



## ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

## CARITAS COLLEGE

## ST. DOMINIC'S COLLEGE

**To : Parents, Guardians and families of students attending of St Dominic's College, Caritas College and St John's College.**

We would like to bring you up to date on the proposed amalgamation of the three secondary schools, St Dominic's College, Caritas College and St John's College. You will remember that we met you, the parents and guardians, and the other education partners last January to hear your views on the proposed amalgamation.

Since those meetings, we have been in constant contact with the Department of Education and Skills in their decision-making process as to their choice of a suitable site for the proposed new school. All three sites were visited, surveyed and evaluated by the staff in the Department. From the Department's point of view, the principal criteria for choice were:

- Room on the site for existing buildings to be extended to cater for 750 pupils
- Adequate playing areas and pitches
- Requirement to have multiple entry / access to the site and the new school, along with traffic considerations
- The capital investment required for any new extension and renovations i.e. which school would require less additional accommodation.

The Caritas site was ruled out at an early stage as being too confined. The Department essentially had to decide then between the St Dominic's and St John's sites as to the best location for the new school. At a meeting last week with the Patrons of Le Chéile and CEIST, and the Dominican Sisters and De la Salle Brothers, the Department informed us that

- A. They agree in principle to the amalgamation
- B. They have decided that the most appropriate site is at St. John's College.

We recognise that this decision will be a difficult one for different reasons for all three school communities, who have, over the past 50+ years provided excellent education to the boys and girls of Ballyfermot. However, as three separate schools, we are no longer in a position to provide the equality of access for all boys and girls in the area to the wider educational opportunities and facilities required for the next 50 years. With the amalgamation of these three great traditions, a whole new exciting opportunity lies before us to shape the future of education in the area.

The Patrons of the three schools, Le Chéile and CEIST will now proceed to put into place a committee to oversee and implement the amalgamation of the three schools. This will happen in the next few weeks, with a view to the committee beginning work early in March 2020. The committee will be fully representative of the three school communities, including 3 staff members, 3 parents and representatives of Boards of Management and Patrons. There will be an independent Chairperson appointed jointly by the Patrons. The Terms of Reference will be agreed by the Patrons, to include the following essential elements:

- A. Preparing for the amalgamation of the three schools and the opening of one new school on the target date of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.
- B. Integration of the ethos and founding traditions of the Daughters of Charity, Dominican Sisters and De la Salle Brothers, as reflected in the three schools.
- C. The coming together and integration of the staff, parents and students.
- D. Planning all the required policies – curricular and operational – necessary for a new 21<sup>st</sup> Century school.
- E. Overseeing the progress of the new school building programme which will seek to ensure the highest quality provision for the students of Ballyfermot.

We would like to thank you all for your contributions to the process so far, for your patience and forbearance. We share your passion to ensure the provision of the best of educational opportunities for the boys and girls, their parents and the wider community of Ballyfermot for the coming generations.

**Éilís Humphreys**  
On behalf of Le Chéile  
Patrons of St John's College and St Dominic's College

**Clare Ryan**  
On behalf of CEIST  
Patrons of Caritas College

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020