

Farewell message from Eilis Humphreys

Dear Colleagues and Friends

I hope you've had a good summer and that you found time to enjoy the beautiful sunshine when it appeared!

I'm writing to wish you well as I hand over the leadership of Le Chéile to our new CEO Marie Therese Kilmartin. I won't say farewell I'll just say 'au revoir' – farewell sounds too final, especially as I will never forget the wonderful family that is Le Chéile. I look forward to keeping in touch as I will continue to do some work in Catholic education.

I want to thank you most sincerely for entering into the spirit of Le Cheile from the very beginning, back to September 2009, when the office first opened. For some of you, even before that, when the 12 congregations were working together to set up the Trust and they consulted and discussed with their schools. I firmly believe that this inclusion of the school communities in the deliberations of the Congregational Leaders was the cornerstone of the success of the Trust. It was genuine collaboration and the thoughts and ideas shared by the school communities shaped the formation of Le Chéile

We owe a great debt of gratitude to our (now) 15 Congregations for their inspirational leadership, their wonderful heritage and their words of wisdom captured in the Le Chéile Charter, which will guide us into the future.

Thanks to all of you, there is a wonderful 'le chéile' spirit among our school communities, based on 'welcome, wisdom and witness'. I encourage you to continue building good positive relationships in your school and with other school communities. It is our belief that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and therefore deserving of care and respect this makes our schools special.

I hope all the new first years will settle in well and be well looked after by the staff and their fellow students. I wish all your staff a healthy, happy and prosperous year ahead and I'd like to extend a special words of thanks to all our Boards of Managements, especially the Chairpersons, who give so generously of their time and expertise.

I'm delighted to let you know that we have now moved into the new, purpose-built Le Chéile Education Centre. It is on the grounds of Our Lady's School in Templeogue. Unfortunately, due to Covid, we have not been able to arrange a celebration of the opening. However, the team will welcome anybody who would like to drop in for a cup of tea!

I'm delighted to welcome Marie Therese, her bio note and photo are attached. Many of you have already met her, if not face-to-face, on social media. I know that she will continue to build this great community and I wish her every success.

I also want to wish Áine Moran every success as she takes up her new position in October as Principal of Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo. We're very sorry to be losing Áine from Le Chéile and thank her most sincerely for all her work with us. I'm sure she will enjoy living in her home county (whether they win the All-Ireland or not!!).

Of course I want to say a big thank you to the Le Chéile team, Tony, Aine, Therese and Eleanor and past members Sean, John and Audrey. They were a joy to work with!

I hope that this year will be a little less stressful than the last two years, as we learn to live with Covid. A special thanks to all of you, for your good wishes and kind words over the past couple of months. I will treasure them!

Stay safe and well and thank you again!

Best wishes

Eilis