



LE CHÉILE SCHOOLS TRUST

School Governance and Leadership Development Officer JOB DESCRIPTION

CONTEXT

The Le Chéile Schools Trust is a collaborative trust of fourteen Congregations. The Trust carries out the increasingly complex legal and inspirational role of the Patron previously exercised by the congregations. In setting up the Trust, the congregations wished:

- To affirm their commitment to the future of Catholic education
- To provide for the needs of the students and communities in their schools
- To honour their partnership with the government in the education system

The Trust is established as a legal entity, under company law. Central to the operation of the Trust is its Charter. The Charter outlines the Mission and Vision that the Congregations entrusted to Le Chéile. The Charter captures the spirit in which the Congregations came together to plan for the future. It states the hopes and aspirations that the Congregations brought to their own work in schools, and that they are confident will be carried into the future.

The Education Office of Le Chéile Schools Trust Limited is set up to carry out the work of the Trust. The team works with the Board of Directors to carry out Trustee obligations and to support the schools in living out the Charter and congregational ethos, and in maintaining the high standards of service to their local communities. Included in the functions associated with the role of the Board of Directors is that of employer.

The team members work together in a flexible way to support the schools, particularly personnel involved in leadership roles, in living out their ethos as defined in the Charter and in the heritage of the founding congregations. Their roles will be seen as accompanying and empowering schools through:

- **Inspiration.** The team provides a leadership service to ensure that developments in Catholic education and education in general are disseminated, reflected on and critically appraised in the light of the Charter, with a view to developing and assuring quality in the service provided by Le Chéile schools.
- **Dialogue.** The team engages with individual schools to affirm, celebrate, support and challenge their living out of the Charter and their congregational heritage. It aims to foster the unique ethos of each school and promotes the school's link with the Le Chéile community. This involves helping schools reflect on issues impacting on their ethos, working with them to plan for the future, and identifying ways in which the Trust can support them into that future.
- **Facilitation.** The team facilitates the network of Le Chéile schools in building a supportive community based on shared values, personal and group reflection, and dissemination of good practice.
- **Advocacy.** The team works with individual schools to ensure their voices are heard and supported on all issues related to the Trusteeship of the schools. The team

reports on such issues, or patterns of issues, to the Board of Directors with a view to promoting the interests of the schools.

- **Service.** Team members work together in a flexible manner to deliver a coordinated and focused service to the schools. The team is responsible for carrying out routine administrative functions of the Trustees and keeping the Board of Directors informed about developments, particularly with regard to school property, the financial management of the school, and developments or policies affecting school ethos.

The team works together in preparing documentation for the Board of Directors of SÍOL Schools Trust Limited and Le Chéile Schools Trust Limited. Team members represent the Trust, as requested, in meetings with other bodies, e.g. the Department of Education and Skills, the Bishops, Catholic Schools Partnership, Association of Trustees of Catholic Schools, other trusts, the JMB and AMCSS, ACCS and CPSMA.

Job Description

As part of the Le Chéile team the School Governance and Leadership Development Officer will be based in the Le Chéile office in South Dublin and work in close collaboration with the Executive Director. The person will also have specific responsibilities in relation to the functions set out below:-

Governance Related Functions such as:

- Fulfilling Le Chéile's responsibility in relation to senior management appointments in schools (providing support for BOM and sourcing Trustee Nominees for Selection Committees)
- Sourcing Trustee Nominees for Boards of Management and co-ordinating the administrative process associated with appointment of boards
- Appropriately supporting Boards of Management in their role
- Reviewing Admissions and other relevant Policies
- Performing a preliminary assessment of capital development proposals
- Reviewing Annual Reports from schools and end-of-term reports from Boards of Management and communicating accordingly as appropriate.

Building Capacity

This will include design and delivery of courses, for example:

- Course for Middle Leaders
- Meetings for Chairpersons of Boards of Management
- Deputy Principal Support
- Cluster meetings of Principals and Chairpersons of Boards of Management
- Induction of new teachers
- Other relevant leadership development initiatives

Some of the above courses are presented in collaboration with other organisations.

Relevant Experience: He or she will have:

- deep knowledge and experience of second level schools together with an understanding of the internal and external factors that impinge on fulfilment of their mission.
- an awareness of the organic link between **policy, practice** and **procedures** in schools and the importance of their rootedness in the Le Chéile Charter
- the ability to affirm, encourage and support, either directly or indirectly, all those who are involved in Le Chéile schools throughout the country
- an understanding of the issues facing Catholic schools today
- experience to senior management level in school setting or its equivalent

Initiative and Teamwork. He or she will be:

- self-motivated and resourceful in developing initiatives to empower different groups in the schools
- able to contribute to the Executive Team in the office, and be flexible in terms of role development and emerging needs
- a good communicator with the ability and confidence to give presentations to large and small audiences
- a good organiser with ICT skills

The roles outlined in this description are given as examples. Specific roles will be decided in negotiation with the Board of Directors and the Executive Director.

Expectations

The position is a full-time executive position which may involve extended hours and evening meetings. In addition, the role may involve occasional overnight and week-end meetings. The Trust will operate an expenses allowance for travel and subsistence. The successful applicant will be required to have a current driving licence.

Appointment

The appointment will be for a five year period, commencing at the start of the academic year 2015-2016. Salary will be commensurate with experience. The Trust is prepared to enter into secondment arrangements. A probationary period of one year will apply.

Performance Review

There will be an annual review of performance.