taught outdoors for lack of proper facilities and where the whole school community would tend to the needs of chicken, rabbits and a cow. But whether it was for necessity or choice, studies and experiences show that animals do have a soothing effect on students and can be successfully used to convey values such as empathy and responsibility, among other benefits.

## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Developing a more holistic mindset towards our relationship with other species, by allowing close contact with animals and their individual behaviours.
- Fostering empathy.
- Providing companionship and emotional support.
- Allowing students to connect, relax and unwind (especially useful for anxiety disorders).

## Project target group

**Setting the space:** teachers, students, parents, staff

**Use of the space:** teachers, students, parents, staff

## Impact of Pets & Other Animals on our development

### Strengthening skills and competences:

- Social skills;
- Problem-solving;
- Collaborative work;
- Cooperation;
- Project management and follow-up;
- Leadership skills;
- People management skills.

## Costs: high, staggered

The costs implied in keeping animals in school can be quite high, depending on the species chosen, their needs and characteristics. Each school should consider its own characteristics and decide on their best option. The building and maintenance of a specific area for the animals, veterinary care, food and a thoroughly designed plan for everyday chores and responsibilities are essential for the success of such a project.

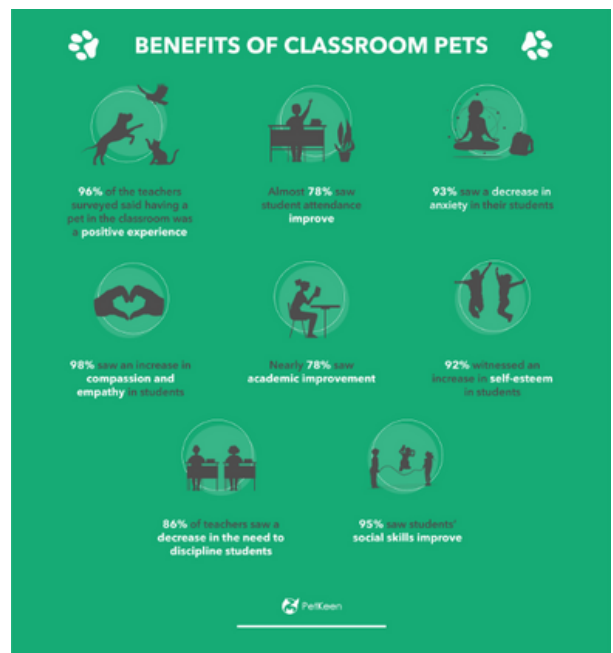
## Ways to minimise costs

- Finding sponsors: veterinarians; animal food suppliers.
- Volunteer work: school community, animal welfare associations and institutions.
- Recycle and up-cycle materials (e.g., clothes and tires for animal bedding).

## Opportunity to implement new ways of learning;

### Opportunity to bond with schoolmates.

- Raised awareness of all the logistics, expenses and preparation needed for keeping animals;
- Raised awareness of animal welfare issues;
- Developing compassion, empathy, respect, and responsibility for other living beings;
- Fostering positive behaviours (increased motivation, focus and engagement);
- Stress and anxiety relief.



In biology classes it is common to use plants to approach different topics. For instance, the evolution of species; hereditary studies; transport in plants; photosynthesis; gas exchange in plants, and many more. It would therefore be an asset for schools to create a space that grows a diversity of plants, making their study more appealing. Ultimately providing teachers and students of different school subjects with an interesting learning space to integrate in their lessons and activities.

The species to be cultivated would depend on the endemic flora and would have to be adapted to each location and reality. We suggest, however, that they are organised in the garden according to their evolutionary origin.

Thus, there would be a first space for non-vascular plants(a), followed by seedless vascular plants (b), then seed-bearing plants (c) and finally flowering plants (d).

Information on the ages of each group of plants should be presented, either on a panel or in a timeline. Plants could also be identified in terms of their particular uses and traditions within the community.

O Jardim da Evolução | Festival Internacional de Jardins ([cm-pontedelima.pt](http://cm-pontedelima.pt))

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## How this innovation fosters creativity

- Allowing for practical biology classes (and of other subjects);
- Promoting autonomous research (planning of space, information research on plants chosen);
- Raising environmental awareness by learning about organic farming;
- Involving students in learn-by-doing, hands on methodologies.

## Target group

**Creation and maintenance of the garden:** biology students; eco club students and other volunteers.

**Use of the garden:** students and teachers.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Critical thinking;
- Problem-solving
- Creativity;
- Teamwork;
- Cooperation
- Application of the scientific method.

## Costs: low / medium

### Ways to minimise costs:

- Asking gardening companies for sponsorship;
- Asking for the support of specialists (students, family, governmental institutions)
- Students and teachers can bring unused resources from home, such as pots, garden items, tools

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# CORRIDORS, CLOAKROOMS AND CANTEEN AREAS

## CHAPTER 4

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Co-funded by the  
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# WHAT SHOULD THE CORRIDORS LOOK LIKE?





# LOCKERS TRANSFORMED INTO GIANT BOOKS

Ugly and boring lockers in the school corridor can be transformed into colourful book spines through a collaborative transformational project. Students discuss and choose which books they want to see painted on the lockers; working as a team to implement their ideas. The project inspires them to explore literature and encourages reading. It fosters student creativity, providing a sense of ownership and can also be connected to the literature lesson.



## Creating an Avenue of Literature for Inspiration

### How this innovation fosters creativity

The process of designing and painting the school lockers promotes:

- Creative use of the space provided.
- Collaboration between students and teachers.
- Small talk between students during lunch-breaks about the books they have read.
- Sparks curiosity about new books.

### Project target group

**Painting of the lockers:** students, teachers, other school staff, parents

**Use of the lockers:** all students.

### The impact of the painted lockers on our development

**Increased knowledge of:**

- Literature
- Classic books and writers
- Social and reading skills.

### Strengthening skills and competences

- Working as part of a team.
- Expressing ideas and listening to others.
- Carrying out manual work: designing and painting
- Use of materials and tools.

### Costs: low

The project of transforming lockers into giant books can be carried out in stages and can be connected to literature lessons. For instance, discussion about favourite books or books they want to read; choosing the books they will include in the project; designing and painting the lockers.

### Ways to minimise costs:

- Find experts in your immediate area who can help you paint the lockers (e.g. parents or grandparents).
- Find sponsors- paint shops and DIY shops
- Get private and public donations
- Involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff.

### References

- <https://bookchase.blogspot.com/2015/08/literary-school-lockers-in-biloxi.html>  
<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/65686/teachers-transform-lockers-book-spines>



# PHOTO EXHIBITION IN THE CORRIDOR

The empty walls of the school corridors can become a canvas for expression and inspiration for students during the breaks cultivating their creativity. You can create a photo exhibition corner in the corridor where pupils can show off their work and feel a sense of ownership. To make the process more challenging the theme of the photo exhibition can be changed regularly or you can organise a photo contest and set up a prize for the winners.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

The design and development of the photo exhibition corner promotes:

- creative use of the space provided - design, planning;
- self-esteem of the pupils
- promotion of the school and its community - photo, film and text creations;
- organising photo-related events, such as photo exhibitions, photo contests and photography seminars with experts.
- organising events where pupils can sell their photos to raise money for their school

## Project target group

### Creation and maintenance of the photo exhibition corner:

pupils, teachers, parents, other school staff

**Use of the photo exhibition corner:** pupils, teachers, school staff, parents

## The impact of the exhibition on our development

### Increased knowledge of:

- technical aspects of photography
- design
- photo editing
- ways to present your work

## Strengthening skills and competences

- inspiration
- imagination
- creativity
- working as part of a team
- carrying out specific work: design, crafting

## Express your creativity through photography

## Costs: low

The photo exhibition corner can be created in a simple form and be enriched throughout the year to reduce cost.

### Ways to minimise costs:

- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and create the photo exhibition corner.. This could be parents or grandparents
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff during the design and creation of the photo exhibition corner
- get sponsors - DIY stores, local businesses, photo studios
- find grant programmes
- organise a fundraising event

## References

<https://www.weareteachers.com/21-ways-to-use-photos-in-the-classroom/>

# SENSORY PATH IN THE CORRIDOR

Sitting still for many hours in the classroom may cause tension and anxiety to pupils who need to express their energy. When they have the chance to move around or use their hands, they can learn things in an easier and better way. The creation of a sensory path in the school corridor for pupils in the first grades of junior high school lets them relieve stress and tension, helps them take a brain break and refocus their energy. Sensory paths are usually used in primary schools but with some adjustments can be also used in the first grades of junior high school. You can buy pre-made decals or design your own to engage pupils in the creation of the sensory path.



## Strengthening skills and competences

- development of gross motor skills, balance and spatial awareness
- working as part of a team
- expressing ideas and listening to others
- carrying out specific work: crafting, painting

*Take a brain break with a sensory path*

## How this innovation fosters creativity

The design and creation of a sensory path in the school corridor promotes:

- creative use of the space provided
- relaxation
- re- focusing pupils' energy
- stress and frustration relief

## Project target group

**Creation of the sensory path:** senior primary pupils and pupils in the first grades of junior high school, teachers, other school staff, parents.

**Use of the sensory path:** all pupils.

## The impact of the sensory path on our development

**Increased knowledge of:**

- methods to relieve from stress and frustration
- ways to keep focused

## Costs: low

The sensory path can be created in stages: the pupils discuss with their teachers their ideas about the design of the sensory path, they decide about its form, start creating it and can add more elements in the path through time.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- design your own decals with the pupils
- use tape lines instead of buying or creating decals
- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and create your sensory path. This could be parents or grandparents.
- make use of material you already have in the classroom
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff - in the design and creation of the sensory path
- get sponsors - DIY stores, paint stores

## References

<https://www.weareteachers.com/school-hallways/>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/sensory-path/>

<https://www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/why-sensory-pathways-are-changing-school-hallways-for-good/>

<https://youtu.be/gDefbr7Vlro>

# HALLWAY PAINTING (MURAL)

The blank walls of the school corridor can be transformed into a canvas for expression and inspiration for the pupils sparking their fantasy and creativity. You can make the corridors a brighter and more positive environment for pupils through creating murals with motivational words or quotes. It is also a fun way to include everyone in an amazing work of art, represent what your school is all about and promote a sense of belonging. To engage more pupils in this process you could create a mural for each class.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

The design and creation of the school mural promotes:

- creative use of the space provided - design, planning;
- inspiration
- expression of ideas and feelings

## Project target group

**Design and creation of the mural:** pupils, teachers, stakeholders around the school (e.g. parents)

**Use:** all pupils, teachers and school staff

## The impact of the mural on our development

**Increased knowledge of:**

- ways to express your ideas and connect to other people
- different kinds of art

*Express yourself in a mural*

## Strengthening skills and competences

- team- work
- decision making
- collaboration
- expressing ideas and listening to others
- carrying out specific work: designing, painting,
- working with tools and materials

## Costs: low

The murals can be created in stages: pupils discuss with teachers about the values their school represents and decide what they want their mural to look like. Through the year they can create more murals.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and paint the mural (e.g. parents)
- involve the art teachers of the school
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff
- get sponsors - DIY stores, paint shops



## References

<https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/news/from-blank-walls-to-the-welcome-mat-digby-regional-high-school-murals-help-to-transform-school-environment-297308/>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/school-mural-ideas/>

# COMMUNITY PROJECT BOARDS

The blank walls of the school corridors can become more vivid and inspiring by transforming them into community project boards. Pupils can put their work on them: on-going school projects and material they have created during class collaborative projects. It can also be used as a display of their achievements if pupils have done something really great within their community (e.g. volunteer acts, participation in arts and sports activities, participation in contests). It can promote a sense of belonging and ownership through presenting their work and create a sense of connection between the community.



## Strengthening skills and competences

- development of gross motor skills, balance and spatial awareness
- working as part of a team
- expressing ideas and listening to others
- carrying out specific work: crafting, painting

*Transforming the blank walls into a display for your work*

## How this innovation fosters creativity

The design and implementation of the community project board promotes:

- creative use of the space provided - design, planning
- inspiration
- collaboration between pupils
- promotion of the school and its community through presenting pupils' work and achievements

## Project target group

**Design and creation of the community project board:**

pupils, teachers, other school staff

**Use of the garden:** pupils, teachers

## The impact of the community project board on our development

**Increased knowledge of:**

- events taking place in the school community
- ways to present your work
- different subjects (maths, language, chemistry, etc.) as pupils present the results of their class projects

## Costs: low

This can be a whole year process. Pupils discuss their ideas and decide what their community project board will be like.

They work for the implementation of their ideas and can add elements to the project board throughout the year as they develop different class projects and activities.

**Ways to minimise costs:**

- get parents to help you with the creation of the project board
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils and other school staff- to design and create the project board
- get sponsors (e.g. DIY stores or bookshops) to provide you with needed tools or crafting stuff

## References

<http://erasmusmaths.blogspot.com/p/uk-diss.html>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Science-Project-Display-Board>



# A PLACE FOR RELAXATION AND BONDING

During the school-breaks pupils usually wander around with their phones. You can make the most of unused corners in the school corridor by creating a space where pupils can relax and get in contact with each other. In this process you can paint the walls in warm and calming colours and use equipment and objects such as cushions, mats, low tables, magazines, books to create a cosy corner where pupils can get together.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

The design and development of the relaxing corner promotes:

- creative use of the space provided - design, planning
- implementing modifications in unused space
- creative use of equipment and objects
- fantasy and inspiration
- organising book-related events (e.g. book presentations)

## Project target group

**Design and creation of the relaxing place:** pupils, teachers, parents

**Use of the relaxing place:** all pupils

## The impact of the relaxing space on our development

**Increased knowledge of:**

- design
- decoration

## Strengthening skills and competences

- carrying out specific work: design, decoration
- working as part of a team
- expressing ideas and listening to others
- cooperation skills

## *Relaxation and bonding in a cosy corner*

## Costs: high

The relaxing corner can be created in stages to reduce cost (elements and objects can be added throughout the year).

## Ways to minimise costs:

- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and create the relaxing space (e.g. parents or grandparents)
- make use of objects and equipment that the school already has and they remain unused (e.g. chairs, armchairs, shelves, small tables, board games)
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff through the whole process (design, decoration etc.)
- get sponsors - DIY stores, local bookshops, carpenters- who can offer material or work
- find grant programmes
- organise a fundraising event

## References

<https://www.demcointeriors.com/project/portfolio-school-calming-room/>  
<https://blog.interface.com/corridors-as-classrooms/>



# STAIRS - HOW TO BE CREATIVE WITH STAIRS AS A SPACE IN SCHOOL

Any school building with more than one floor will have stairs. Very often this area, which will get a lot of use, might be overlooked as a possible area in which to inspire students and engage with their creativity. The versatile nature of stairs can sometimes offer an amphitheatre-style environment for students which can lead to surprising engagement. Stairs are places of interaction and connection, as well as physical activity and wellness in school. Book spine stair graphics are just one example of how the area can be used to promote creativity as well as encouraging reading!

## How this innovation fosters creativity

The process of using the stairs as a creative space and visual catalyst for student creativity gets student to think of ways in which the space can be used, how to use it, decide on which books to be used in the project and why, increase curiosity among the wider student population about perhaps reading the books and it also improves awareness of literature and various authors.

## Project target group

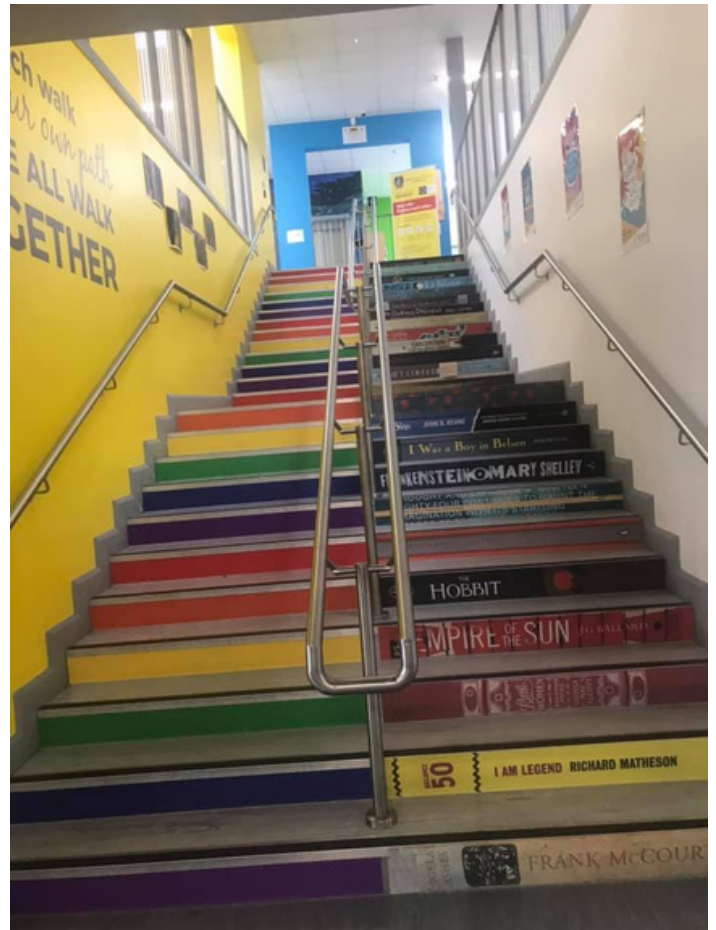
The entire school community, but especially students.

## The impact of the project

There is a visual benefit to such a project. Without even knowing or being aware of it, students are looking at the stairs and learning about literature or art and being visually stimulated. It also brings playfulness and creativity into play though the space itself and extensions of the space.

## Strengthening skills and competences

It gives them a sense of ownership, they have to make decisions about what to put on the stairs and why, so this is critical analysis, it helps students familiarise themselves with aspects of the curriculum and literature, as they see the information on stairs every day, they'll begin to memorise it or become very familiar with it.



## Costs: medium

Approximately €1200 to get the stickers made and applied to the stairs in a professional manner. There are cheaper alternatives on how to do this but the result will not be the same.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- find sponsors
- paint shops and DIY shops
- get private and public donations
- involve volunteers – teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff

## References

<https://www.blocksdesign.co.uk/book-spine-stair-graphics/>  
<https://blog.interface.com/corridors-as-classrooms/>

# STICKERS AND VINYL IMAGES

Stickers, vinyl images and wall paintings can help education facilities that struggle with lifeless, demotivating spaces so as to be able to fill them with colour and personality. The result is a transformation which helps boost morale and well-being for students and staff as they make their way along school corridors. These visual inspirations can be made by students with the help of staff allowing students express themselves and their thoughts in a meaningful way.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

Colour brightens up school corridors, doorways and locker areas. If the stickers and images relate to the subject they are studying it can motivate students and encourage creativity as well as being a visual reminder. The displays on classroom windows attract visual learners – those who learn best with imagery and visual aids.

## Project target group

The entire school community, but especially students, staff, parents and visitors to the school

## The impact of the project

Well-being sticker displays support positive relationships and achievements. They also can involve students in their creation and implementation and with the use of cheap and simple technology, so they are learning new skills whilst being creative. Students can show what amazing things are happening in school in a visual way. Positive quotes focus on the people rather than the building. Well-being matters; how students and staff feel in a space is important. Inspirational quotes such as 'We each walk our own path, but we all walk together' can help build community and respect in a school.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Expressing ideas, visualising how to fill space, looking for quotes/images, decision making, listening to others
- Technical knowledge and skills in designing and making the stickers
- Conversations regarding elements of the displays, working with staff, raising self-esteem and competence

## Costs: Low

(approximately €300 to buy the machine and then cost of vinyl)

## Ways to minimise costs:

Purchase the sticker machine and vinyl. Train staff members on the use of the machine

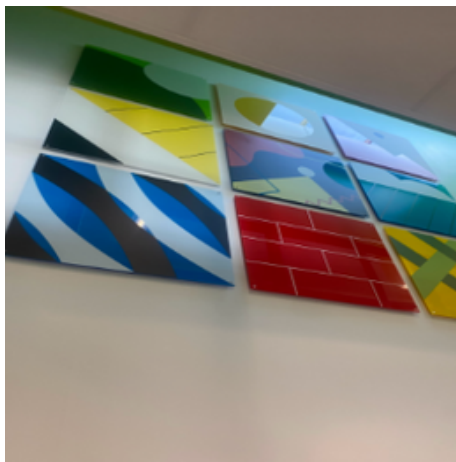


## References

<https://www.pinterest.ie/pin/27514247709535409/>

# STUDENT INSPIRED ART WORK IN CORRIDORS AND HALLS

In Ireland all new public buildings receive a grant for art work/installations. In the case of our school this grant amounted to €54,000. Professional artists, in consultation with the arts council, parents, staff, students submit ideas on what pieces of art will be on display in the school. In total there were over 20 submissions from artists. Students and staff voted as part of feedback. There are series of light wells that run along the corridors, as well as the large open canteen/assembly wall space. The windows in the light wells offer a natural framework, that were ideal for bright, colourful, engaging artworks to be placed on the walls behind, and that are much needed in such a new building to bring a feeling of warmth, life, and familiarity to surroundings. They are also intended to inspire the students who picked the locations for the display from an initial series of workshops run with all of the students in the school



## How this innovation fosters creativity

- A series of workshops with the students using their ideas and inspirations as a catalyst that inspire and inform a series of finished artworks for display around the school.
- An initial series of workshops were led by the artists, where students were each given a sketchbook and drawing materials (eventually theirs to keep), and shown how an artist and illustrator explores words and concepts through drawing, colour, shape and form.
- The students were given some simple word categories in which to make sketches from, for example Emotive Words, Descriptive Words, Abstract Words, Oxymorons, etc. This is an essential part of the creative process.
- Students were then asked to explore these words visually, with structure and support offered from the artists along the way, growing their initial visuals from a rough starting point into more rounded concepts and ideas.

## Project target group

This was the whole school community and the wider community who sometimes come to visit the school for a variety of reasons.

## The impact of the project

- Artworks for the corridor light wells help to address some of the 'newness' of the building, and bring it to life with works that still allow the wall spaces to be used for school posters, notice boards etc
- The works help to create a sense of ownership of the building for the students, as the works will be recognizable and inspired by their own ideas.
- Tailored to allow participation by the entire student body, and will work with any students with special needs to maximise their quality engagement.
- The workshops are unique opportunities for the students to work with a high end artistic process; with proper instruction, equipment and materials.

## Strengthening skills and competences

Skills around the creative process, working with professionals, seeing how there can be many different concepts for the project and seeing the project through to completion.

## Costs: High

This scheme is funded by the government of Ireland, as it is high cost. However, the scheme could be replicated in schools at a much lower cost, but still following the principles of engagement and creativity in the scheme.

## References

<https://www.artscouncil.ie/Arts-in-Ireland/Local-Place-and-Public-Art/Public-Art/#:~:text=The%20Per%20Cent%20for%20Art,referred%20to%20as%20public%20art>



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# WHAT SHOULD THE WALLS LOOK LIKE?





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# EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND RELAXATION

## CHAPTER 5





# COOKING CLUB

Cooking is regarded to be a calming and relaxing activity as it makes you be present and puts you in a flow situation. By organising a Cooking Club in your school you can equip pupils with many different skills. Cooking at school can enhance social interaction and make pupils feel more confident and independent as they learn how to use cooking equipment and combine the ingredients to prepare healthy meals. It can also help them take responsibilities (organising their time, keeping the area clean and tidy, and caring about their safety in the kitchen). And above all, cooking makes them express their creativity by inventing their own recipes.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

- The design and development of the Cooking Club promotes:
- creative use of the space provided - design, planning;
- implementing modifications in unused space
- fantasy, inspiration and creativity (pupils can invent their own recipes)
- organising cooking seminars with professionals and experts.

## Project target group

**Design and creation of the Cooking Club:** pupils, teachers, parents

**Use of the Cooking Club:** all pupils

## The impact of the Cooking Club on our development

### Increased knowledge of:

- healthy nutrition and recipes
- basic cooking skills
- how to use ingredients and materials
- design

## Strengthening skills and competences

- being responsible for the upkeep, safety and cleaning of the equipment and cooking area
- working as part of a team
- expressing ideas and listening to others
- cooperation skills
- self-confidence
- sense of independence

## Costs: High

Basic cooking equipment and supplies, cooking magazines (pupils can bring stuff they don't need from home). The Cooking Club can be created in stages to reduce cost (equipment, devices and objects can be added throughout the year).

## Ways to minimise costs:

- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and create the relaxing space (e.g. parents or grandparents)
- make use of objects and equipment that the school already has and they remain unused (e.g. chairs, armchairs, shelves, small tables, board games)
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff through the whole process (design, decoration etc.)
- get sponsors - DIY stores, shops with culinary equipment- who can offer material or work
- find grant programmes
- organise a fundraising event

*“The Art of Cooking is when you mix craftsmanship at the highest level of creativity”*

Eric Ripert, Chef

## References

<https://www.tribpub.com/gdpr/orlandosentinel.com/>

<https://www.educationworld.com/blog/cooking-classroom>

<https://www.ssw.com/blog/5-ways-start-kids-cooking-club-program/>

# STUDENT NEWSPAPER/ MAGAZINE

A place at school where pupils can design and publish their own newspaper/magazine can be a very inspiring and creative extra-curricular activity. Through this process they can express and share their ideas, opinions and creativity by getting involved in photo journalling, writing news, topics and articles and sharing news from their school community. It's a very interesting activity that helps them gain interpersonal skills, learn how to work as part of a team and improve their literacy and language skills. They can also make use of real newspapers/magazines to see what the layout of a newspaper or magazine is like and get ideas of how to design and publish their own.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

- The design and development of a place where pupils can create their newspaper/magazine promotes:
- creative use of the space provided - design, planning, decoration
- fantasy and inspiration
- organising seminars with professionals (e.g. journalists, newspaper/magazine publishers)

## Project target group

**Design and creation:** pupils, teachers, parents

**Use of the place:** all pupils

## The impact of the the relaxing space on our development

### Increased knowledge of:

- the process of creating and publishing newspaper or magazine
- different styles of writing (news, articles, etc.)
- newspaper/magazine layout and
- design techniques

## Strengthening skills and competences

- carrying out specific work: design, writing
- working as part of a team
- expressing ideas and listening to others
- cooperation skills
- language skills
- communication skills
- sense of community

*Express your ideas and creativity through the school's newspaper/magazine*

## Costs: medium

The place for creating the school's newspaper/magazine can be designed and decorated by students and teachers to reduce costs. You can start with some basic furniture and equipment (small tables and desks, roundtables, chairs and armchairs, stationery) and gradually add objects.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and create the place (e.g. parents or grandparents)
- make use of objects and equipment that the school already has and they remain unused (e.g. chairs, armchairs, shelves, desks, tables)
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff through the whole process (design, decoration, painting, etc.)
- get sponsors - DIY stores, stationery shops or carpenters- who can offer material or work
- organise a fundraising event

## References

<https://www.demcointeriors.com/project/portfolio-school-calming-room/>

<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/creating-classroom-newspaper>

# DRAMA CLUB

Drama is a kind of art that can develop the overall personality of pupils and help them get together. Through this extra-curricular activity pupils can get in touch with performing arts and theatre, experiment with their feelings, express themselves, connect with each other and learn how to be present. Drama also helps students explore their talents and build emotional intelligence by putting themselves in different situations and feelings through the roles they take.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

The design and development of the Drama Club promotes:

- creative use of the space provided - design, planning, decoration
- implementing modifications in unused space
- creative use of clothing, equipment and objects (pupils can make props and create their own costumes)
- fantasy and inspiration
- organising events and theatre performances

## Project target group

**Design and creation of the Drama Club:** pupils, teachers, parents

**Use of the Drama Club:** all pupils

## The impact of the Drama Club on our development

**Increased knowledge of:**

- history of theatre
- important theatrical plays and authors
- different kinds of characters
- critical thinking

## Strengthening skills and competences

- carrying out specific work: design, decoration
- working as part of a team
- expressing thoughts, feelings and emotions
- cooperation skills
- connecting with others
- emotional intelligence
- empathy
- self-confidence

*“It was only in the theatre that I lived”*

Oscar Wilde

## Costs: low

The Drama Club can be created in stages to reduce cost (elements and objects can be added throughout the year). Pupils can also bring clothing, costumes and objects they don't need from their home.

## Ways to minimise costs:

- find experts in your immediate area who can help you design and create the Drama Club (e.g. parents or grandparents)
- make use of objects and equipment that the school already has and they remain unused (e.g. chairs, armchairs, shelves, small tables)
- involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff through the whole process (design, decoration etc.)
- get sponsors - DIY stores, clothing and costumes stores, carpenters- who can offer material or work
- organise a fundraising event

## References

<https://scienceandliteracy.org/how-to-start-a-drama-club-in-elementary-school/>  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/many-benefits-middle-school-drama-club>  
<https://pin.it/4ND5opd>

# BENCHES ON CORRIDOES AND OUTSIDE

When it comes to relaxation, it seems very basic, but having something on which to sit can help students to be more relaxed, rest and engage with their peers. This is a really important aspect of school for students.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

Whilst having benches on corridors and in outside spaces may at first sight not appear to have anything to do with fostering creativity, the reality is that if you didn't have benches for students on which to sit, then it is quite likely that this would hinder their creativity. We know that Maslow speaks of a hierarchy of needs, but this basic need for students, to help them to relax and to engage with their fellow students, is really important for them.

## Project target group

The students in the school.

## The impact of the project on our development

Having a place to sit and relax, even in a nook or cranny of a school, is going to have a positive influence on students. This allows them the opportunity to engage and chat with their friends, thus improving social skills which are so important in this digital age and when so many find it hard to come away from their screens. It allows them downtime or break-time from formal learning and this is really important for all students so that when they go back into classes they are ready to engage again. This is true of any student whether they engage socially or not with their peers, as a small few may not want to do this. Neuroscience tells us that this is important at any stage, but is especially important for adolescents. Having benches outside the school has the added benefits of the above but is also linked to getting fresh air and being aware of their environment.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Whilst it may not seem like an obvious skill, there is a skill in being able to engage with others and chat with them.
- There is the opportunity to increase social skills by having areas on the corridor in which students can sit and interact with each other.
- Where benches are placed in outside locations, there is the added advantage of students being more aware of their outside environment and things such as air-quality, birds, bushes, trees etc. depending on their location so they are developing skills around noticing, seeing, viewing

## Costs: medium

(approximately €5000 depending on types of benches, quantity etc.)

## Ways to minimise costs:

You can buy very simple benches and very often you can source second-hand benches from companies who are changing their furniture, churches getting rid of pews etc.

## References

- <https://scienceandliteracy.org/how-to-start-a-drama-club-in-elementary-school/>
- <https://www.edutopia.org/article/many-benefits-middle-school-drama-club>
- <https://pin.it/4ND5opd>



# COMMON ROOM

A common room is a room in a school where students can sit, talk, and relax. It is interesting that whilst many schools have a staff room, not all schools have a common room for students which comes near to what a staff room has to offer. Just as a staff room should facilitate a strong network of collaboration and communication amongst staff so too should a common room. It also needs to be a place of relaxation and fun for students.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

Having a dedicated space for students in which they can sit down, chat, relax and have some fun can only help them to be creative in their relationships (telling stories, jokes, having fun) as well as helping them to be able and ready for learning.

## Project target group

The students.

## The impact of the project on our development

Having a space where we can relax with our friends only helps us in being creative and in our learning. Such a space also helps us to get to meet new friends. It can also help to clear our head by engaging with our friends and engaging in social interaction.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Students learn social skills by interacting with other students
- Students learn to how to share a common space with other students
- They learn skills around being responsible for the upkeep of the area and ensuring that items such as microwaves, furnishings, décor are kept in good order and having to take responsibility if they are not.

## Costs: medium

(approximately €1000 - €2000 for sofas/benches etc.)

## Ways to minimise costs:

You can buy very basic seating and furnishing to start a common room. Things such as audio players, digital displays, toasters, coffee machines, paintings etc. can all cheaply add to the student common room.

## References

<https://www.cubecompany.co.uk/news-blog/how-to-create-the-perfect-student-common-room.html>



# FITNESS SUITE

With the increased emphasis on health and fitness for students' wellbeing, the provision of a fitness suite in a school can provide a fantastic extra-curricular activity. Not only does a fitness suite help facilitate and promote physical activity but it can also be a space in which teachers can create and adapt activities to enhance the engagement of students in their kinaesthetic learning. The equipment, activities and layout of the suite can be decided by the school's ethos, and the vision of the Physical Education department. A fitness suite helps to tackle inactivity as well as engage and encourage participation from a broad range of students/user groups who may not be traditionally involved in sport and recreation or other extra-curricular activities that require exercise.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

It is generally accepted that exercise and fitness contributes significantly to students' wellbeing and improved mental health. When this happens then it assists students in being ready to not only learn but also from a neurobiological perspective helps them to become more creative from the production of chemicals associated with exercise. When you exercise, a number of neurotransmitters are released such as endorphins, endocannabinoids, and dopamine. These promote neuroplasticity and increase oxygen supply to your brain both of which help with creativity.

## Project target group

The entire school community, but especially students and staff. The use of the fitness suite by staff can help them to increase their creativity in teaching, the same way as it does for students.

## Costs: high

(approximately €20000 upwards)

## Ways to minimise costs:

You can buy very basic pieces of equipment such as gym mats, cheap weights, skipping ropes, and some machines.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Learning how to use the various machines and pieces of equipment. There is also scope to do activities such as table-tennis, yoga, Pilates, Zumba and other exercises that do not necessarily use things like rowing machines, free-weights, bikes, treadmills etc.
- Learning about the importance of exercise and how to engage and do various exercises – the exercises involve skills and being able to do these
- Free weights help users to build balance and coordination
- Becoming competent in measuring various physical activities
- Teamwork- working together in this space which also leads to social skills by having to work with others

## The impact of the project on our development

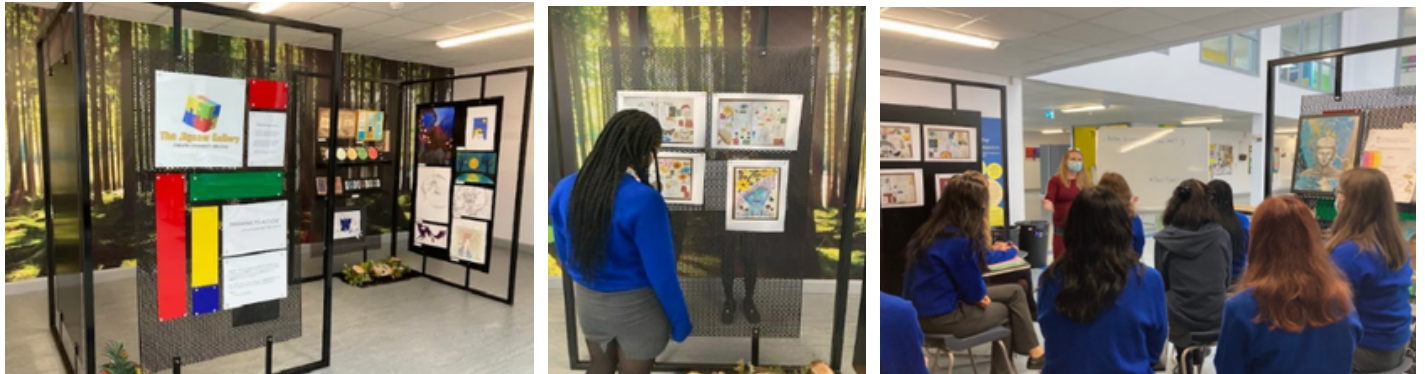
A fitness suite offers students a number of activities and learning space in one area that's both adaptable and flexible. It is an area which can be altered to the needs of the school, timetables, and students. It is a space that allows students to escape the traditional classroom and gives students room to express themselves. It also helps them to learn kinaesthetically, as this is one of the ways in which students learn.

## References

<https://www.cubecompany.co.uk/news-blog/how-to-create-the-perfect-student-common-room.html>

# THE JIGSAW GALLERY

Displaying student work in common areas fosters a sense of community, inviting students to see what is going on in other classrooms. Students feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when they see their work displayed. Displays of student work can also document the process of student accomplishment. Displaying student work can help students learn from one another through social interactions and having a common dialogue for learning. Having a dedicated area to house these visuals can also become an alternate creative classroom space that offers a more dynamic learning environment supported through the use of the visual aids and it can also be a relaxation space, where students can view their fellow students' creativity.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

The process of creating a dedicated area for student displays of learning promotes:

- Flexible and dynamic learning spaces outside the classroom
- Visibility of learning
- Curiosity among students about the learning of others
- Conversation among students about the work on display
- Interest in various subject areas among students based on the work displayed

## Project target group

The whole school community

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Enables students to view the learning of other students
- Encourages dialogue among students
- Heightens motivation around learning
- Exposes students to subjects they may not study
- Acts as a learning aid
- Provides an alternate classroom environment
- Facilitates movement and dynamic learning

## The impact of the project on our development

- The Jigsaw Gallery allows us to promote the Arts within the school to ensure the school provides equal emphasis on both academic and creative subjects for our students and encourages their interests in both avenues of learning.
- The Jigsaw Gallery creates opportunities for flexibility within our learning spaces. The space can be transformed from an area of display to an alternative classroom where students can physically engage with visual supports to assist their learning.
- The Jigsaw Gallery leans into the idea that playfulness and creativity in a learning space heightens motivation and participation levels among students.

## Costs: low

(approximately €500)

## Ways to minimise costs:

Get private and public donations and involve volunteers - teachers, pupils, parents and other school staff.

## References

[How Art Can Help You Heal: The Health & Wellbeing Benefits Of Art – The Art & Science of Flourishing \(deavictoria.com\)](https://www.deavictoria.com/)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AhLzvirZvM17vO6tJ7AMjCl0Mh23PNOU/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AhLzvirZvM17vO6tJ7AMjCl0Mh23PNOU/view?usp=share_link)

# LIBRARY

Nearly every school will have a library. This will serve as not only a place where students can get books and read so as to learn, but it can also serve as an extracurricular activity where students can gather together and discuss books that they have read, or read books together.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

Libraries by their very nature lend themselves to the imagination and to bringing students to another place through the words that are contained on the pages of the book. This lends itself to fostering creativity through the use of words, whether it be in prose, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, or through the use of drawings that are contained within books.

## Project target group

The entire school community, but especially students and staff. Studies have shown that where students see staff reading that it encourages them to read as they see the importance of reading.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Reading obviously improves literacy skills.
- It fosters creativity by the use of imagination which is necessary when we read books, especially fiction.
- Reading increases knowledge and confidence
- When students gather to discuss the books they are increasing their social skills and are becoming competent in outlining what they liked or did not like about the books they have read
- Reading is a skill for life, which lasts a lifetime and contributes to so many other aspects of learning and creativity.

## The impact of the project on our development

Having a well-stocked comfortable and welcoming library can bring so many benefits to the students and staff in the school. Giving students the opportunity to have access to a wide range of books can only but have positive effects on the students and their development – from a learning perspective but also from a social perspective as whilst we might read books on our own, our discussing them and the knowledge that we gain from them is something that brings us closer to others. It can also be intellectually stimulating.

## Costs: low

Whilst we might think that a library is expensive, it can be quite cheap to stock a library using second hand books. The furniture (shelves and seating) can be quite basic, yet comfortable.

## Ways to minimise costs:

Very often there are grants to buy books. Donations can also be a very good way to stock a library. Buying second-hand books is also a very good way to minimise costs. With most students now having smart phones there are a number of apps (some of which are free) which allow students to read books on their screen devices. This means that students can read the same book and discuss it. Many of these apps can also give metrics on how many books a student reads, the amount of words read etc. One of the best such apps is Sora: [soraapp.com/welcome](http://soraapp.com/welcome)



# SENSORY ROOM

Our day is full of sensory experiences from the moment we wake up to when we go to sleep. We all respond to sensory information within our environment differently as we touch, move, see, hear, taste and smell things around us. The environment in which learning takes place has a significant impact on the participation of children, especially those who may have additional learning needs such as being on the autism spectrum. However, such a room can be used by all students, especially those who need to reduce overwhelming feelings, or be a place where a person can obtain additional sensory input. It helps students regulate their sensory and emotional needs which are interdependent on each other.



## How this innovation fosters creativity

If students feel overwhelmed by either sensory overload, or if they are unable to regulate themselves emotionally, then they will be unable not only to learn but their capacity for engaging in learning in a creative way will also be affected. Having a room/space to which they can go so as to regulate will help the students.

## Project target group

The target group are those increasing numbers of students who need to regulate, for a variety of reasons, before they can learn in a meaningful and engaging way. Such rooms were originally established for students who are diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum, but they can be used by any student who feels the need both during school time, but also after school time, as an extracurricular space for students who may wish to use them.

## Costs: High

(approximately €8,000 - €12,000)

## Ways to minimise costs:

You can equip the room with low cost items that can be sourced through local hardware and craft shops such as throws, blankets, cushions and lights and getting items donated.



## The impact of the project on our development

Sensory rooms show that schools are looking at the individual student needs and what needs to be in place before they can learn and be creative in the school environment. This also means how they can be creative outside of the classroom in their social interactions with others and so this is why such rooms help with equipping students to engage in extracurricular activities and in relaxing in the school environment. By modifying the environment to support student's sensory needs and creating sensory spaces we can enable students to engage and access the school curriculum.

## Strengthening skills and competences

- Provide teachers and other school staff with opportunities to utilise sensory spaces within a school to meet students' needs across the continuum of support from whole school and classroom level to targeted group and individualised school support.
- The students are provided with a space in which to recognise that they need to regulate and the skills to be able to do so
- Enrich the capacity of teachers and school staff to recognise and meet the learning needs and enhance the participation of all students, especially those with sensory needs. These are both skills and competencies.
- Enhance teacher and school staff learning, knowledge, skills and ability to monitor and reflect on student's sensory needs and support students to develop self-awareness and self-management skills.

## References

<https://asiam.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SENSORY-CHECKLIST-1.pdf>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/sensory-room-ideas/>



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# WHAT IS CREATIVITY?



Creating  
Spaces  
for Creativity  
Erasmus+