Le Chéile Secondary School Autumn 2024 Newsletter

Upcoming events:

November:

All month: In November We Remember

11th- 15th: Science Week & chickens hatching

13th: 3rd year Parent Teacher Meeting

18th – 22nd: Exam Week

25th – 29th: Geography Week

Week of 25th: Study Skills Seminar for 3rd & 6th years

December:

12th: Carols by Candlelight

17th: Christmas Markets

20th: Last day of term/Beginning of Christmas holidays

It's our 10th birthday this year! Le Chéile Secondary School first opened its doors in August 2014. It has taken a huge amount of work, commitment, passion, and endurance to get to where we are today. Please join us as we celebrate this milestone through our whole school events, Masses, assemblies and more.

As you would expect, the 'Back-to-School' term has been a busy one this year. Extra-curricular activities have resumed, CBAs in some subjects have begun, school trips have taken place, classroom activities have kicked off, and so much more!

In this newsletter, read all about our Italian Exchange with a school in Fermo, celebrate Le Chéile's first annual Eurovision Song Competition, admire the work the Art classes have been doing and seeing, and cheer on our sports teams!

Welcoming a New School Year: Fresh Beginnings and Achievements at Le Chéile

For last year's words belong to last year's language, and next year's words await another voice. - T.S. Eliot

I am delighted to welcome you to our first newsletter of 2024/25.

The start of each new school year brings lots of fresh starts and new opportunities. It is great to see that the year has begun with the busyness and productivity that characterises life in Le Chéile Secondary School.

In this first newsletter of the school year, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate our Class of 2024 on their Leaving Certificate results. What an amazing group of young people. We are so proud to see them move on to the next phase of their life journey, and we wish them every success.

There was great excitement as we distributed our Junior Cycle results last month. Well done to the Junior Cycle Class of 2024. It is lovely to see you transition to the black jumper and settle into Transition Year and 5th Year.

I would like to extend a special welcome to those students new to our school. Our First Years are settling in very well and it is a joy to see new friendships being formed as the students get used to the demands of secondary school, whilst also embracing all the opportunities available to them.

As ever our students have involved themselves in all aspects of school life since returning in September. It is wonderful to see them energising the school with their enthusiasm. In such a short period of time they have had the opportunity to involve themselves in many activities and events and I would like to thank the staff for their willingness to give their time so generously.

This year we have welcomed a number of new teachers to our school, all of whom have spoken so positively about our fantastic students and our beautiful learning environment.

A school however is not just a building. It is the culmination of the hopes, dreams, joys, sorrows, hard work, and teamwork of the school community. Undoubtedly this school year will bring new challenges, but our hope is that our students move forward confidently, use and share their many gifts and talents generously, make the most of the opportunities presented to them, and have a happy and successful year.

I would like to thank you, as parents, for working in partnership with us to ensure we maintain the highest possible standards for your sons and daughters. I look forward to meeting with you in the coming year and thank you for your continued support.

Leona Harrington

Principal

Feast Day Celebration: Honouring Le Chéile's Spirit and Student Leaders!

On Friday, the 27th of September, the 10 year anniversary celebrations of our school began with our annual Feast Day! The number of students who received badges for their participation in various aspects of school life is a testament to vast array of opportunities to be had at Le Chéile! From Ceol Captains to Sports Prefects, College For Every Student ambassadors to Yearbook Committee members, and everything in between, the Spirit of joy has never been more alive!

Thank you to Mgr. Eoin Thynne for celebrating a beautiful Mass with us. We were also happy to welcome Diocesan Advisor, Sr. Bernadette Carron, and Olive Laffoy from the Le Chéile Schools Trust to celebrate with us.

We know our school is in good hands this year with our new Head Boy Shu Bruen, Head Girl Anastasia Nastasiu, and their deputies Jacquelina Mabeti, Advaith Bharathwaj, Joshua Annakkodi and Arafat Aremu!

And finally congratulations to Molly Finnegan who was awarded the prestigious Spirit of Le Chéile Award!

Learning Leaders: Building Community, Celebrating Culture, and Supporting Student Success!

Dear students and staff,

We're excited to share what the Learning Leaders have been up to this past year and what's ahead!

Event Organisation

Over the past year, we had the pleasure of helping to organise several fantastic events, including our hugely successful Culture Day back in May, assisting with the Awards Day, and we happily helped to organise and promote our Small Sweet Chops event in the school at the end of October to celebrate Black History Month. These activities not only celebrate our diverse community but also foster connections among students and staff.

Supportive Initiatives

In addition to larger events, we also take pride in our smaller contributions around the school. Recently, we assisted with the Feast Day ceremony, and in March we helped out with the Seachtain na Gaeilge café. We also provided pencils for anyone who forgot theirs during Exam Week. Our goal is to enhance the school experience for everyone and make it a time to remember!

Study Tips and Resources

To support your academic journey, we've uploaded helpful videos on Schoology, covering essential topics such as effective study techniques, preparation strategies, and relaxation methods. These resources are designed to help you succeed both academically and personally.

What's Next?

Stay tuned! We're planning to upload even more videos to help you navigate your studies and well-being. Keep an eye on Schoology for the latest updates and tips.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to making this school year even more memorable!

Best,

The Learning Leaders Team

6th Years Get Political

On the 9th of September, our 6th year Politics and Society students got the inside scoop from Former Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Dublin West TD Paul Donnelly on their trip to Leinster House. The TDs spent 40 minutes talking to, and answering questions from, our students about their concerns.

Transition Year Students Enjoy an Action-Packed Trip to Carlingford

On September 16th, our Transition Year students embarked on their first trip of the year to Carlingford, an adventure that offered the perfect opportunity to bond and form new friendships. The day was filled with exciting team-building activities, including archery, foot golf, maze trekking, kayaking, sky ropes, airsoft, and laser tag. With beautiful weather on their side, students had a fantastic time challenging themselves and supporting one another. This memorable trip set a positive tone for the year ahead — here's to more adventures together!

Senior Visual Studies Students Explore Ancient History at Brú na Bóinne!

On the 24th of September, 22 senior cycle Visual Studies students attended a trip to Brú na Bóinne with Ms. Cowley and Ms. O'Brien. It was a wonderful experience to see the passage tomb of Knowth and go into the passage grave of Newgrange. The guided tours were very insightful with such fantastic staff and an amazing facility.

Le Chéile Secondary School Hosts a Successful Open Evening!

At the end of September, Le Chéile Secondary School welcomed prospective students and their families to our 2024 Open Evening. Our classrooms and facilities were open to show off the huge range of subjects, co-curricular activities, and extra-curricular activities that make our school community so vibrant and exciting. Visitors had the chance to explore our school, meet with teachers, talk to current students, and see the many opportunities that await future students here at Le Chéile. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the evening a great success!

U16 and U19 Boys Basketball Teams Advance to Cup Quarterfinals!

Congratulations to both the U16 and U19 boys basketball teams who are through to the quarter finals of the Cup in both age categories. The U16's are playing Presentation Bray College and the U19's are up against St. Andrews after midterm for a place in the semi-finals. Well done lads!

Student Council Reps Gather Ideas at Fingal Youth Conference!

Three of our Student Council members attended the annual Fingal Youth Conference in Blanchardstown on the 15th of October. They had a great day meeting student council members from other schools in their area, listening to their ideas and coming up with new suggestions for this year. Simon Zwirko, Ava Power Martin and Emma Rose Buttner will meet with the other members when they get back to school to discuss all of the insights gained from their valuable conference.

Celebrating Exam Success!

Congratulations to all our wonderful students who received their Junior Certificate results and to the LCA class who received their Leaving Certificate French results this term, marking a milestone on their academic journey. We are very proud of each and every one of you.

Students Explore Dublin's Vibrant Street Art Scene!

On the 15th of October, the LCA Visual Art class along with one of Ms. Cowley's Claddagh Art students experienced a guided Street Art Tour around Dublin City Centre. It was a wonderful experience to hear the stories of how all the beautiful art came about.

Celebrating European Week of Languages: A Week of Culture, Fun, and Linguistic Diversity at Le Chéile!

Every year on the 26th of September, countries around the world celebrate European Day of Languages. In Le Chéile, we don't just make a big deal of this for one day. We take a week to celebrate the linguistic diversity in our school, and to recognise and hear our students express themselves in their own language - and some new languages too.

Our school offers French, German and Spanish as Modern Foreign Languages to study, as well as teaching English and Irish to all students. However, for European Week of Languages (and beyond!) Ms. Cahill, Ms. Long, Ms. Hempenstall and the Transition Year students spent the month of September coming up with an array of activities to get students speaking, learning and interested in dozens of different languages.

This year, the TYs came up with ideas for all year groups to get involved in. There were scavenger hunts where students had to find pictures of European landmarks, monuments and buildings dotted around the school. There was a 'German Museum' which invited students to look at artefacts of German culture and taste German cuisine. There was a game of Pin the Tail on the Donkey – with a twist! Students had to instead pin the phrase in the native language to the correct country on the map of Europe.

The TYs outdid themselves this year putting on the best European Week of Languages we have had in a long time, so well done to all involved!

Sweet Success at the European Baking Competition!

One of the highlights of the week was the delicious European Baking Competition which saw students bake their favourite sweet treats from across Europe and a panel of judges who taste tested the dishes and ranked their favourites. Congratulations to ***Danny Al Wraidata*** *in 3rd year who came in first place by baking Madjarica, a Croatian chocolate cake. In second place was* ***Domas Zukauskas*** *from 2nd year who baked Tinginys, a Lithuanian biscuit cake, and* ***Karol Palok*** *in 3rd year who made a traditional Polish cheesecake.*

Singing Sensations: Le Chéile's Eurovision Highlights European Week of Languages!

The biggest event of European Week of Languages was, by far, the Eurovision event that took place on Wednesday the 2nd of October. After a week of auditions and rehearsals, 12 hopeful acts took to the stage to sing for their chosen country and to be crowned the 2024 Le Chéile Eurovision Song Contest winner!

An audience of over 300 people comprised of students from 1st year, the Claddagh, TY, and staff decided their fate by voting on their iPads after all contestants had had the chance to perform. The judges panel was made up of Mr. Reyes, Mr. Walshe, Ms. Lyons and Ms. Carey who also took to the stage to delight the crowd with their rendition of a Backstreet Boys classic hit which served as a perfect interval act during which the voting took place.

*Congratulations to **Mia Maguire** from 1st year who won with her cover of Adele's 'Love in the Dark'! In second place were the **Naija Babes** (Elizabeth Gbadebo & Gemma Odemena from 2nd year, Faith Ayuba, Aine Izegwire & Gabby Ogungbamigbe from 3rd year and Seun Amusan & Molly Finnegan from 5th year).*

*The judges' favourite was the **6th year Zombie Band** (Liam Freeman, Marcia Ison, Yvon Ntambi, Przemyslaw Pawelec, Sean Rosca & Tadhg Ward).*

Creativity Shines in Le Chéile's European Art Competition!

Another event that took place during European Week of Languages was a European Art Competition. Students had to create any (preferably) eco-friendly art piece (painting, drawing, sculpture, poster, etc.) related to a European country of their choice. Well done to all who entered and congratulations to our winners listed below!

*1st: **Molly Finnegan** (5th year)*

*2nd: **Emily Lin** (1st year)*

*3rd: **Maxwell Obu** (2nd year)*

Second Year Students Embrace Italian Culture and New Friendships on Exchange in Fermo!

On the 7th of October, sixteen 2nd year students embarked on the second leg of the Italian Exchange with Istituto Comprensivo Da Vinci Ungaretti Fermo in Fermo, Italy. Our excited partners met us at the airport, and we hopped on a bus together to explore the Italian capital, Rome. Day one consisted of 20,000 steps around Rome doing a walking tour of all the major sites; the Colosseum, the Trevi Fountain, and the Spanish Steps to name but a few. The gelato by the Trevi Fountain provided the sugar rush we needed as we were up so early that morning!

On the second morning, we attended a music lesson in their school before going to the Cantina Ortenzi vineyard where we learned about wine production, picked grapes and pressed them into juice. We had lunch with a view in a park overlooking the hilly town of Fermo and the surrounding areas. We were welcomed to the town of Fermo by the Mayor and the Counsellor for Culture in the town hall, before finishing the day together with a walking tour of the town of Fermo.

On the third day we hiked Monte Conero to take advantage of another lunch with a view, this time of the sea and the Italian countryside. After a lot of walking in 24-degree heat and some limestone cave exploration, a trip to the beach and a dip in the Adriatic Sea was more than welcomed.

The last day we went to Geography, Literature, and poetry lessons, and finished the morning with a class where we coded robots. After break, we made our way to another one of their school buildings in the beautiful town of Torre di Palme. Here we were greeted by the entire student body singing and signing the Italian national anthem. Students took part in cake decoration, crocheting, sign language, and keyring making classes. Next, their students led us on a walking tour of their small, but beautiful, town before setting up easels overlooking a seaside view for us to paint. That evening, the exchange partners and their parents threw us a farewell dinner at a beautiful restaurant. Here the tears started as we bid farewell to our new friends for life!

TYs Take on GoQuest: A Maths Week Adventure in Logic and Fun!

On the 16th of October, to celebrate Maths Week, Transition Years enjoyed a day trip to GoQuest in Carrickmines so they could put their mathematical, logical thinking, and athletic skills to the test. They had to solve problems using their powers of deduction and in the end, it was a very close competition!

Green Schools Committee Update: Spooktacular Sustainability and Upcoming Events!

Welcome to the latest edition of our Green Schools Committee newsletter update! Green Schools focuses on saving the environment, helping reduce waste, and promoting sustainability. As part of our commitment to sustainability and environmental awareness, our group has been actively engaging with students, teachers, and the community. Here's a look at our recent activities, upcoming events, and how you can get involved!

****Recent Activities****

Green Halloween Posters

Our group designed many Halloween posters to raise awareness about recycling and keeping Halloween environmentally friendly! Thank you to everyone who participated!

Sustainable Halloween costumes

Green Schools promoted reusing old costumes or making your own costume this year. Thank you for joining us for our first Green Fair and sustainable recycles Halloween costumes competition. The best dressed got a reward! We were, and are, excited to see so many of you implementing these practices at home!

****Weekly Meeting****

Date: Monday! *Time: Break!* *Location: Science Rooms*

All members are encouraged to attend our weekly meeting where we will discuss new ideas and upcoming projects. Get involved!

We're always looking for new members! If you're passionate about the environment and want to make a difference in our school community, join us! Meetings are open to all students, and we welcome fresh ideas and enthusiasm.

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Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm for our Green Schools Group! Together, we can create a more sustainable future for our school and community. Let's keep working toward a greener tomorrow!

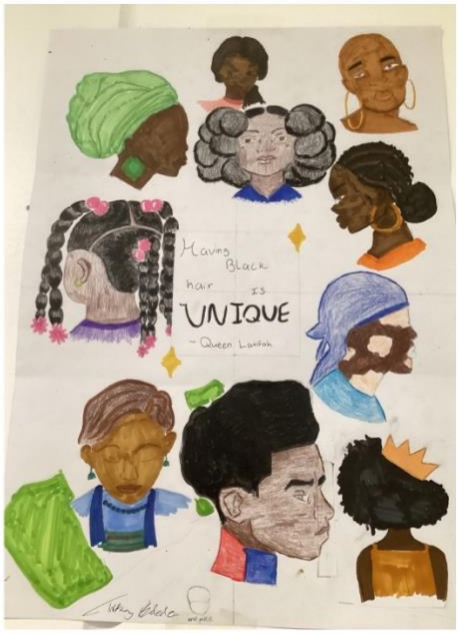
Green-Schools
An Taisce

Le Chéile Zoo: Halloween Dress-Up Raises Funds for Dublin Zoo!

As is tradition at this point, our students and staff love to dress up for Halloween on the last day of term in aid of a good cause!

This year's staff theme was 'Le Chéile Zoo' and you might have seen Mrs. Harrington and the Deputy Principals working with the animals dressed as Zoo Keepers!

The Transition Year students organised the fancy dress fundraiser for Dublin Zoo, from which over €350 was raised!



Black History Month Celebrations: Cultural Flavors and Art Competitions

To celebrate Black History Month, our students organised two big events. The first was a poster competition with themes spanning from "Black and Irish" to "The History of Hair". On the last Friday of term, we had a "Small Sweet Chops" competition where students baked foods that represent their culture or celebrate Black History Month. These treats were then judged by some fairly well known food critics! There were also some good prizes up for grabs.

Congratulations to Shauna Kengne, Nancy Lucky, Progress Omoregie and Elisheva Murhundezi (Meat Pie) and Elizabeth Gbadebo (Suya) on winning the Small Sweet Chops competition! All of the food was amazing! A big thank you to judges Mary, Amina and Mr. Walshe who critiqued the beautiful dishes.

Congratulations to Tiffany Edede, Kaila Nwabiakam and Chisom Agbalizu who won the Poster competition for Black History Month.

Spread the Christmas Cheer: Support Team Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal!

Team Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal is an annual campaign that delivers gifts straight into the hands of children affected by poverty. Often these shoebox gifts are the only gift that a child will receive at Christmas and the joy that they bring is incredible.

We're excited to announce that, this year, Ms. Conroy and the TY Nelson Mandela Team is leading this year's Shoebox Appeal! From ***October 11th to November 6th****, we'll be collecting shoeboxes filled with gifts for those in need. This is a fantastic opportunity to spread kindness and make a difference in someone's life.*

Join us in making this appeal a success! For more information, find flyers around the school and scan the QR code, or speak to a member of the TY Nelson Mandela Team or Ms. Conroy.

Students are asked to wrap a shoebox in nice wrapping paper (wrapping the box and lid separately, decide what age and gender the gift box is for, and fill the box generously with items from the 4 Ws list. Thank you in advance for your help!