Welcome to the Autumn 2025 edition of the Le Chéile Secondary School newsletter. Read all about our busy few months as we returned to school in August and got back into the swing of things with Open Nights, celebration weeks, school trips, extra-curricular activities and more!

Dates for your Diary

November:

- November We Remember: All month
- History Week and Stand Up Week: 3rd – 7th
- 3rd & 6th year information Zoom: 5th
- Science Week: 10th – 14th
- 3rd year Parent Teacher Meetings: 12th
- Exam Week: 17th – 21st
- Study Skills Session for 3rd and 6th years: 19th & 20th
- Geography Week: 24th – 28th

December:

- College Awareness Week: 1st – 5th
- Carols by Candlelight: 11th
- Cosy Clothes Day: 12th
- Christmas Markets: 16th
- Christmas Holidays Begin: 19th

Congratulations to the October Students of the Month pictured here at our whole school assembly on the last day of term!

Message from the Principal

"A new school year means new beginnings, new adventures, new friendships, and new challenges. The slate is clean and anything can happen."

Denise Witmer

I am delighted to welcome you to our first newsletter of 2025/26.

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.

We brought our 10-year celebration to a close on the 24th of September with a beautiful Mass. We were delighted to be joined by Dr. Áine Moran, Founding Principal of Le Chéile Secondary School. It was lovely to welcome Dr. Moran back to Le Chéile along with the CEOs of the Le Chéile Schools Trust, past and present, the Chairpersons of our Board of Management, past and present, and a number of our past staff.

In this first newsletter of the school year, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate our Class of 2025 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 2025. 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

Message from the Deputy Principals

As we come to the end of a particularly full and energetic autumn term, we want to take a moment to reflect on all that has taken place in our school community over the past few weeks. As always, it has been a term marked by collaboration, celebration, and achievement in so many areas of school life.

One of the highlights this term was our amazing celebration of the ten year anniversary of our school - a milestone that allowed us to celebrate how far we have come as a community and to look forward with optimism to the next chapter. Congratulations to all of our second year 'Angels' who pledged to support & guide our first years during the Feast Day and to all of the staff & students who played a part in bringing the whole celebration together. As always, the Flag Ceremony was iconic and brought many a tear to those in the audience!

Students and staff have been involved in an incredible range of activities so far this year. The Extra-Curricular Fair once again highlighted the richness of

opportunities available to our students — from sport and music to creative and cultural pursuits. Our sports teams have enjoyed great success across multiple disciplines, representing the school with skill, determination, and pride. We also got to host our very own Eurovision Song Contest, which brought colour, laughter, and musical talent to the stage.

The celebration of our Junior Certificate results was also a memorable afternoon, where we commended the hard work and achievements of our third years.

The term ended at full pace with a Subject Inspection in PE, which provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the great teaching and learning that happens here in our school. Congratulations to the fantastic PE Department and all the students who showcased the excellent practice that takes place in Le Chéile every day.

Amidst the busyness, what stands out most is the sense of community, resilience, and joy that defines our school. We are grateful to all staff, students, and parents for their continued commitment and support. As we approach the mid-term break, we hope everyone takes time to rest, recharge, and reflect on a term filled with learning, laughter, and lasting memories.

Warm regards,

The Deputy Principals

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 2025 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!

Claddagh Updates

This term has been full of learning, growth, and creativity at The Claddagh! Our learners have been busy developing new skills – from cooking and computer certifications to hair and beauty training. Together, we also prepared for a special celebration: our school's 10th anniversary and the Guardian Angels Feast. For the first time, one of our learners from Claddagh joined us to help during Open Night. It was a new and exciting experience for all of us!

With the help of our intern, Jamena from Spain, we created beautiful themed decorations during a sensory art session. We also took time to care for our local environment with a community clean-up around the school – because learning how to give back is just as important!

One of our past students, Yoel Teckie, came back for a quick visit to say hello and bring us some chocolate cake!

Lastly, we dived right into the Halloween spirit and got ready to celebrate in true Claddagh style!

Community Pride

A huge well done to 1MT and 1NM for their litter picks on the school grounds and in Tyrrelstown Park most Monday mornings as part of their Tidy Towns and Community Care Blue Sky class! Thank you to Fingal for providing us with 6 new litter pickers, a few pairs of gloves, and some bin bags too!

Celebrating Exam Success!

Congratulations and well wishes to the Class of 2025! Almost 200 Leaving Cert Established students and the Leaving Cert Applied students received their results this term and we were very happy with the results! Congratulations to all our wonderful students who received their Junior Certificate results in October, marking a massive milestone on their academic journey. We are very proud of each and every one of you.

Calling All 1st Years! Italian Exchange Opportunity

To all 1st years and their families, we would like to invite you to take part in our exciting school exchange programme with a school in Fermo, Italy! This is a cultural exchange, so you don't need to be learning Italian or speak Italian as they are advanced English students who want to improve their English.

Please find the information sheet and application of interest form on your One Voice course. Physical copies can be collected from Ms. Cahill also. The deadline to return the application form is Thursday, the 6th of November.

Please return your application form to Ms. Cahill, Mrs. Barron, or Mr. Kenny.

There will be a Zoom information meeting for interested parents on the evening of Monday, the 10th of November.

European Week of Languages

Every year on the 26th of September, countries around the world celebrate European Day of Languages. During the month of September, the Le Chéile Transition Year students came up with a range of activities for all year groups to get involved in during the first week of October. For example, one group of TYs did a survey to see what languages were spoken in the school and then made a video of everyone saying 'Hello' in their mother tongue. Another group made a quiz for students to guess the language that their peers were speaking. There were Kahoots and Blookets hosted during class time and on the Wednesday there was a huge Eurovision event that you can read more about on the next page!

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 1st of October. After submitting video auditions and attending rehearsals after school, 10 hopeful acts took to the stage to sing for their chosen country and to be crowned the 2025 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 Ms. Lyons and Ms. McCann.

Congratulations to Claire Tabo from 6th year who won with her cover of Alicia Keys 'If I Ain't Got You'! In second place were Super Eagles made up of Elizabeth Gbadebo from 3rd year, Faith Ayuba and Tiffany Edede from 5th year, and Molly Finnegan and Jody Aigbe from 6th year.

The judges' favourite was 4th year Sandra Pompka who sang in her mother tongue language of Polish.

Thank you to Odeon Cinemas Blanchardstown who gave two free passes to the cinema as part of the prize!

Feast Day Celebrations: Looking Back and Moving Forward

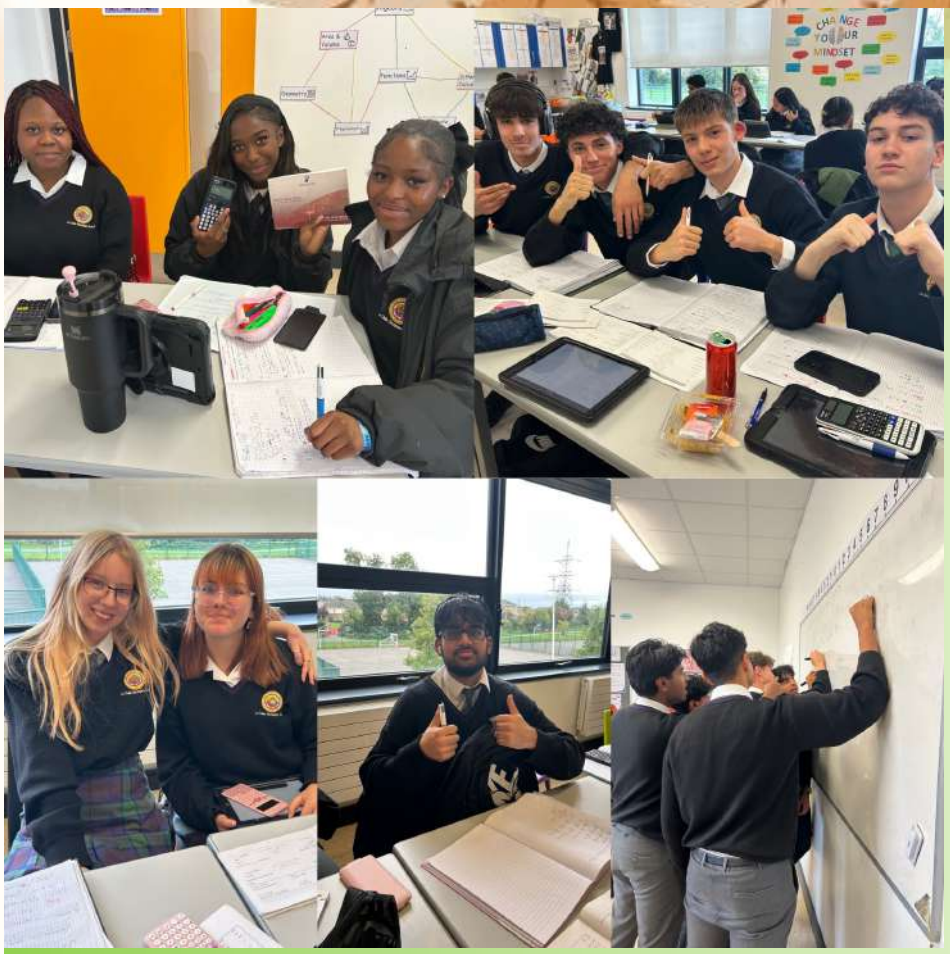
On Friday, the 26th of September, the 10 year anniversary celebrations of our school concluded with our annual Feast Day. It was our first Feast Day celebrated by our new Parish Priest Fr. Brendan Madden.

We looked back on ten years of Le Chéile with speeches and special guests from our past and present. Our former principal, Dr. Áine Moran, was invited back to receive a gift in honour of all the work she put in setting up Le Chéile Secondary School and getting our school off to a good start before Mrs. Leona Harrington took over as Principal. Members of the Le Chéile Schools Trust and the Board of Management delivered speeches reflecting on our unique journey over the last decade. In attendance in the audience were the familiar faces of some of our staff who have retired or moved on from Le Chéile.

As per usual during our Feast Day, our 2nd years pledged to become Angels to the 1st years, promising to guide them through life in secondary school and to be a role model for them.

We also officially launched our three year strategic plan, with members representing the different stakeholders coming to the stage for a photo.

And finally congratulations to 6th year, Eoghan Connolly, who was awarded the prestigious Spirit of Le Chéile Award!



Maths Week 2025

Maths Week took place from 13th - 17th October where the school was taken over by numbers! Maths classes from all year groups throughout the week took part in different activities - from The Cube gameshow to algebra treasure hunts, to solving Rubik's cubes - the week was fully of problem-solving and strategy. Each subject played their part by including and highlighting numeracy in their classes from tempo in Music, patterns in Art, timelines in History, weighing ingredients in Home Ec to gathering stats in PE.

6th Year Maths Revision Classes

Since the return to school, a strong cohort of our 6th years have been staying back after school each Thursday, working hard to prepare for their Leaving Certificate Maths exam. The time allows students to revise key topics together with each other and the support of some of our dedicated staff from the Maths Department. The commitment and teamwork have been incredible so far and we hope to see this continue for the rest of the school year! Thank you to all of the students who attend for putting in the extra effort.

Visual Art

In October, some 2nd Year Visual Art students had the opportunity to participate in a Street Art Tour, they experienced the Yeats exhibition, visited a photography exhibition and finally took part in a Black Out Poetry workshop run by the National Library. These new experiences were shared with peers back in the art room before all 2nd Year art students participate in the Friendship Postcard Exchange Programme.

Collaborative Art Project

With a very tight timeframe talented Le Chéile art students from 5th and 6th year, along with their teachers Ms O' Brien and Ms. Cowley, rose to the challenge of collaborating to create three artworks on the East corridor in preparation for our 10th Anniversary and Feast Day Celebrations, September 2025. These were the Witness Collage, the Le Chéile Timeline, and the Student of the Month wall.

Mr. Kelly's students consulted with the Art Department and used CAD to design and make the unique Student of the Month frames and laser cut lettering.

Thank you to everyone who participated, from preparing surfaces, researching, redesigning, chopping, selecting, collecting, pasting, drawing, painting and to finishing.

Much gratitude to passing students and staff for their heartening and encouraging comments bringing lots of positivity and kindness throughout. Students were invited to a Tea and Doughnut party to come together and celebrate their achievements on Friday, the 3rd of October.

Senior Volleyball

The school's senior volleyball teams have been developing over the past number of years into a very strong squad of dedicated boys and girls. The teams train on Tuesdays (girls) and Wednesdays (boys). They have both begun their competitive games with the girls having their first -round matches away against a strong Loreto College Swords A and B team, narrowly missing out in both games but coming away with lots of determination for round 2.

The boys hosted their first-round against Malahide Portmarnock ETSS and our close neighbours Coláiste Pobail Setanta, coming out on top in both games with some impressive serving, setting, and spiking from all the team.

Both teams progress to round 2 in November which will see the girls face Beaufort College and Drogheda ETSS while the boys will take on Coolmine CS and Naas CBS.

Black History Month

This is an annual celebration of the history, lives, and culture of the African diaspora. In Ireland, it is celebrated from 1st to 31st of October each year. During the month our School of Sanctuary / Culture Committee helped the school community celebrate by holding a poster competition, creating quizzes and activities that were completed during tutor classes, made posts on Schoology to highlight key dates, and made a presentation at the end of term assembly. Well done to Tiffany Edede (5th Year) who won the poster competition this year.

40 students. One board. Infinite possibilities!

It was a day of strategy, concentration, and pure excitement as chess made its debut at Le Chéile Secondary School!

On Wednesday the 22nd of October, we had 40 students participate in our first-ever chess tournament, showcasing incredible sportsmanship and smart thinking. The competition was fierce but friendly!

A massive thank you to the renowned John Alfred from Limerick for concluding the day with a brilliant and inspiring master class for our aspiring grandmasters. It was an unforgettable experience!

Congratulations to :

- 1st place Francis Mathew (1DD)
- 2nd place Egidijus Jarutis (3OR) & Jeduthun Umayat (5OR)
- 3rd place Nishanth Baskaran (1DD)

Watching our students strategize and shine was a true checkmate moment!

Lourdes Pilgrimage

6th Year students Chiamaka Aduba & Esshay Verma proudly represented our school on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in September, accompanied by Mr. McGee. A wonderful opportunity to serve and share in this special experience!

We Are All Teachers, All Learners, Always

Higher Options: Mid-September, our 6th Years had an amazing day at the WorldSkills & Higher Options event in the RDS! They explored future careers, college courses, apprenticeships, and more, and came back full of inspiration for life after school. Big thanks to our Guidance Department for organising this opportunity!

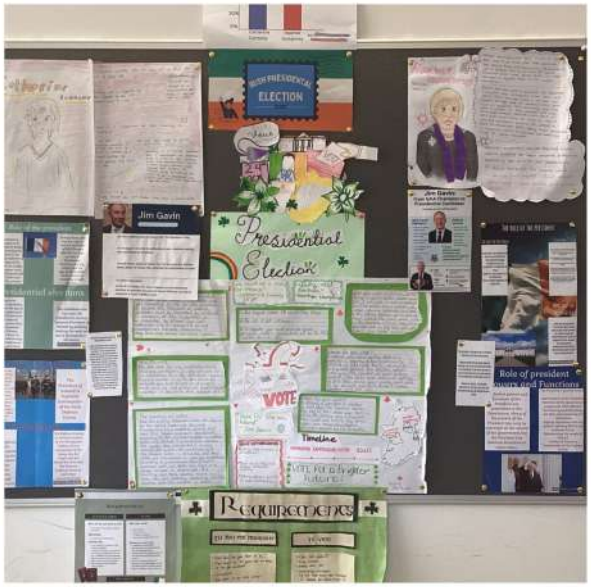
IBEC Manufacturing Day: A group of TY students had a fantastic experience visiting Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals as part of IBEC Manufacturing Day. They enjoyed an insightful tour of the facility, engaging presentations on a variety of career roles, and were treated to a lovely breakfast and lunch. A big thank you to Mallinckrodt for their warm welcome and inspiring day.

Dulce et Decorum

Mr McKeever's 2nd Year English class completed their study of Wilfred Owen's Dulce Et Decorum Est by creating posters reflecting the theme, imagery, and tone of the poem.

Cell Biology

From mitochondria to chloroplasts — our 1st Years brought cell biology to life! Amazing creativity and effort on display!



Irish Presidential Election

3MG has been working on their CSPE CBA for the past couple of weeks. Their topic was the Presidential Election and on Friday, the 24th of October, they voted for their preferred candidate. But who did they choose to elect?

Senior Geography Field Trip

On the 2nd of October, the 6th year Geography students went to Glendalough for their Field Study Project with Ms. Hempenstall and Ms. McCann. Thankfully Storm Amy hadn't arrived just yet but that wouldn't have stopped them anyway!

Once Upon a Time in Le Chéile: 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 'Once Upon a Time' - fairytales, myths and legends - and the teachers, SNAs and office staff did not disappoint! This was also our biggest Halloween fancy dress ever, with more students than ever before dressing up and having some fun!

The Transition Year students organised the fancy dress fundraiser for Dublin Zoo, from which over €550 was raised! The TYs will donate this money to the zoo when they visit in the coming weeks. Well done!