

National Centre for Technology in Education
Ionad Náisiúnta don Teicneolaíocht san Oideachas

WEB 2.0 FOR LEARNING

MODULE 2

INTRODUCTION TO BLOGGING

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WEB 2.0 FOR LEARNING – MODULE 2

This module is one of a series of modules of the NCTE's course Web 2.0 for Learning, covering Web 2.0 technologies and their application in education.

These modules are aimed at primary and post primary teachers who are interested in integrating Web 2.0 technologies into learning and teaching.

All links referenced in these courses can be found at: www.ncte.ie/web2learning/

All links referenced in this module can be found at: <http://www.ncte.ie/web2learning/module2>

There are three modules in total:

1. INTRODUCTION TO WEB 2.0 TOOLS

This is the first of the 3 modules of Web 2.0 for Learning, and provides an introduction to web 2.0 tools and their uses in education. It also gives an overview of Wiki's, RSS feeds and aggregators as well as social bookmarking and provides the basic skills required to use these tools in an educational context, along with internet safety and copyright considerations.

2. INTRODUCTION TO BLOGGING

Module 2, Introduction to Blogging, provides an overview of blogging in education, including curricular uses and examples of Irish schools' blogs. It also provides the skills required to create a blog (using Scoilnet Blogs), to post to a blog and to add digital content in other formats (images, video, etc) to your blog.

3. INTRODUCTION TO PODCASTING

Module 3, Introduction to Podcasting, provides an overview of podcasting in an educational context which includes possible curricular uses and examples of podcasts created by Irish schools. This module also provides participants with the skills required to create a podcast and to upload their podcast to their school's blog (using Scoilnet Blogs).

It is highly recommended that these modules are completed in the order above where possible, as terminology and skills are covered in module 1 which may be required for modules 2 and 3.

This module is Module 2: Introduction to Blogging and focuses on the creation and use of blogs, using the Scoilnet Blogging service for schools.

INTRODUCTION TO BLOGGING

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Please note

- Screenshots used in this manual may appear different to those on computer screens used by participants; variations in versions of the software and differing operating systems may be in use.
- The World Wide Web is constantly evolving and content and URLs (Universal Resource Locators – website addresses) change over time. It is possible that the content located at some of the URLs listed throughout this manual may change over time.
- Screenshots and software titles used throughout the manual are from a PC using Microsoft Windows XP®.
- Participants using other operating systems may encounter some differences in screen presentation and layout.

Throughout this module reference may be made to software titles and suppliers of Internet services. These references are made purely to illustrate or expound course content. Any such reference does not imply any endorsement by the NCTE of a product or company. The reader should be aware that typically there are many products and companies providing similar services in areas related to ICT. Participants should be as informed as possible before making decisions on purchases of ICT products or services.

INTRODUCTION TO BLOGGING

DURATION:
2.5 HOURS

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

This module aims to enable the participant to:

- Understand the concept of a blog
- Learn how to create and use a Scoilnet Blog
- Understand plugins and widgets
- Learn how to add content, such as text, images, video, podcasts and multimedia

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INTRODUCTION TO BLOGGING

WHAT IS A BLOG?

A blog (short for weblog) is a personal online journal that is frequently updated and intended for general public viewing. Typically, a blog contains a combination of text, graphics and links to relevant websites and other blogs of similar interest. The ability for readers to leave comments on individual posts is also an important feature of most blogs.

A blog may also contain widgets and plugins to enhance its functionality. A widget is a small web application, containing dynamic (changing) content, which can be added to any blog. They provide a simple way to arrange the various elements of the sidebar content without changing any code. They include items such as the blogroll which is a list of links to other blogs. Other popular widgets are online polls and calendars. Plugins are also small web applications that are usually installed with your blogging software to provide extra features that are not already available. Plugins support the use of multimedia items such as audio for podcasting and video or adding Google maps to the site. Using widgets and plugins in your blog will be covered later in the module.

Some blogs may have a specific focus such as:

- photoblogs (photographs)
- podcasting blogs (audio)
- vlogs (videos)

Blogs that focus on specific areas of interest are categorized accordingly. For example blogs written by people with an interest in education are called Edublogs.

LINKS

Examples

<i>Edublog:</i>	<i>Ewan McIntosh – http://edu.blogs.com/</i>
<i>Photoblog:</i>	<i>Spain Park Photography Blog – http://sphsdigital2.blogspot.com/</i>
<i>Podcasting Blog:</i>	<i>The Podcasting Principal – http://principalmiller.podomatic.com/</i>
<i>Podcasting/Video Blog:</i>	<i>EdTechTalk – http://edtechtalk.com/</i>
<i>Video Blog:</i>	<i>TILT – http://tiltv.blogspot.com/</i>
<i>Irish Edublogs:</i>	<i>Scoilnet List – http://www.scoilnet.ie/hp_schoolsthatblog.shtm</i>
<i>Edublogger Directory – http://www.edubloggerdir.blogspot.com/search/label/ireland</i>	

INTERNET SAFETY — ADVICE FOR SCHOOLS

Before commencing working with Web 2.0 tools in an educational context, it is important to consider Internet Safety:

What can schools do to promote safe use of the Internet?

- Implement and update an Internet Safety **Acceptable Use Policy**.
- **Educate** students on how to be safe online and when using ICT.
- Be part of a **filtering/monitoring** system.

The school should combine all three of the above strategies rather than over reliance on one in order to empower learners online.

How can a school protect learners online?

The **Schools Broadband Programme (SBP)** provides first and second level schools in the Republic of Ireland with filtered and monitored broadband Internet access. The **NCTE Service Desk** provides a single point of contact for schools in relation to all aspects of the **Schools Broadband Network (SBN)**. However, protecting learners by filtering alone will not educate young people on how to keep themselves safe and use technology responsibly whenever and wherever they are online. Schools should create and implement an Internet Safety Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and a whole school education programme on the safe and ethical use of ICT.

Why does our school need an Internet Safety AUP?

As part of its duty of care the school has a remit to protect and ensure the safety of all the children and young people in its care. As the integration of ICT into the curriculum and across the school enables learners to collaborate, communicate and connect with others over the school's own network and the Internet it is necessary to protect and safeguard them. Creating an AUP will enable the school to detail the ways in which staff, students and all users of the school's ICT can and can not use the ICT facilities. The AUP should link to the whole school plan and other school policies such as the Behaviour Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Homework Policy. Resources for Schools and AUP templates are available at **Webwise.ie**

How can the school empower all users to keep themselves safe when using technology?

Encouraging staff and students to keep themselves safe online and when using the school's ICT is the first step. Staff should promote the responsible use of technology and teach students how to protect themselves and others when using ICT. Students need to understand how to be responsible in regard to content and in contact with others. The NCCA's ICT Framework provides a guide to teachers for embedding ICT in the curriculum.

One of the objectives of the ICT Framework is to enable teachers to support students in habits which reflect ethical and responsible use of ICT. A whole school educational programme should be put in place to give students the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be safe and effective Internet users for life.

Webwise educational programmes for use in primary and post primary classrooms are available in the Learning Resources Area. **Chatwise** and **Surfwise** are online lessons featuring the engaging characters Niamh and Fionn accompanied by paper-based classroom exercises to evoke discussion and consolidate learning for junior primary school pupils. The **Be WEBWISE!** set of lessons are designed to be part of the 5th and 6th class SPHE programme to help children keep themselves safe. The post primary lessons **//Be SAFE Be WEBWISE://** are a set of personal safety lessons and resources for Junior Cert. classrooms to help teenagers become safe and responsible social networking and Internet users. Each of the lessons may be downloaded from Webwise.ie. Further information available for download from the publication *Webwise Information and Advice for Schools*.



The NCTE's course in Internet Safety: **//Integrating internet Safety into Teaching + Learning://** and a 2.5 hour practical workshop — **Bebo what's going on!** is also available for teachers who wish to get to grips with social networking. Booking details available at www.ncte.ie/icttraining.

BLOGGING IN EDUCATION

WHY ARE BLOGS USED IN EDUCATION?

In education, blogs are used for communication:

- between teachers for professional development
- between teachers and students for provision of course content
- between teachers and students in the creating of e-Portfolios
- between schools and students/parents for communication of current events, online newsletters
- between students for collaboration and project work
- between students for displaying club/society information and news

Blogs enable students to:

- become involved in the publishing process and 'write to the web' as well as 'read the web'
- reach a wider audience (beyond their classroom)
- develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their work
- collaborate through receiving and providing feedback

Five reasons why schools should consider blogging:

1. They encourage higher order skills such as reflection and analysis but also encourage reading, writing and collaboration
2. Publishing commentary and entries can lead to peer learning, peer assessment and a sense of ownership, all of which are highly motivational
3. The technology involved is easy to use.
4. They easily support video, audio and other media and file types therefore creating a very dynamic learning experience and supporting various learning styles
5. Learning is extended to outside the school environment

ACTIVITY

See Who's blogging

Log on to <http://www.ncte.ie/web2learning/module2/> and take 5 – 10 minutes looking at some of the blogs referenced there and on the Scoilnet **“Blogs: Irish schools are blogging”** webpage. Consider and discuss how you think you could use blogs in your own teaching.

Through the link here you will discover sections that deal with different blogs which are also linked to on this Scoilnet webpage (http://www.scoilnet.ie/hp_schoolsthatblog.shtm)

The Who's blogging section?

Teachers', Primary and Post-Primary Schools' Blogs:

The following is a snapshot of teachers and schools both primary and post primary who are currently blogging. It offers a broad view of how blogs can and are being used in education currently. At the primary school level, they highlight the power of blogs to meet teachers' needs as an information source and learning tool. Blogs are created for classes, projects or schools. In Post Primary schools, blogs are being created on a subject, project, class and schools basis.

The Who else is blogging section?

A selection of other educational blogs (Edublogs) from a variety of sources in Ireland and outside of Ireland.

ACTIVITY

Add your blog to the Scoilnet Listings

If you know of any other interesting school or education blog let us know by send a short description of the blog, including the link, to smcdonald@ncte.ie

Alternatively, if you are a new or seasoned blogger why not answer Scoilnet's call to all teachers that blog to share their experiences.

<http://blogs.scoilnet.ie/archive/2008/10/24/22.aspx>

NCTE's advice sheet on Blogs.

<http://www.ncte.ie/documents/advice sheets/35BlogsNov08.pdf>

FINDING EDUBLOGS

There are several specialised search sites and social networks available, which can be used to find edublogs of interest. The blogroll, included on many blogs, should also be used to find further relevant blogs. The following list of search sites is not exhaustive but includes some useful starting points. NB: Some of the sites listed in this course may be blocked in Option B in the Schools Broadband Network (SBN). . For more information on the SBN filtering system please visit: <http://www.ncte.ie/Broadband/Filtering/>

Links to blogs specifically for education as well as more general blogs can be found at:

<http://www.ncte.ie/web2learning/module2/>

ACTIVITY

Searching for edublogs

Using any of the dedicated search sites listed:

Search for examples of edublogs that relate to your subject area and education sector. For example: physics at second level, etc.

Search for examples of edublogs that match any general educational topic of interest to you. For example: discipline, special needs education, etc.

SOFTWARE FOR BLOGGING

There are several sites that teachers can use to create an online blog. It should be noted that these sites may also be used to create standard conventional websites. All of these sites support the addition of plugins and widgets, which can provide extra functionality to the blog. The sites listed below are a sample of what is available and it should be noted that some of these sites may not be available within the School's Broadband Network (SBN). When choosing a blogging platform it is important to remember that you may want to access it from within the SBN filtering system.

- Wordpress – <http://wordpress.com/> (available through Scoilnet Blogs)
- 21Classes – <http://www.21classes.com/>
- Blogger – <http://blogger.com>
- Class Blogmeister – <http://classblogmeister.com/>
- Edublogs – <http://edublogs.org/>
- LiveJournal– <http://www.livejournal.com/>

All these sites can be accessed and edited using a web browser.

USING SCOILNET BLOGS

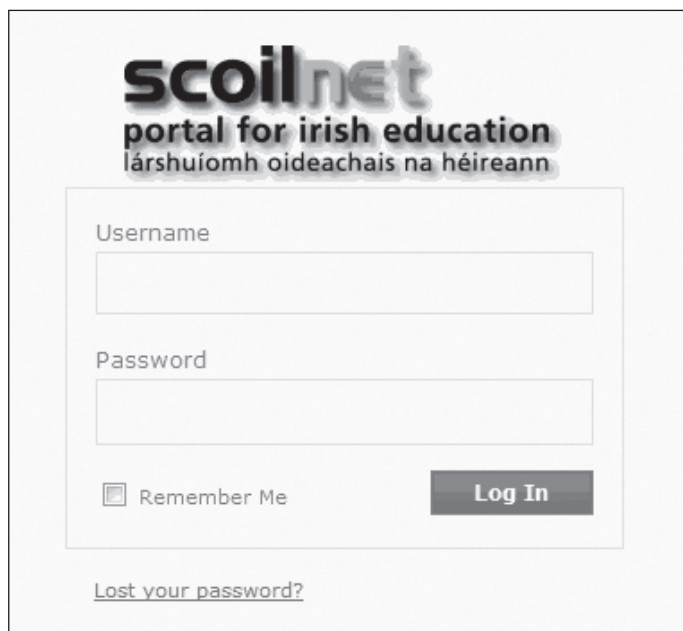
As some blogs are not accessible through the SBN Scoilnet offers a solution now which can be accessed by schools on the SBN. See also Scoilnet's Webhosting/Blogging information – http://www.scoilnet.ie/YourQuestions_WebhostingBlogging.shtm or contact the NCTE Service Desk @ 1800 33 44 66. All information regarding Scoilnet Blogs can also be accessed at the Scoilnet support wiki: <http://support.scoilnet.ie/wiki/Blogs>

LOGGING INTO YOUR BLOG

1. You can access the login page by entering the following address:

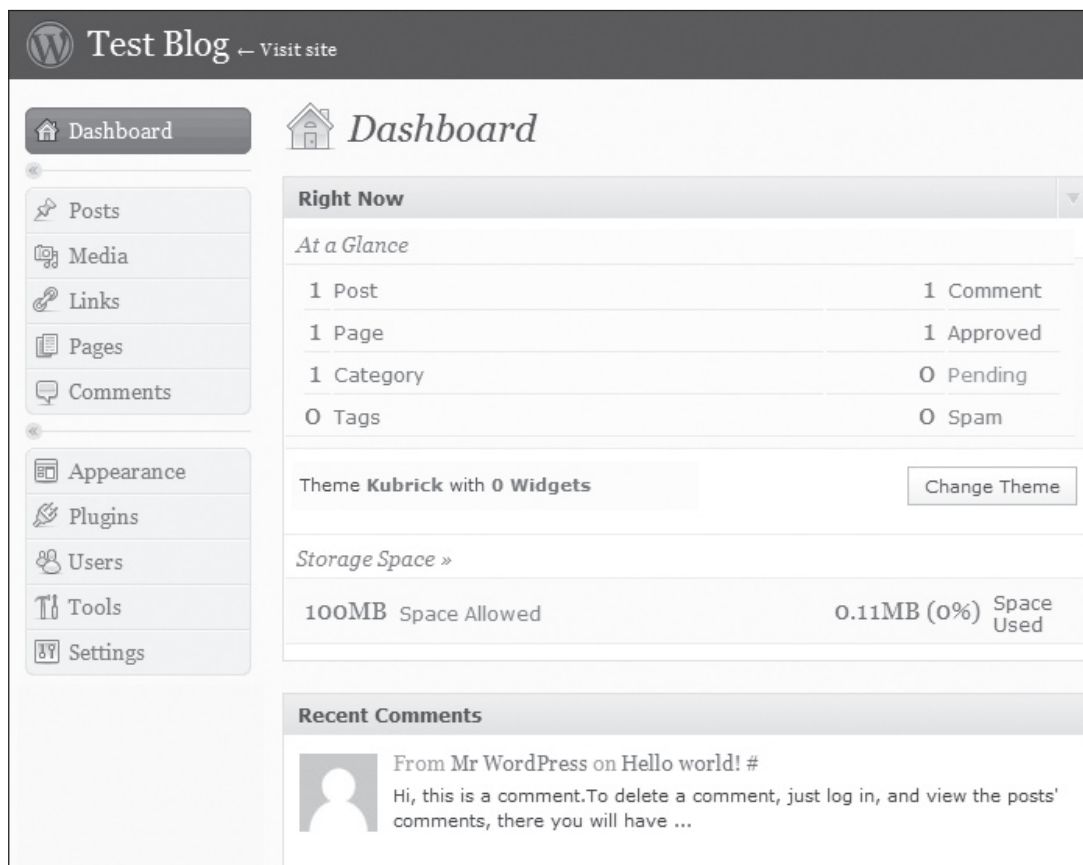
<http://schoolblog.cpd.scoilnet.ie/blog/wp-login>

Replace ***schoolblog*** with your Temporary Scoilnet Blog Account name, given to you by the course tutor and then enter your username and password.



The image shows the login page for Scoilnet. At the top, the text reads "scoilnet portal for irish education" with the Irish phrase "lárshuíomh oideachais na héireann" below it. The login form consists of two input fields: "Username" and "Password". Below the "Password" field is a checkbox labeled "Remember Me" and a "Log In" button. At the bottom of the form, there is a link that says "Lost your password?".

2. On successful login you will be presented with the blog **Dashboard**.



The image shows the WordPress Dashboard for a site named "Test Blog". The top navigation bar includes the WordPress logo and a link to "Visit site". The left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: Dashboard (selected), Posts, Media, Links, Pages, Comments, Appearance, Plugins, Users, Tools, and Settings. The main content area is titled "Dashboard" and features several widgets:

- Right Now**: A summary of site statistics.

At a Glance	
1 Post	1 Comment
1 Page	1 Approved
1 Category	0 Pending
0 Tags	0 Spam
- Theme**: Kubrick with 0 Widgets. A "Change Theme" button is available.
- Storage Space**: A progress bar showing 100MB Space Allowed and 0.11MB (0%) Space Used.
- Recent Comments**: A list of recent comments. The first comment is from "Mr WordPress" on the post "Hello world! #". The text of the comment is: "Hi, this is a comment. To delete a comment, just log in, and view the posts' comments, there you will have ...".

USING THE DASHBOARD

The dashboard is the working area of your blog and provides links to all the features that you can use. The dashboard is used to determine exactly what your blog contains and how it will appear to viewers.

Select **Visit Site** at any time to see what your blog looks like. The blog's overall appearance will depend on the theme that you choose.

1. Posts Menu

Here you can add new posts, edit existing ones and manage your tags and categories. Tags are keywords used to identify posts. Posts with the same tags are all linked together and will all be accessed when the tag is selected by a user. Categories refer to general topics under which posts may be classified. Usually a blog would have 7-10 categories. All posts with the same category are linked together.

2. Media Menu

From the media menu you can view and manage all your uploaded media including video content added with wordTube widget. You can also add new media here.

3. Links Menu

A link is a static hyperlink to another website, which is placed on the side of your blog. From this menu, you can add new links, edit existing ones and categorise them.

4. Pages Menu

Pages are used for static content that rarely needs to be changed. A typical example would be the 'About Page' that gives some information about the author of the blog. Here you can add new pages and edit existing ones.

5. Comments Menu

Here you can manage all the incoming comments to your blog including approving, not allowing and deleting.

6. Appearance Menu

Here you can change your blog theme, which determines exactly how the blog will appear to visitors, including your blog image header. You can also add widgets and enabled plugins using this menu.

7. Plugins Menu

Plugins extend and expand the functionality of your blog. Here you can activate and deactivate any of the plugins that have been supplied by Scoilnet.

8. Users Menu

Here you can change your profile and add new users to the blog. This includes setting the user's role ranging from subscriber to administrator.

9. Tools Menu

Use this menu to import posts or comments from another blog. You can also export your own blog as an XML file, which contains your posts, pages, comments, custom fields, categories, and tags.

10. Settings Menu

Your school's Scoilnet Blog administrator will use this menu to manage some of the most basic configuration settings for your blog. They include:

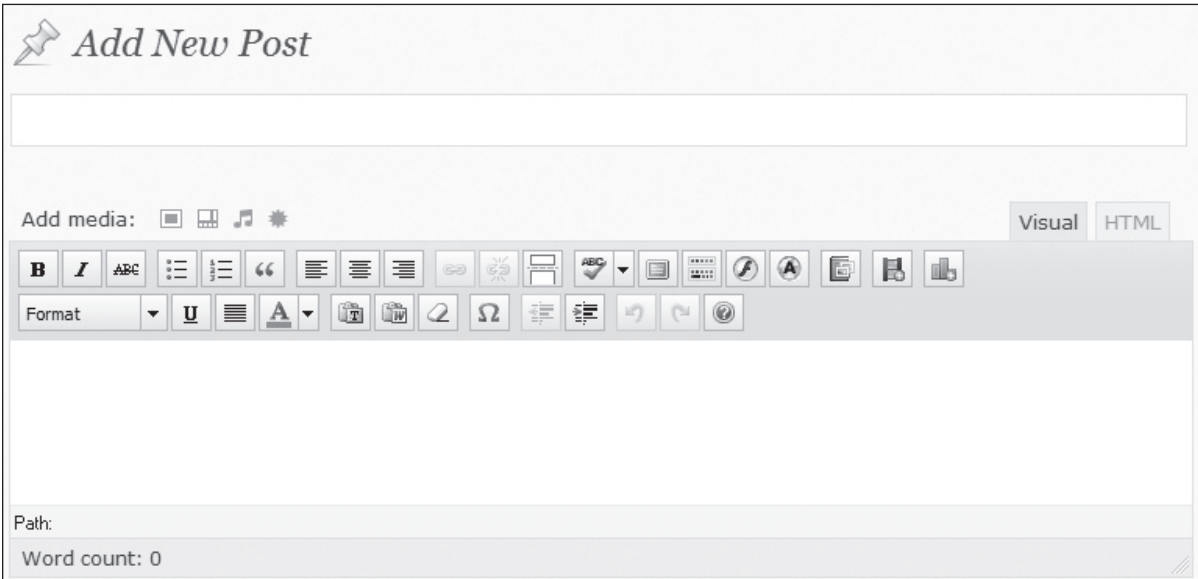
- **General** – controls the most basic configuration settings for your blog: blog title and tagline (brief description), time zone, and how dates and times are calculated and displayed.
- **Writing** – controls the size of the post editing page, how formatting is applied, default settings for the post and link categories, and the option to include remote publishing (post to your blog from a remote client).
- **Reading** – controls whether posts or a 'static' page is displayed as your blog's main page, how many posts are displayed on that main page, how many posts are how much information is included in your RSS feed, and the character encoding for your choice of languages (use the default).
- **Discussion** – controls the options concerning comments (also called discussion). This includes the default comment settings, additional settings, e-mail notification options and pre-approval options. Comment moderation may also be set and a comment blacklist created. Options regarding the display of avatars are also set here. NB: An avatar is an image that follows you from blog to blog appearing beside your name when you comment on avatar enabled sites.
- **Media** – controls the various size settings related to images that are used in writing posts and pages.
- **Privacy** – controls your blog's visibility to search engines, such as Google and Technorati. You can also choose to block the search engines but allow normal visitors to see your site.
- **Permalinks** – controls the URL structure for your permalinks allowing you to choose from different settings or create your own custom setting. This can improve the aesthetics, usability, and forward-compatibility of your links. A permalink is the URL address for each individual blog post.

NB: Further menu options will appear as your Scoilnet Blogs administrator enables extra plugins for your blog.





WRITING AND PUBLISHING YOUR FIRST POST

1. Select **Add New** from the **Posts** Menu.
2. Enter your post **Title**, "Welcome", in the first blank line.
3. Enter your **Post** text in the section underneath the formatting toolbar. You can copy and paste this from the demonstration blog (<http://tutors.scoilnet.ie/blog/>) or use the text below:












































As a key initiative of the NCTE, Scoilnet is responsible for the promotion and use of the Internet in education under the Government's ICT in Schools Programme. Scoilnet is the Department of Education and Science's official portal for Irish education. Currently, it contains a database of over 11,000 digital resources including themepages, reviewed websites, quizzes, lesson plans, crosswords and other multimedia. It acts as a support to teachers, students, parents and school managers at both primary and post primary levels. Resources, which are constantly being reviewed, developed and updated by a team of over 30 curriculum experts, are accessed primarily via the "Resource Finder".



Add New Post

Add media:    

Visual HTML

Format                                           

Path:

Word count: 0

4. Enter relevant tags (separated by commas) in the **Tags** section and select **Add**. The tags we will use for this first post are, "NCTE, Scoilnet, Resource Finder". Select the **X** beside a tag to delete it.

NB: Tags are keywords that can be associated with and help to identify posts. Posts with the same tags will all be accessed when the tag that they have in common is selected by a user.

5. Select relevant categories in the **Categories** section. Add new ones if necessary. For this course add in a new category called "NCTE".

NB: Categories refer to general topics or headings under which posts may be classified. Usually a blog would have 7–10 categories. All posts with the same category heading are linked together.

6. Select **Save Draft** in the **Publish** section.
7. Select **Preview** in the **Publish** section.
8. Select **Publish**.

NB: You may publish your post at a later date by selecting **Edit** (beside **Publish immediately**) and selecting the required date. Then select **Publish**.


Publish

Save Draft

Preview

Status: **Draft** [Edit](#)

Visibility: **Public** [Edit](#)

 **Publish immediately** [Edit](#)



Publish

Tags

Add

Separate tags with commas

Tags used on this post:

 blogging  education

[Choose from the most popular tags](#)

Categories

All Categories

Most Used

☐ Events
 ☐ test
 ☐ Uncategorized

[+ Add New Category](#)

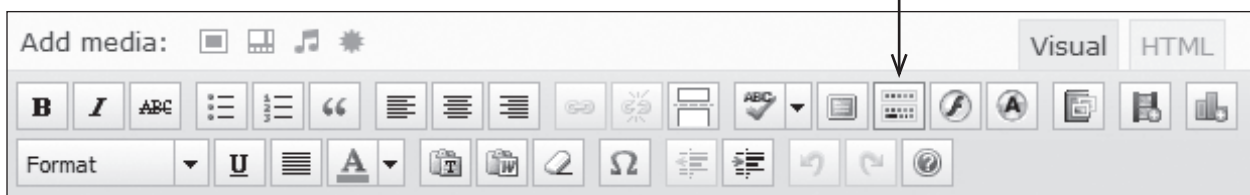
USING THE FORMATTING TOOLBAR

A formatting toolbar appears at the top of the **Post** box where you enter your text.

NB: standard formatting includes: bold, italics, bullets, quotes, alignment, adding a link, image insertion and spellchecking.

A full description of all the formatting toolbar buttons can be accessed at the Scoilnet support wiki: http://support.scoilnet.ie/wiki/What_Do_The_Buttons_Mean

Use the Kitchen Sink button to show/hide the lower row of formatting buttons.



EDITING A POST

1. Select **Edit** from the **Posts** Menu.
2. Select the Post that you want to edit.
3. Make the changes and then select **Update Post**.

NB: Select **Edit** again to leave the post unchanged.

Edit Posts

All (7) | Published (7)

Bulk Actions ▼
 Apply
 Show all dates ▼
 View all categories ▼
 Filter

<input type="checkbox"/> Post	Author
<input type="checkbox"/> Google Calendar Edit Quick Edit Delete View	schoolblogpd
<input type="checkbox"/> Anarchy Yeah!	schoolblogpd
<input type="checkbox"/> Gallery Test	schoolblogpd
<input type="checkbox"/> Poll Plugin	schoolblogpd

The screenshot shows the 'Quick Edit' interface for a post. At the top, there are tabs for 'Post', 'Author', and 'Categories'. The 'Post' tab is active. Below the tabs, the 'QUICK EDIT' section contains the following fields:

- Title:** Google Calendar
- Slug:** google-calendar
- Date:** Mar 11, 2009 @ 10 : 45
- Password:** (empty) -OR- ☐ Private post

On the right side, there are two sections:

- Categories [more]:** A list of categories with checkboxes: Events, test, and Uncategorized (checked).
- Tags:** (empty)

At the bottom right, there is a checkbox for 'Allow Comments' (checked) and a 'Status' dropdown menu set to 'Published'. At the bottom left, there is a 'Cancel' button, and at the bottom right, there is an 'Update Post' button.

NB: The **Quick Edit** allows you to change the Title, Date Published, Tags and Categories of the post without changing the actual content.

NB: To **Delete** a post, hover over the post's title and then select **Delete** from the submenu which appears. (To delete several posts, select the posts' checkboxes and then select **Delete** from the **Bulk Actions** Menu).

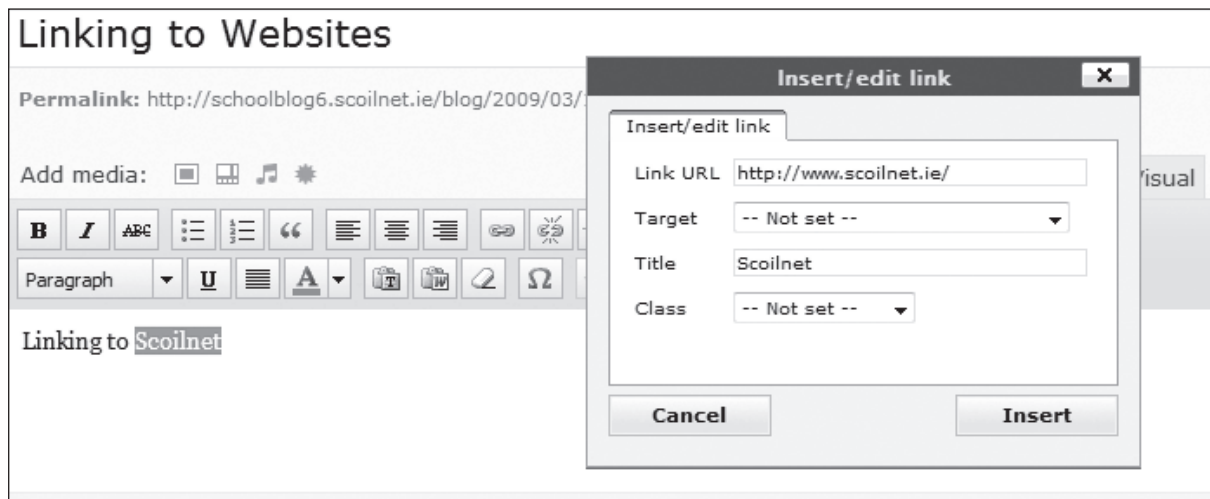
LINKING TEXT TO A WEBPAGE

1. Select the word **"NCTE"**.
2. Select the **Link** icon (the chain icon on the toolbar).
3. Enter or paste the required **Link URL** address, which is <http://www.ncte.ie>
4. Select the **Target** (open the link in the same window or a new window).
5. Enter the **Title** for the link. This will appear as the alternate text when the mouse pointer hovers over it.
6. Select the **Class** (leave as 'not set').

NB: This only needs to be set when using an image as the link. The class determines the alignment of the image in relation to the text on the page. (Left, centred, right). The wp-caption can be used for images that include a caption.

7. Select **Insert**.

Repeat these steps for the second instance of the word **"Scoilnet"**, using the link URL address, <http://www.scoilnet.ie>



ADDING CONTENT TO A POST

Please note that before adding any content to your blog, that is not your own, you must pay particular attention to any copyright restrictions that may apply to the content. Look out for Creative Commons Licences (cc) notes or links, which generally allow for the content to be reused, under certain conditions which are consistent with the license. These links are sometimes found at the bottom of the page and are associated with legal or terms of use notices.

NB: All the photos in **ImageBank** are freely available for non-commercial use under a Creative Commons Licence. ImageBank has been developed by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) and Scoilnet, the portal for Irish education – <http://www.imagebank.ie>

Here are the terms of use for ImageBank – <http://www.imagebank.ie/moreinfo.aspx?id=terms>

LINKS

Further Reading

Copyright Basics – <http://www.benedict.com/Info/Info.aspx>

Creative Commons FAQ – http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Frequently_Asked_Questions

Creative Commons Licences – <http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/meet-the-licenses>

ImageBank Creative Commons – <http://www.imagebank.ie/moreinfo.aspx?id=creativecommons>

USING IMAGEBANK FROM SCOILNET

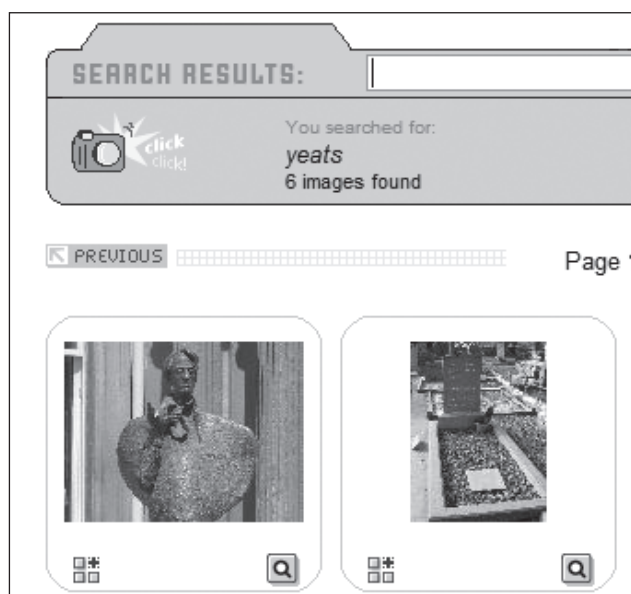
ImageBank is a photo library web site where people can search for and share photographs for educational use. ImageBank focuses on providing photos of Irish places and spaces but other subjects are also included, such as animals, sport and flowers.



ImageBank is intended as a supportive resource for students and teachers in Irish education. More importantly, it is a growing resource and you are encouraged to share any relevant photos you may have in it. Creative Commons licensing is used to allow you share your photos and specify how others may use them.

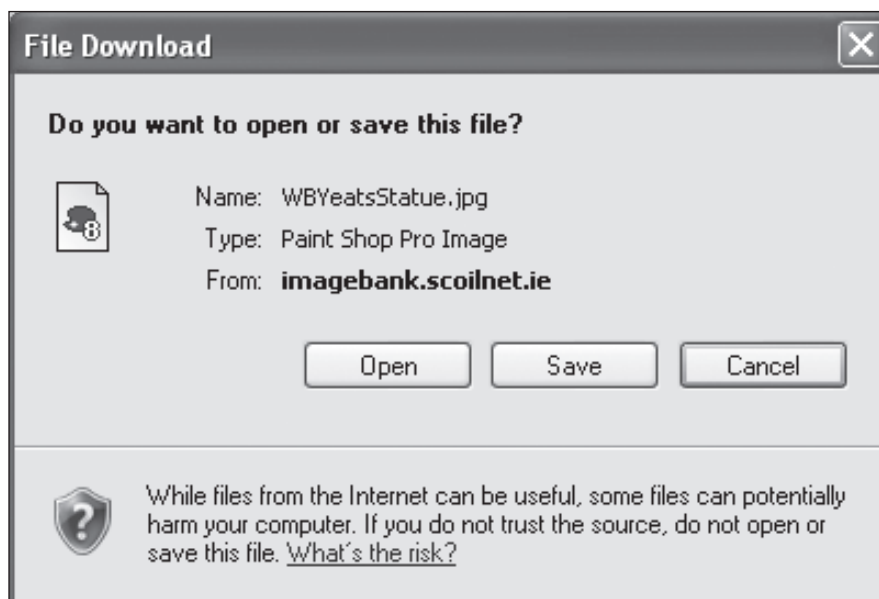
HOW TO SEARCH FOR IMAGES

- **Open Internet Explorer** and type in the address: <http://www.imagebank.ie>
- In the box under **"Find Photo of.."** enter the name 'Yeats' and **click "Search!"**
- When the image results appear, **select** the first photo.
- **Click** on the magnifier icon under the picture for photo details.





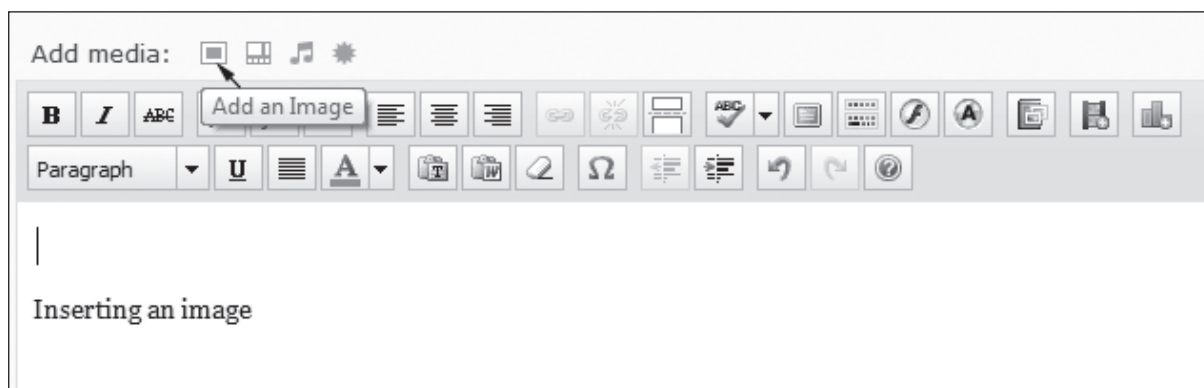
- Click on **Save Image**.
- When the File Download dialogue box appears, **click 'Save'**.
- Choose the folder where you want to save the image and **press 'OK'**.



NOTE: The photos in ImageBank are made available under Creative Commons licences. Just click on the CC button under a photo to see how you can use it. Creative Commons is a non-profit organisation that has written flexible copyright licences for people who want to share their creative works with others. These licences are used for the photos in ImageBank as they facilitate and promote the sharing of images for use in education.

INSERTING AN IMAGE

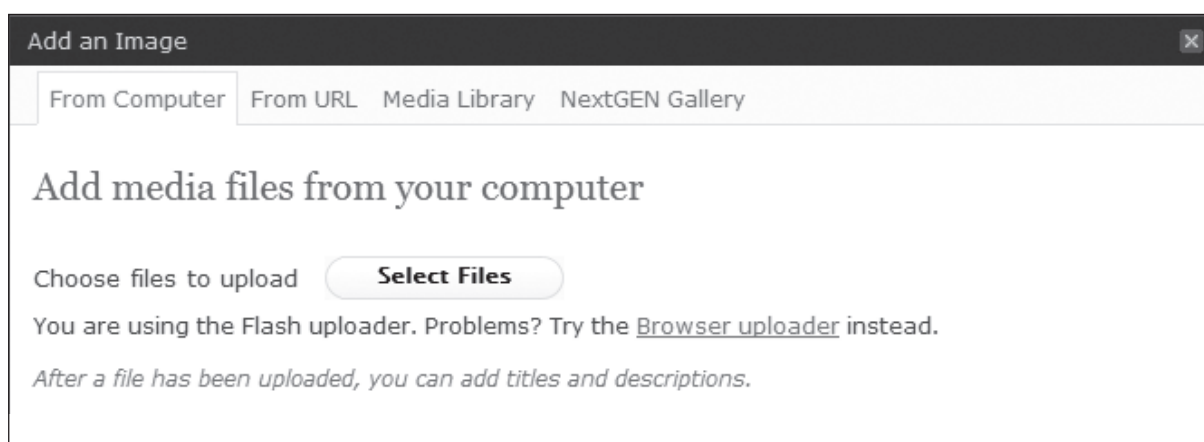
1. Place the cursor below the text you added to your original post where you will now insert the image.
2. Select the **Add an Image** button (beside **Add media**).



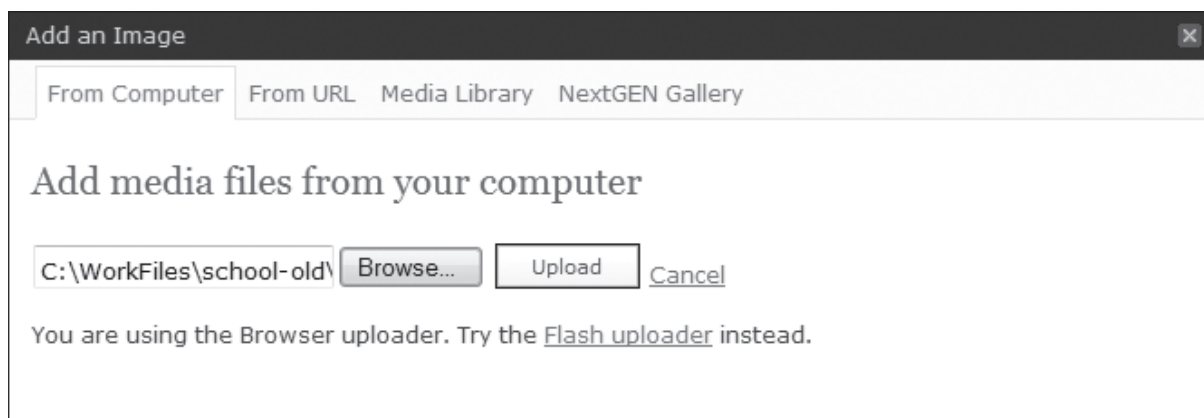
Option A

From Computer

3. Select **From Computer** and then select **Browser uploader**.



4. Select **Browse** and navigate to the required file on your computer and select Upload.




5. Enter a **Title** (this is the only required field). For this course the title to enter is “*WBYeatsStatue*”.
6. Enter a **Caption**. To increase the accessibility of your website, it would be best practise to add a caption with every image.
7. Enter a **Description**.
8. Select the type of **Link** required.
9. Select the **Alignment**.
10. Select the **Size**. This is a large image, so for this course choose “*Thumbnail*” to set it at a small size below your text,
11. Select **Insert into Post**.

Add an Image
✕

You are using the Flash uploader. Problems? Try the [browser uploader](#) instead.

After a file has been uploaded, you can add titles and descriptions.



WBYeatsStatue1.jpg
image/jpeg
2009-09-10 14:24:05

Title
* WBYeatsStatue

Caption

Also used as alternate text for the image

Description

Link URL

http://tutors.scoilnet.ie/blog/2009/08/14/welcome/wbyeatsstatue-3/

None File URL Post URL

Enter a link URL or click above for presets.

Alignment

☒ None
☐ Left
☐ Center
☐ Right

Size

☒ Thumbnail (150 × 150)
☐ Medium (300 × 225)
☐ Large
☐ Full size (1024 × 768)

Insert into Post Delete

Save all changes

Option B

From URL

If the image is already online then copy the URL of the image.

3. Select **From URL**.
4. Paste the URL into **Image URL**.
5. Enter an **Image Title**.
6. Enter a **Caption**. To increase the accessibility of your website, it would be best practise to add a caption with every image.
7. Select the required **Alignment** (position of the image in relation to surrounding text).
8. Enter a **Link Image To** URL (if required).
9. Select **Insert into Post**.

Add an Image

From Computer
From URL
Gallery (3)
Media Library
NextGEN Gallery

Add media file from URL

Image URL *

Image Title *

Image Caption

Also used as alternate text for the image

Alignment

☒ None
☐ Left
☐ Center
☐ Right

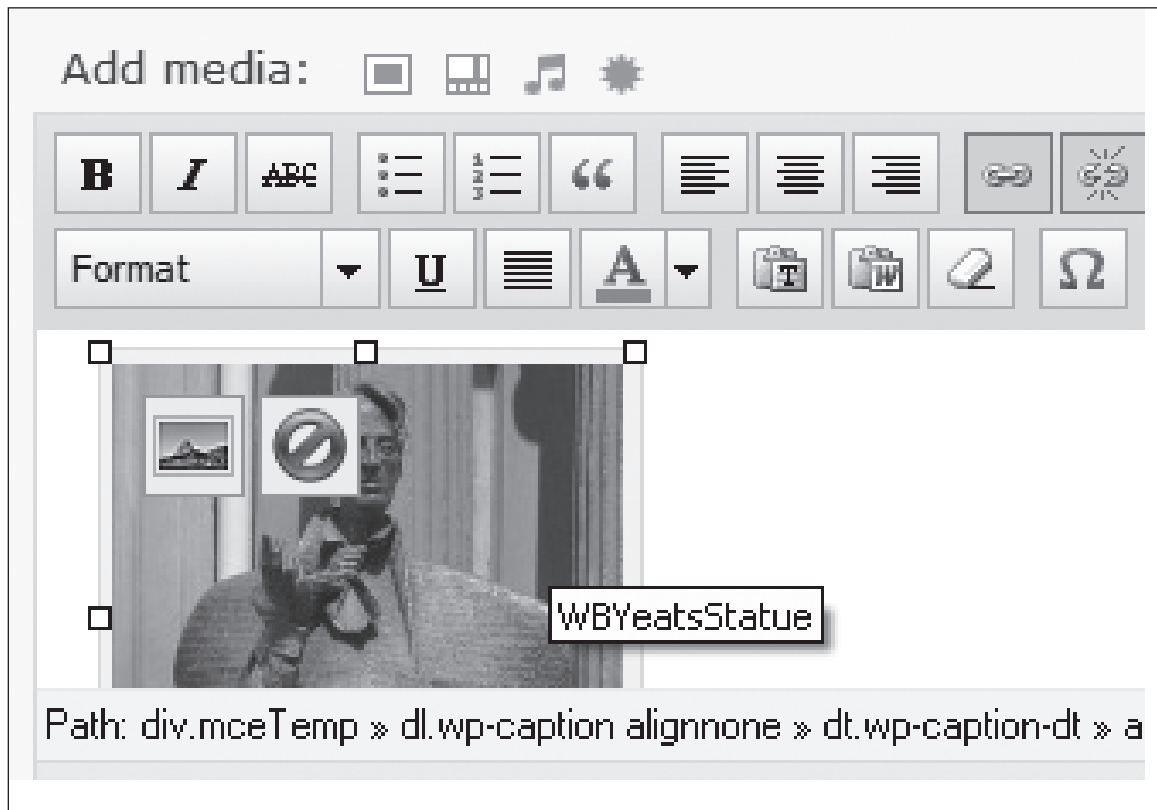
Link Image To:

None
Link to image

Enter a link URL or click above for presets.

Insert into Post

NB: You may make changes to your image formatting after it has been inserted. Select the image and then select the **Edit image** icon which appears with the picture. Change any required features including those in the **Advanced Settings**. Select **Update** when you are finished.



INSERTING OTHER MULTIMEDIA

You can also insert audio, video and some document files into your post. A link to the media file will be displayed in your post.


Follow the same steps as for 'Inserting an Image'. Select the relevant **Add Media** icon to start the process.

ACTIVATING PLUGINS

In order to embed audio and video into your blog the Scoilnet Blog Administrator in your school must first activate the **wordTube** plugin. There is a separate course available for teachers wishing to administer their school's Scoilnet Blog called, **NCTE – Creating your School's Website or Blog using Scoilnet Blogs**.

There are other plugins available (see the Plugins Explained section below), which can be activated by the Scoilnet Blog Administrator in your school

1. Select **Installed** from the Plugins Menu.
2. Select **Activate** under **Action** for the **wordTube** plugin.
3. Select **Activate** for any other plugins that you may wish to add. These plugins are moved from the **Inactive Plugins** to the **Currently Active Plugins**.



Manage Plugins

Help ▾

Plugins extend and expand the functionality of WordPress. Once a plugin is installed,

Currently Active Plugins

Bulk Actions ▾
Apply

Plugin	Version	Description	Action
<input type="checkbox"/> Event Calendar	3.2.beta2	Manage future events as an online calendar. Display up as a list in the sidebar. You can subscribe to the calend Event Calendar Options screen. By Alex Tingle.	Deactivate Edit
<input type="checkbox"/> Google Maps Quicktag - MU	1.0.1 MU	Google Maps Quicktag makes it convenient to open the generate your map and copy the needed code to paste sites with open registration are not recommended. Use	Deactivate Edit

Inactive Plugins

Bulk Actions ▾
Apply

Plugin	Version	Description	Action
<input type="checkbox"/> List-All-Blogs Widget	0.0.1	Creates a list of all blogs on a WPMU site as a widget, conversio http://www.erik-rasmussen.com/blog/2006/11/30/widgetize-any	Activate
<input type="checkbox"/> List-All-Posts Widget	0.0.1	Creates a list of all posts on a WPMU site as a widget, conversio http://www.erik-rasmussen.com/blog/2006/11/30/widgetize-any	Activate
<input type="checkbox"/> wordTube	2.1.0	This plugin manages the JW FLV MEDIA PLAYER 4.2 and makes it onto your WordPress posts and pages. Various skins for the JW f By Alex Rabe & Alakhnor.	Activate

PLUGINS EXPLAINED

Scoilnet blogs have a number of different plugins available

Event Calendar — Manage future events as an online calendar. Display upcoming events in a dynamic calendar, on a listings page, or as a list in the sidebar.

Podcasting — This plugin adds full podcasting support for you to embed podcasts to posts and play them with an embedded player.

WassUp is a Wordpress plugin to analyze your visitors traffic with real time stats, chart and a lot of chronological information. It has sidebar Widget support to show current online visitors and other statistics.

wordTube — This plugin manages the JW FLV MEDIA PLAYER 4.2 and makes it easy for you to put music, videos or flash movies onto your WordPress posts and pages.

WP-Polls — Adds a poll system to your WordPress blog. You can easily include a poll into your WordPress's blog post/page. WP-Polls is extremely customizable via templates and css styles and there are tons of options for you to choose to ensure that WP-Polls runs the way you wanted including multiple selection of answers.

WP-Polls Widget — Adds a Poll Widget to display single or multiple polls from WP-Polls Plugin. You will need to activate WP-Polls first to enable this widget.

WP Authors — Sidebar widget to list all authors of a blog. This is particular useful to schools as it aggregates content from different authors. It's main use would be where you have class authors and their content is collected together on a sidebar link.

Google Maps Quicktag — MU Google Maps Quicktag makes it convenient to open the Google Maps web site while editing, where you can generate your map and copy the needed code to paste into the editor.

Wordpress Google Calendar — This plugin allows for the integration of a Google calendar into a Wordpress blog.

WP-SpamFree is an extremely powerful anti-spam plugin that virtually eliminates comment spam.

EMBEDDING A VIDEO

1. Select **wordTube** from the **Media** Menu.
2. Select **Insert new media file**.

ID	Title	Creator	Path
1	Moodle Presentation Edit Delete	iAlja	http://www.youtube.com/wa

Insert new media file »

3. Enter the **Title** as "Intro to Web 2", **Creator** (use your initials here) and **Description** (can be left blank).
4. You can upload a file from your computer using the **Browse** button, but for this course enter the following **URL**: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gmP4nk0EOE>
5. Select **Add media file**.

Enter Title / Name

Title / Name

Creator / Author

Description

Upload a file

Select media file

Note : The upload limit on your server is

The Flash Media Player handle : MP3,FLV,SWF,JPG,PNG or GIF

Select thumbnail

Upload a image to show a preview of the media file (optional)

or enter URL to file

URL to media file

Here you need to enter the absolute URL to the media file

It accept also a Youtube link: http://youtube.com/watch?v=O_MP_6ldeB4

URL to thumbnail file

Enter the URL to show a preview of the media file (optional)

Add media file

6. Once added to **wordTube**, you need to click on **Edit** beneath the title of your video.
7. In the **Settings** box, **copy** the media file tag, including the brackets. The media file tag will look like this, **[media id=2]**. The number written within it represents the order in which the video file was added to **wordTube**.
8. Select the “*Current Events*” **Page** where you want to insert the video (select **Edit** in the **Pages** Menu).
9. Place the cursor where you want to embed the video.
10. Paste in the media file tag that you copied (for example, **[media id=2]**).
11. Select **Publish**.

COMMENTING ON OTHER BLOGS

In order to allow comments on your blog the Scoilnet Blog Administrator in your school must first activate this feature.

Wordpress

1. Select the **Responses** link at the bottom of the post.
2. Enter your **Name**.
3. Enter your **Email Address**.
4. Enter your blog **URL** (not required).
5. Enter your comment.
6. Select **Submit Comment**.

NB: Your comment will either appear immediately or a message will be shown indicating that your comment is awaiting moderation.

[Trackback URI](#) | [Comments RSS](#)

Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Mail (hidden) (required)

Website

Submit Comment

CREATING A STATIC PAGE

Pages are used for static content that rarely needs to be changed. A typical example would be the 'About Page' that gives some information about the author of the blog.

1. Select **Add New** from the **Pages** Menu.
2. Enter the page **Title**, which for this course is, "Links".
3. Enter the page content text in the section underneath the formatting toolbar. You can copy and paste this from the **Links Page** on the demonstration blog (<http://tutors.scoilnet.ie/blog/>) or use the text below:

ImageBank (<http://imagebank.scoilnet.ie/>)
 French.ie (<http://www.french.ie/>)
 I Am an Artist (<http://www.iamanartist.ie/>)

4. Select **Save Draft**.
5. Select **Publish**.

NB: Once published, a new tab will appear on your blog linking to the new page.

Add New Page

Path:

Word count: 0

Custom Fields

Discussion

☒ Allow Comments

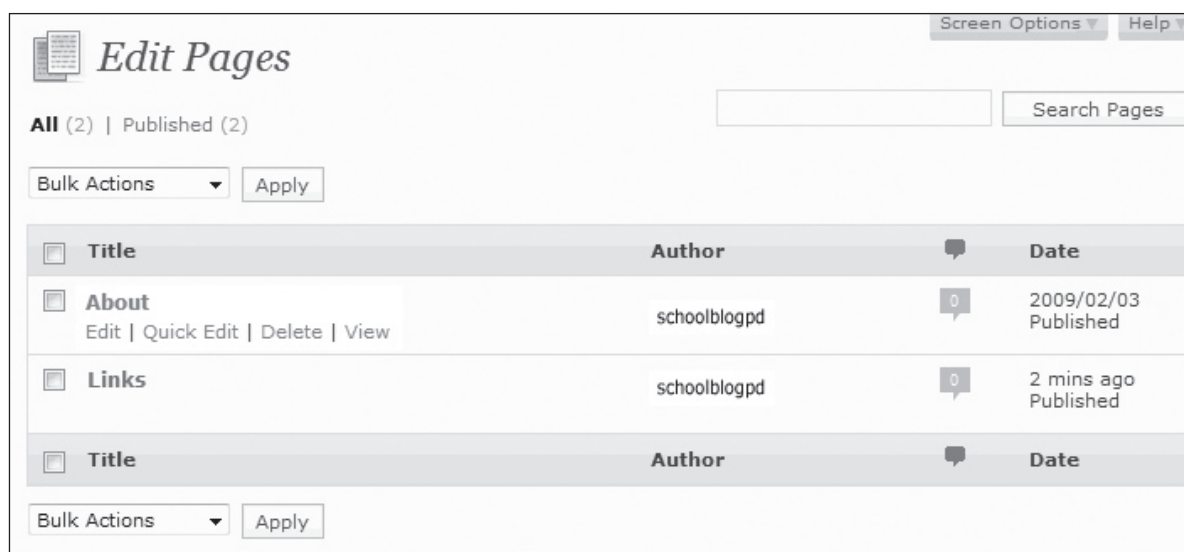
☒ Allow Pings

These settings apply to this page only. "Pings" are [trackbacks and pings](#).

EDITING A STATIC PAGE

1. Select **Edit** from the **Pages** Menu.
2. Select the required page's **Title** and change it to "Websites"
3. Make the changes and then select **Update Page**.

NB: To delete a page, hover over the Page's **Title** and then select **Delete**.



Edit Pages

All (2) | Published (2)

Search Pages

Bulk Actions ▼ Apply

Title	Author	Date
About Edit Quick Edit Delete View	schoolblogpd	2009/02/03 Published
Links	schoolblogpd	2 mins ago Published

Bulk Actions ▼ Apply

LINKS

Further Reading

WordPress Help Documentation – http://codex.wordpress.org/Main_Page

WordPress.tv – <http://wordpress.tv/>

ACTIVITY

Adding content

Create a new post and enter the following information:

A blog (a contraction of the term “Web log”) is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order.

*Full details at: Wikipedia**

** link to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>*

Add the following content, available in the Resources section, at the demonstration blog (<http://tutors.scoilnet.ie/blog>) to your post, just below the text:

Audio file – blogs.mp3 (right click and save to your PC and then upload to your blog). Please note, that when you add an audio file you must choose the setting “File URL” under the “Link URL” heading in order for it to appear as a playable sound file in your blog.

Upload one more image from ImageBank of your choice (<http://www.imagebank.ie>)

Congratulations! You have now set up and used a blog with the Scoilnet Blogs platform. You can access this sample blog for a period of three weeks from the date of your first log in. Don't forget to check if your school has registered for Scoilnet Blogs. If not they can do so by contacting the Broadband Service Desk, via <http://www.ncte.ie/Broadband/Webhosting-Blogging/>

For further information on the Creating Your School's Website (using Scoilnet Blogs) course go to: <http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/Courses/CreatingSchoolWebsiteorBlog/>

Finally, another related Web 2.0 technology which is becoming more and more popular:

MICRO-BLOGGING

WHAT IS MICRO-BLOGGING?

Micro-blogging is a simple text only version of blogging where short posts (usually to a maximum of 140 characters) are published. These posts can be submitted to the micro-blogging platform in a variety of ways including instant messaging, text messaging, email or the web. To send messages or tweets the user must open an account in one of the micro-blogging providers which are free.

Software for micro-blogging

- Twitter – <http://twitter.com>
- Edmodo – <http://www.edmodo.com/>
- Posterous – <http://posterous.com>
- Tumblr – <http://www.tumblr.com/>
- Yammer – <http://www.yammer.com/>

FINDING EDUCATIONAL TWITTER USERS

- Just tweet it – <http://justtweetit.com/education/>
- Directory of Learning Professionals (& Others) on Twitter – <http://www.c4lpt.co.uk/socialmedia/edutwitter.html>
- Twitter for Teachers – <http://twitter4teachers.pbwiki.com/FrontPage>

ACTIVITY

Using Twitter

Look at the following education Twitter user – <http://twitter.com/AngelaMaiers>

See Scoilnet's Twitter page – <http://twitter.com/scoilnet>

Use the web sites given above to view other educational Twitter users.

Use <http://search.twitter.com/> to search for keywords on Twitter.

If you were to start using a blog with your school what aspects do you feel would be the most important?

The list below is not exhaustive, but might help as a starting point for the discussion and there is a case study in the Appendix at the end of this module.

- How would using a blog in class affect classroom management? For example, in a primary school, would children work in groups and/or computer room? At post primary level, could the blog be used mainly for homework?
- How would a blog be used by students? Could they add comments? How could you ensure it would be secure and safe?
- Would you consider a blog as motivational for students?
- Would a blog encourage collaborative learning? Literacy skills? Digital literacy?
- What aspects of the primary curriculum could be enhanced through the use of a blog?
- Which subject areas at post primary could be enhanced through the use of a blog?

APPENDIX

Case Study

Sinéad Counihan, a teacher in St. Damian's NS, Walkinstown, writes about her school's blog: www.scoildamian.scoilnet.ie/blog

All classes in the school are using the blog, with teacher aid, which means we have 250 students participating in one way or another.

The blog was created shortly before the summer (2009). It is to reduce the work load for myself as the teacher in charge of the website. I use Dreamweaver for the website and it would be up to me to create the webpages for all the classes, which is very time consuming. Using Scoilnet blogs, all the individual teachers are now responsible for having a webpresence for their class.

We are still experimenting with all its possible uses. So far we've used it for:

- Displaying success stories in all curricular areas for example achievements like Science Award of Excellence, Bí Gnóthach Merit Award, winning in sporting events.
- English – It has been used in junior classes to write daily news etc.. We are lucky and have IWBs and can use these for whole class activities.
- Fifth class have created games based on the SESE work done during the year and use the blog to access the games created in class, in the computer suite and at home as a means of revision. We've just started but would hope to continue to create these. The children themselves want to create a whole set for tables practice, they've only started but it will continue as a sixth class project next year. It can then be accessed by all and used as a class or home resource.
- Students have uploaded poems of their own in school

It has been used as a whole class teaching tool, children have worked, in groups, pairs and as individuals. Teachers use it to showcase work done and share pictures of events e.g. school tours. Parents can see what's going on and they are kept up-dated.

Comments can be left but are monitored by teachers with accounts

As a learning tool it is motivational and the children themselves like seeing what's going on in the school in terms of the other classes. Classes can also leave comments on the work of other classes too and using our IWBs this can be done as a whole class activity. Fifth class used the quizzes created as a revision tool both in school and for those who have home internet access. At least 80% of students have access at home. The students themselves came up with the idea of making quizzes for learning tables. For the senior classes it is envisioned that next year they would be the main people uploading to the blog (under teacher supervision). However, at this stage only some of them have. The blog is definitely a useful tool for teaching computer skills.

As a teacher, it has definitely cut down on the work required to keep the website up-to-date. I just need to create the dozen pages or so involving the whole school rather than 50 pages to show what all the classes are doing. We as a school are at the beginning of a learning curve. We are still experimenting and making mistakes. I'm regularly in touch with the NCTE to solve problems e.g. learn how to include the widgets properly into the site. We need a way to showcase pictures as a gallery page rather than as posts on the main page. At the moment if lots of pictures are uploaded they move all other posts off the page. I'm sure we'll get to grips with it and we're only starting out. The staff are enthusiastic about it and it has huge potential.

There are some concerns about internet safety but we have had a website up and running for over 5 years and our AUP and strategies for internet safety on our website essentially transfer over to use on the blog. The comment facility of course is new, however, it will be censored by teachers before any are posted. It is nice to get feedback directly from children and parents and this is another method. It allows parents in particular access to the children's education in a way they have never been involved before. Our principal has left comments and from the feedback I've had from teachers in the school, this was really appreciated by the junior classes in particular,. So far all comments have been very positive and show the school blog is also being accessed at home by parents and students.

St. Damian's school blog is only up and running a month at the time of writing but already the school is looking forward to see where it takes them next year.

PARTICIPANT DISCUSSION NOTES:

[illegible]

PARTICIPANT DISCUSSION NOTES:

[illegible]

