



CEIST

Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust



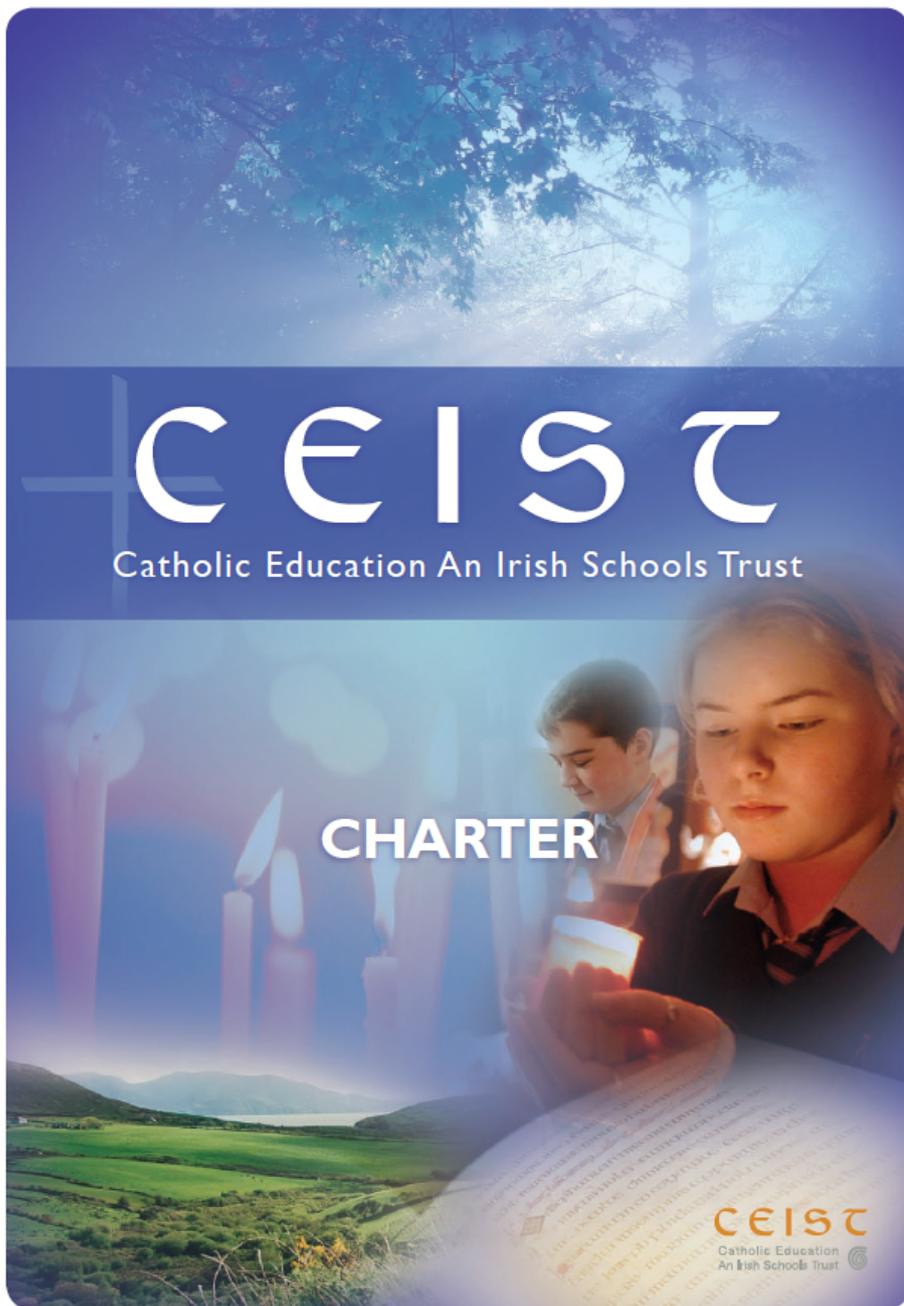
Annual Report 2021



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Vision

A compassionate and just society inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Mission

To provide a holistic education in the Catholic tradition.

Chairperson's Foreword



On behalf of the Board of Directors of CEIST I welcome you to the 2021 Annual Report and thank you for taking time to read it. The following pages provide an insight into the work the CEIST Board and CEIST Staff undertakes and more importantly, the initiatives pursued throughout the 107 schools.

Provision of Catholic Education in Ireland continues to feature prominently in public discourse. Such discourse is often deficient of an acknowledgement and understanding that Catholic Education is an intrinsic part of educational pluralism anchored in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the period that lies ahead it is essential CEIST schools are conscious of their founding intention, enthusiastic about their characteristic spirit, comfortable about what they stand for and proud of the outstanding contribution we make to the common good.

CEIST schools, which are part funded by the State, operate in partnership with the State with marvellous results. Under Section 9 of the Education Act 1998, CEIST schools, and indeed all schools fully or part-funded by the State, are required to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of the students entrusted to us. CEIST schools also have a statutory obligation to promote health education, in consultation with parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school. CEIST Schools undertake these challenges ever conscious of the CEIST Charter.

The CEIST Charter is the fulcrum around which the CEIST family continually seeks to focus our work and energies. The Charter is an inherited founding document of CEIST. In it the founding Religious Congregations sought to outline the values to which CEIST schools would remain faithful. As a Board, we are charged by the Members of CEIST to ensure that the CEIST Charter becomes a lived reality in our schools on a daily basis. The Charter mandates the schools to be communities where Gospel values are upheld and promoted. We are further tasked with ensuring CEIST schools are communities where excellence in teaching and learning prevails. These are not simple tasks! Neither are these tasks deliverable without the drive and determination of all those who work in the schools.

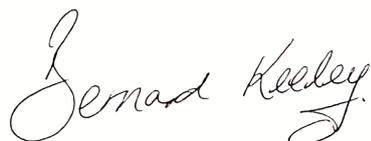
We commend the schools for ensuring the values of the Charter were lived out in a meaningful way day to day over the course of 2021. The past year brought with it Covid 19 challenges and complexities. It is remarkable how the schools strove to function as normally as possible despite the challenges posed by the public health pandemic. We are ever cognisant of the efforts the Boards of Management, Leadership Teams and staffs played in ensuring that no one got left behind, and we acknowledge the extra efforts that were made to alleviate educational disadvantage.

We are indebted to the 856 voluntary Board of Management members who provide a voluntary governance function in our schools. Your statutory work on behalf of the trustees and the inspiration and loyal support you provide to the Principals and Deputy Principals, make our schools the success they are. The efforts and dedication of our teachers, support staff and ancillary staff create the positive environments in our schools, where students can flourish, grow and, most importantly, are challenged and inspired. We are grateful for your critical contribution.

Sr. Mary Rossiter PBVM, retired as a CEIST Director having been assigned to assume duties in Newfoundland, Canada. We sincerely thank Sr. Mary for her loyal service to the CEIST Board and wish her every blessing and success in Canada. Sr Marie Wall PBVM, Andrew O'Leary and Monsignor Gearóid Dullea were appointed by the Members of CEIST as Directors at the company AGM 2021. The determined pro bono work undertaken by CEIST Directors is acknowledged and cherished. In addition to normal board attendance directors join sub committees to ensure the smooth functioning of the Trust.

We acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our CEO, Clare Ryan and Executive throughout 2021. Clare's understanding of the ethos and charism of CEIST is outstanding and she does wonderful work in bringing this to the staff and pupils of our schools. We thank them for their commitment, energy, and enthusiasm. The innovative initiatives undertaken throughout the pandemic to keep CEIST Schools connected are admirable and appreciated throughout the CEIST family.

Finally, to the central people in the CEIST family – you the students placed in our care by your parents and guardians. In choosing to attend a CEIST school you have chosen to share life's journey with us. CEIST schools will care for you, challenge you, celebrate with you, commiserate with you and will have a lasting positive influence on you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bernard Keeley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name below it.

Le gach dea-ghuí,
Bernard Keeley,
Chairperson, Board of Directors CEIST Ltd.

Introduction

As someone who has been employed by CEIST for seven years I am delighted to present the Annual Report for 2021 to you for your attention. First and foremost I must stress that the achievements, successes, events and initiatives outlined in this Annual Report were all done under the direction and leadership of my predecessor, Clare Ryan, although I know that Clare would agree that great credit must also go to all the staff in the CEIST Education Office. My role in CEIST during 2021 was that of Faith Leadership and Governance Coordinator until 31 August.



For a second year running the predominant force in 2021 was Covid 19. The most amazing aspect of this was that schools carried on about their business, adapted and revised to meet the diverse challenges and succeeded in giving their students the best possible educational experience. We in the CEIST Office also had to adapt and change many of our practices due to the circumstances. Working from home became a part of life and communicating through Zoom was the norm. The uplifting parts of our role, visiting schools, attending special occasions in schools and Student Council Training were no longer possible and were greatly missed by us all.

However, as in schools, we devised different ways of doing things, our online "Gatherings" for school leaders, teachers, support staffs, students and Boards of Management continued and grew. Initiatives such as Transformative Meetings, Middle Leadership Programme (MLP), Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) were sustained through technology. We introduced new initiatives such as the Spiral Programme and Ethos Focus. Work commenced on the new CEIST Strategic Plan which will come into effect in 2022 and will take us through until 2027.

During 2021 we witnessed once again, the "changing of the guard" at some of our schools as members of Senior Management teams took their leave from us and proceeded onto pastures new. This is always a nostalgic time for those who have dedicated their lives in service to education. In 2021 it was made all the more difficult as Covid-19 restricted the type of farewell ceremonies schools like to have to mark these monumental occasions.

To those who embarked on a new leadership adventure, we wish you a rewarding and fulfilling career ahead. Be assured of our support as you lead and serve with care, compassion and ambition for all. Over the past year we appointed sixteen new Principals and twenty-four new Deputy Principals who began their leadership journeys in CEIST schools. We also welcomed one new Principal and seven Deputy Principals in our Community Schools and Designated Community Colleges.

Thirty-One new Boards of Management took office in October 2021. The willingness of so many to step into leadership roles in Catholic education is a source of inspiration. We wish them all every blessing in the years ahead.

During this time we had a number of changes in personnel. David Conway our Communications Manager departed in January for pastures new, Colin Roddy left us at the end of May after three very successful years and we greatly missed his wisdom and unique sense of humour. Kate Liffey, who brought a new dynamic and impetus to the role, returned to school life and left at the end of August, as did I. We are very fortunate to have added three very experienced and talented members to our team in Sharon McGrath, Rob Halford and Johnny McCormack.

I would like to thank the Board of CEIST for their tireless and voluntary work on behalf of the Trust and in particular the Chairperson, Bernard Keeley. Bernard will step down from the Board in May 2022 having served nine very exciting and challenging years as Chair of the largest Trust Body in Ireland. He brought a wealth of experience, knowledge and wisdom to the role and will be greatly missed. I would also like to thank all members of CEIST Boards of Management for their work for our schools and for all they give to our communities. CEIST Principals, Deputy Principals and teachers have been a pleasure to work with; their involvement in initiatives, positivity, striving for excellence, welcome and kindness shine through all they do. CEIST students are at the heart of everything and it has been a privilege to serve them.

I finally want to thank the CEIST Executive team who form the vital link between schools with the Board and always have the best interests of those we serve in mind. They are hard-working, creative, experienced and kind people and great fun to work alongside. Finally, we remember that we lost students, staff and family members from the CEIST community in 2021. We remember them all with love and gratitude and may eternal rest shine upon them.



Gerry McGill
Iterim CEO



LIFE isn't about waiting for the STORM TO PASS...



IT'S ABOUT learning to dance IN THE RAIN

The significant challenges presented by Covid-19 since March 2020 were embraced in CEIST schools with resilience, compassion and determination ensuring our schools continued to provide and participate in the highest possible standards of teaching, learning and care.

Great credit is due to all members of our school communities who, under the new normal, adapted and transformed, to give witness to the best of the human spirit, in an environment wrought with challenges, emerging overwhelmingly positive.



Christ King Secondary School @christkingss · 1h

Our 1st year Pastoral Team met with our parents this evening outlining the first month of transition into Christ King. A pleasure to discuss how the students have grown in confidence throughout this stage of the transition. #partnership #parents #teamworkmakethedreamwork



Wellbeing Day in Fota

Wellbeing Workshop Day

Ethos - Respect
Managing my Time
Healthy Eating
Staying Active
Reflection

Procedures

Sick at Home	Sick at School	Being Collected Early
Note in journal	Tell teacher	Note in journal
May ring office	Never unsupervised	Time arranged with student
Student looks for homework or notes missed	Deputy collects and isolates	Student goes to office
	School rings home	

Wellbeing Modules

- Yoga
- Digital Literacy
- Drama
- Art
- Cooking
- Irish Sign Language



Covid Landscape

Once again the predominant force in 2021 was Covid 19. The year began with news of the Delta surge and the decision that schools would not reopen after Christmas. We returned to online classes, although with greater expertise and less trepidation than previously. *Zoom, Teams* and other platforms once again became part of our everyday routine. Meetings (Parent Teacher, Staff, Leadership, Subject, Boards of Management, Parent Councils) were all remote but our schools didn't just cope, they met the challenges and turned adversity into achievement. We then entered the "blended" period when schools had to adapt to in person education for some and remote for others. It was not until 1st March that all students returned. Schools were then faced with Accredited Grades and all that this system involved. We all breathed a sigh of relief when 9th June arrived and there was some respite. September however, brought little relief, Omicron did not seem as lethal as previous variants but there was a great deal of uncertainty and fear. School leaders once again returned early to ensure that all possible steps were taken to protect the health and safety of staff and students once they returned. As the term progressed masks, social distancing and sanitising were part of the everyday, but at least some measure of extra-curricular activities began to return and with them, some of the joy that had been lost. There was more bustle, more smiles behind the masks and we began to look forward again.

Please God we are close to the end of these terrible times. We cannot reflect without being immensely proud of all that our school leaders, staffs and students faced, met and overcame. The resilience, flexibility and determination shown by them meant that the worst consequences of a global pandemic for our young people were avoided. Our young people have made incredible sacrifices over the last two years and some have suffered more than others. It will be our job going forward to help and support all of our students as we enter the Post Covid phase.

CEIST struggles to find words that are adequate to express our admiration, appreciation and respect for all that our Principals, Deputy Principals, teachers, non-teaching staffs and Boards of Management have done to guard and protect our students and their education since March 2020. They have shown commitment, adaptability, versatility but most of all care, compassion and love. We will be forever in their debt.

Boards of Management

The work of Boards of Management throughout the country is invaluable. We are indebted to and deeply appreciative of the generosity of these volunteers who give of their time and expertise pro bono. Thirty-one Boards of Management commenced a three-year term in October 2021, with many people having selflessly served for longer.

The induction of new Boards is incredibly important and so the first BOM meeting reserves as much time as possible to share relevant information with members. A streamlined approach which includes (if physically possible) a walk through the school and site, a handover document/report to the new BOM from outgoing members and the formal induction conducted by the CEIST FLG Co-ordinator was introduced. At that meeting, all roles and responsibilities are outlined as well as the necessary processes to ensure good governance. We look forward to meeting and working with Boards of Management over the coming year and again thank each Trust, Parent and Teacher nominee for their generosity of time and expertise in supporting the Principal and school community to do excellent work.

Under a new initiative a Gathering for new members to existing Boards of Management was held in early November which was very well received.



Interim Board of Management at St. Seton's College, Ballyfermot

Ethos Group

Following on from the Middle Leadership Programme, held in spring, a group of teachers from CEIST schools came together with Kate Liffey, to explore ethos within their schools and within the wider CEIST group of schools. The following two research questions emerged:

1. *How do we view, enact, and value the CEIST ethos of our school?*
2. *How do we celebrate ethos in our school?*

Schools are of course familiar with school self-evaluation and it is this that will inform the group's handling of both of these questions. It is hoped that the process being developed by this group of teachers working together will be refined for use in other CEIST schools in the area of ethos evaluation in their schools.

The research methodology being employed is action research; a form of research that allows practitioners on the ground to plan, act, observe and reflect on a specific area of interest. Action research acknowledges that the researcher, in this case, the teacher is surrounded by rich research opportunities that allow the group to, ***“theorise practice, revise theories self-critically in the light of practice and transform practice into praxis or informed, committed action”*** (Carr and Kemmis, 1986).

As part of Phase 1 of this research, the group decided to explore through questionnaires initially, the first of these questions. The second question will form the focus of the next phase of the group's engagement together.

For Phase 1 of the project, questionnaires have been designed by the group for use with students, parents/guardians and staff members. Consent and assent forms have been designed. The questionnaires have been designed with advice from Dr Bernadette Sweetman (Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education, DCU):

- To allow for cross referencing of results across the three groupings (students, staff, parents/guardian)
- To allow for a focus on the five values contained within the CEIST Charter

Following the surveying of all partners in education in our schools, the lessons from this process of SSE will be shared within the wider CEIST network of schools. Individual schools involved in the process will design tools to allow for a celebration of what is working well within their schools and also a process to allow for focused energy and effort to be given to improving what is not working so well. The data gathered will also serve as a useful baseline for further review work in this area in schools.

The schools now involved are:



St Aloysius College, Cork



Presentation Secondary School, Kilkenny



Scoil Mhuire, Kanturk

Spiral Programme

Spirituality grows and develops when it goes on a journey. **“The Spiral Programme”** was a programme that sought to bring CEIST Principals and Deputy Principals on this journey. Through interactions with leading thinkers in Ireland and beyond in the areas of Theology, Education, Spirituality, Scripture, Sociology and Ecology, our participating school leaders reflected on some challenging content to help them on their journey. What is below will give you a flavour of the kind of material they reflected on together. It is outlined here in the form of questions and short descriptors to give you a taste of what was expected.

CEIST Spiral Programme

September 2021 - November 2021



**A PROGRAMME
FOR YOUR OWN
PERSONAL AND
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
AS THE LEADER
OF YOUR
SCHOOL.**

The programme will take place over 10 weeks beginning in September 2021 and concluding in early November 2021. The programme will be online, using Zoom.

- Who is God for me? Introducing a theology fit for Catholic education in my CEIST school in the 21st century. Fr Dermot Lane, Theologian, and priest of Dublin Archdiocese.
- What will help me make better decisions as a leader in my school? Fr. Brian Grogan SJ, Jesuit scholar and writer.
- What is eco-spirituality and why is it so important in Catholic educational leadership? Jane Mellett, Laudato Si Officer, Trócaire
- What is God's word saying to me now? The word of God alive in our schools; Scripture and the Catholic school, particularly as it relates to inclusion. Dr Jessie Rogers, Scripture Lecturer, St Patrick's College, Maynooth.
- How can we be well? How can I be well? Wellbeing and the Leader in the context of my school's ethos and in the context of Wellbeing Guidelines offered to schools by the NCCA. Brian Gillen, Psychotherapist.
- What about the young people I lead in my school? A look at culture, and Catholic education. Fr Johnny Go SJ, academic and author.
- Why do we call God, love? And how can a relationship with Jesus help me in my work? Love at the heart of Catholic education. Fr Paddy Byrne, Priest of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin.
- How can I 'do' ecumenism and inter-religious engagement within my Catholic school in a way that is life giving for students of all beliefs and none? The role of dialogue in Catholic schools. Dr Aiveen Mullally, Marino Institute of Education.

Feedback received so far on the programme has been very positive. Our gatherings held from the end of September to the start of November were marked by incredible good humour, real generosity of spirit, honesty and a deep desire for growth. We thank the Principal and Deputy Principals who gave so generously of their time to take part in the programme. We thank them also for their flexibility. Thanks also to our presenters.

A more formal review of the programme is ongoing in the context of a study being conducted by Dr. Bernadette Sweetman of the Mater Dei Institute of Education on questions related to adult religious education and faith development.

Professional Development Initiatives

Child Protection

"Child Protection is the most important part of our job for the young people in our care"

Principals and Deputy Principals were offered an information session on Child Protection presented by Sharon McGrath.

The aims of the session were to give participants an overview of the requirements and obligations with regard to ***Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*** with particular emphasis on Department of Education Child Protection Inspections. Sharon spoke about the range of models used by the Inspectorate to monitor implementation of the 2017 Procedures with particular emphasis on the intensive full-scale inspection known as Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection model (CPSI) The ten main checks were explored in detail. The absolute requirement to use the Department of Education templates was emphasised as well as the recent requirement to include in the Child Safeguarding Statement an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) which outlines the school's approach to remote or distance learning and how the school informs parents of its approach.

This was followed by a comprehensive experiential outline of a recent CPSI. Practical guidance on preparing for an inspection was given. This included advice on preparing all stakeholders, parents, students and all school personnel.

All support and ancillary staff were offered an information session on their role in child protection. The aims of the session were to introduce the ***Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017***, to promote a whole school approach to the welfare and safety of students.

Transforming Meetings

Transforming Meetings is a programme for School Principals and Deputies to get the very best thinking, action and results at meetings in schools, whether they are online or face to face. It is a programme developed by *Time To Think Ltd*, an organisation pioneered and led by Nancy Kline, author of *Time to Think; More Time To Think; and The Promise the Changes Everything*. The Time to Think philosophy. Over three mornings you learn and experience the Transforming Meetings methodology to:

- Create an engaging and interactive meeting environment
- Develop meeting's behaviour that is collaborative and helps all voices be heard
- Prepare transformative meeting agendas to operate in a very structured yet highly participative and collaborative way, using the 10 components of the *Transforming Meetings* methodology
- Improve engagement before, during and after meetings using a range of *Transforming Meetings* techniques such as Thinking Pairs, Rounds, Dialogue and Open Discussions
- Be more productive and inspired in meetings
- Improve the quality of thinking and listening of those attending
- Encourage equality and diversity honouring the CEIST value of Showing Respect for every Person
- Create a psychologically safe environment for quality decisions to be made
- Engage in respectful, robust discussions and move more easily into and through conflict

Middle Leadership Programme

In the Spring and Autumn of 2021, despite the many restrictions and curtailments, we were delighted to witness the largest number of participants ever (over 400 teachers from CEIST schools) complete the CEIST Middle Leadership Programmes. The necessity, due to Covid-19, to adapt this programme to online delivery proved extremely successful and allowed a greater breadth of participants countrywide. Feedback and evaluation from all cohorts have been extremely positive. Over five evenings participants explored the hallmarks of leadership in a CEIST school. Leadership as service was a key theme and the five CEIST values were explored with regards to how we can ensure that these values are genuinely experienced in our schools. Among the topics covered were:

- Governance & Provenance of CEIST schools
- Leading a Faith School in the 21st Century
- Legal Framework
- Building the Inclusive School
- Leading Teaching and Learning in a CEIST School
- Building Teams – Working with Others
- Moving Forward – Taking on Leadership Roles



Together with the CEO, all School Coordinators contributed to presentations. Each evening a minimum of one Principal or Deputy Principal shared their experience of being a school leader and these practical inputs translated the theory of leadership into the reality of how values can be the scaffold which supports all our interactions and experiences in our schools.

There is a belief among the Faith Leadership and Governance Coordinators that this course may be more aptly named as a Teacher Leadership Programme as it aims to strengthen a teacher's understanding that all teachers are leaders of learning. Moreover, all teachers are advocates and guardians of ethos and the value-laden culture of our Catholic schools. The title '**Middle Leadership Programme**' may erroneously imply that the programme is exclusively for those who aspire to holding a formal leadership role in the school.

Just to remember that the school's ethos is at the core of every encounter we have or every engagement we share with all personnel in the overall school community.

I thoroughly enjoyed and found great value in the programme. Will highly recommend it.

It energised me again and reminded me why I went into teaching in the first place.

I thoroughly enjoyed the course and I didn't feel the time passing each week at all. I could have listened to all the guest speakers all day long. Their enthusiasm and motivation were infectious and inspirational

Induction for newly appointed Staff and Senior Leaders

CEIST engages with all schools in September of each year to promote a welcome and induction of new teachers into the CEIST family of schools. This year, as Covid restrictions continued we held an online Induction Seminar “**Welcome to the CEIST Family**” for all new teachers across our schools.

With the attention of a large audience of over 200 teachers we both celebrated our CEIST Values and what they mean for a teacher in a CEIST school and challenged our new teachers to participate fully in the life of their school so as to live out CEIST Values to the full. Under the theme that ‘teachers are more than the subject they teach’ we emphasised how teachers have a unique and cherished opportunity to play a critical role in the lives of the young students they work with. Teaching is a privilege and with that privilege comes great responsibilities. The emphasis was on encouraging our new teachers to both embrace the privilege and be sincere to their responsibilities.

In discussion and feedback, the unique place of CEIST Schools as Faith Schools protecting and nourishing an inherited ethos from the founding congregations was seen by all as a strength and a key reason as to why our new teachers chose to pursue a career in a CEIST school. We also gave sense to the current reality of contemporary Irish society and why it is now important that our schools must demand a very positive and confident expression of ethos and characteristic spirit from everyone in the school going forward.

The CEIST team met with newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals on separate days in early October. The opportunity to meet face to face was greatly appreciated and allowed a wonderful sharing of practice, as well as the opportunity to make connections which will hopefully last for many years to come. Almost 30 new school leaders attended over the two days and were welcomed by the full CEIST team including its three new Faith Leadership and Governance Co-ordinators.

Leadership in Catholic Education is vitally important and has been entrusted into extremely capable hands. CEIST school leaders must be noble, courageous and ambitious for their schools, protecting and promoting them at every opportunity, mindful of the rich heritage and the noble intentions of our founding congregations.

The role as Principal is of course a hugely challenging role. However, principalship is, more than anything an awesome privilege where we support and assist our students to flourish as young people and as children of God.



Newly appointed
Principals and Deputy
Principals gathering in
October 2021



Gatherings

Gatherings for Senior Leaders and Chairpersons

Leadership Gatherings for Senior Leaders and Chairpersons were held throughout the year and we were delighted to be joined in such large numbers, generally over 200 participants, at each of our CEIST Leadership Gatherings.

Our first Gathering of the year, **“Sustaining the Leader”**, took place on 9 February 2021 and we were humbled by the numbers who took time out to attend, submitted scores of questions in advance and shared their hopes and prayers for the future. Once again guest speaker Professor Luke O’Neill, School of Biochemistry and Immunology at Trinity College Dublin, gave an uplifting take on where we were with Covid-19, the roll-out of the vaccines and the future landscape. He certainly managed to inspire hope in us all and was most thankful for all the messages of support that were relayed on the day.

We concluded our Leadership Gatherings for the 2020/2021 academic year on 5 May with guest speaker Dr. Tony Bates, advising on **“Minding our Mental Health”**. After such a challenging period for all involved in education, it was so encouraging to hear Tony’s observations and insights. He was especially affirming of school leaders who have sustained so many, often at a personal cost. During the same Gathering, we heard from a number of our own school Leaders who kindly shared their stories and their journey through Covid-19. The descriptive image provided during the reflection of how we are all in the same storm but not, however, “All in the Same Boat” garnered much food for thought. However, despite all, there was an unequivocal sense of gratitude.

We were extremely pleased to have Bishop Denis Nulty join with us on 9 September, the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, for our Leadership Gathering **“New Beginnings”** to bestow a blessing upon our CEIST community. In his address Bishop Nulty offered an alternative interpretation to the CEIST acronym –**Christ Encountered In Schools Today**. We have adopted this daily challenge as an opportunity for each of us to question how we can bring/meet Christ in our various encounters with others, in our classrooms, on the corridors, in canteens, sports grounds and pitches, being present with and for each other, listening, helping, guiding and sharing.

Our December Gathering celebrated the theme of **“Reflections of Hope”** with input from a cross-section of our school community, Principals, Chairpersons and Students. Input from Choir, Presentation Secondary School, Ballyphehane brought a festive vibe with their beautiful rendition of **“Winter Song”**.

Once again we are appreciative of the huge number of Principals, Deputy Principals and Chairpersons who took time out of their busy days to join us. We hope that the various Gatherings provided not only support but most importantly a spirit of collegiality 'in communio'.

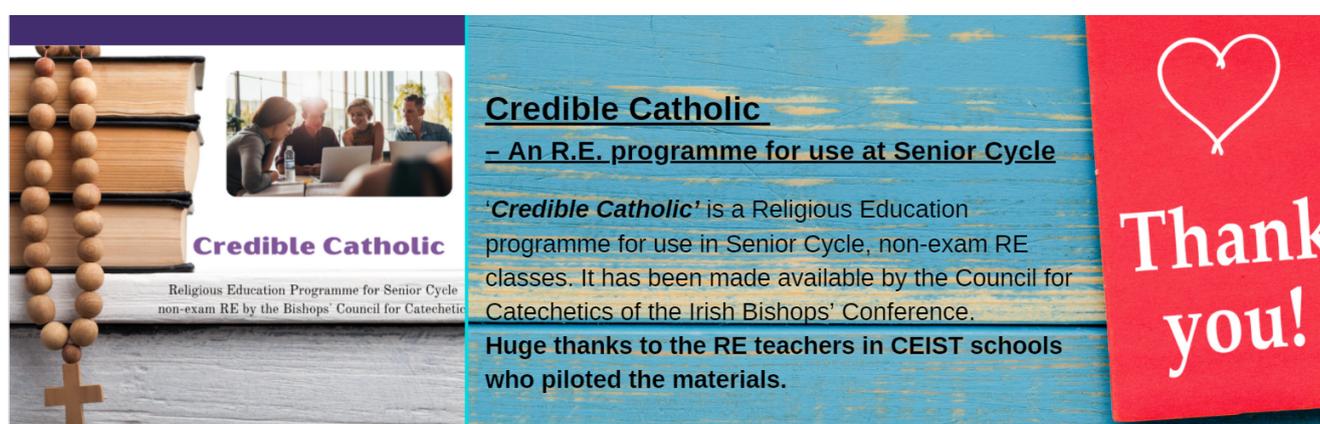


Gathering for Religious Education Teachers

Two Gatherings for Religious Education Teachers took place in May 2021 before the summer break. Once again we were delighted to see superb interest and commitment with 118 RE teachers participating. The days provided a mix of activities/workshops with contributions from The Sanctuary, Dr. Aiveen Mullally, Fr. Eugene Duffy and supported by some of our own CEIST R.E. Teachers.

Emerging from this gathering a number of opportunities have presented for schools to become involved in:

- Piloting of "Credible Catholic" in September 2021.
- Research into Senior Cycle RE in collaboration with the Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education.



Credible Catholic
– An R.E. programme for use at Senior Cycle

'Credible Catholic' is a Religious Education programme for use in Senior Cycle, non-exam RE classes. It has been made available by the Council for Catechetics of the Irish Bishops' Conference.

Huge thanks to the RE teachers in CEIST schools who piloted the materials.

Thank you!

The programme aims 'to stimulate dialogue, encourage reflection and critical reasoning, foster religious literacy, build community, and nurture faith, and in doing all of these things, to promote student wellbeing' CEP, Oct. 2021.

The following is a link to the programme: www.catholicschools.ie/crediblecatholic

Gatherings for Support Staff

CEIST recognise the input, very often in the background, of School Support staff. These often unsung heroes and heroines—caretakers, secretaries, cleaners, nurses, librarians etc. who are absolutely critical in the day to day running of our schools were invited to join us throughout the year. In March 2021, school secretaries joined an online meeting on a short CPD presentation on "**Minutes of Meetings - Best Practice**" which outlined producing the final Draft Minutes including, preparation, note taking and minute taking process. On 30 September 2021, as mentioned above, all support and ancillary staff were offered an information session on their role in child protection in a presentation "**Child Protection for Support Staff**".

A further Support Staff Gathering was held on 16 December 2021 celebrating the theme "**A Spirit of Gratitude**". We were delighted to welcome Minister Norma Foley who was sincere in her praise for the unbelievably hard work and dedication of this sector in these challenging times. The choir from Mercy Mounthawk, Tralee, with their rendition of "**O Holy Night**" brought the spirit of Christmas and sense of belonging and community to the occasion.

Student Leadership Focus 2020 / 2021

CEIST continued to develop its engagement with students over the year. Our focus has been on promoting the Student Voice as an active partnership in school life. Despite the restrictions of Covid we have conducted many Student Leadership Seminars with School Leadership /Council groups across the country.

We are delighted that students have a growing awareness of the importance of promoting our core CEIST Values as they engage within the local school community. Many schools develop follow-on initiatives which see student groups lead projects on issue of importance to them including promoting school ethos, anti-litter, care for the local area, looking after the vulnerable, promoting anti bullying, promoting positive behaviour, raising support for local charities, to name but a few.

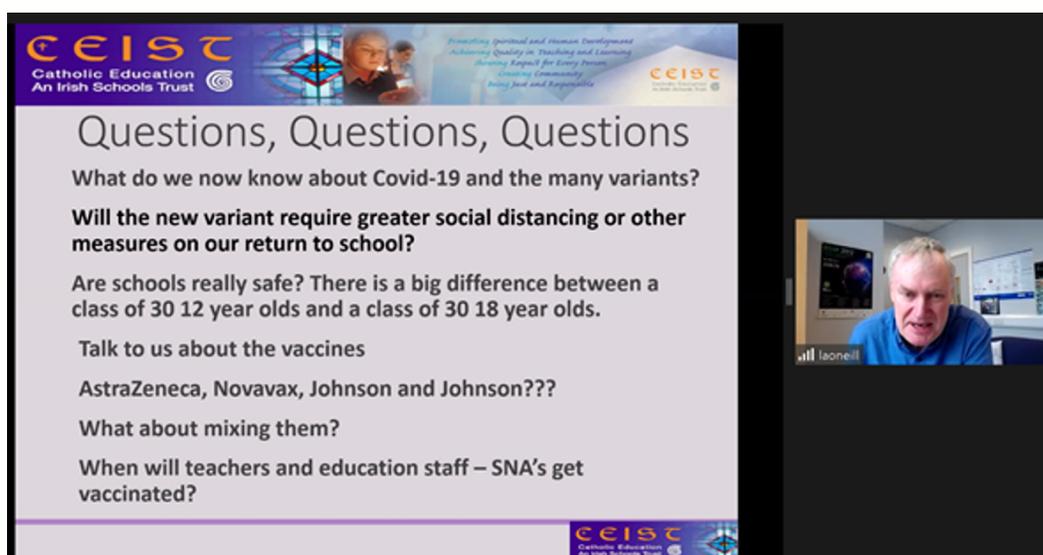
National Student Leadership Gathering 27 April 2021

As a means of highlighting our Annual National Student Conference, which again had to be cancelled due to Covid, we organised a national online Student Gathering on 27 April 2021.

School groups from all our schools across the country participated in a celebration of hope, gratitude and ambition for the future.

We heard from school groups as to how they have coped with the restrictions and what concerns them going forward. Professor Luke O'Neill was the keynote speaker and gave a very reassuring talk on why restrictions were important and how eventually 'science would beat the virus'.

Students were given an opportunity to put questions to Professor Luke on many every day practical implications of the virus in the school and wider community.



The image shows a screenshot of a Zoom meeting. On the left is a presentation slide with the CEIST logo at the top. The slide title is "Questions, Questions, Questions". Below the title are several questions related to COVID-19 and school safety. On the right side of the slide, there is a small video window showing Professor Luke O'Neill speaking. The slide text is as follows:

CEIST
Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust

*Promoting spiritual and human development
Advancing Quality in Teaching and Learning
Ensuring Progress for Every Person
Creating Communities
Being Just and Responsive*

Questions, Questions, Questions

What do we now know about Covid-19 and the many variants?

Will the new variant require greater social distancing or other measures on our return to school?

Are schools really safe? There is a big difference between a class of 30 12 year olds and a class of 30 18 year olds.

Talk to us about the vaccines

AstraZeneca, Novavax, Johnson and Johnson???

What about mixing them?

When will teachers and education staff – SNA's get vaccinated?

CEIST
Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust

We were very grateful to students from St. Joseph's Secondary School, Rochfortbridge, Co. Westmeath. Scoil Na Tríonóide Naofa, Doon, Co. Limerick and St. Mary's High School, Middleton Co. Cork who led the discussion with Professor Luke.

Community Schools & Designated Community Colleges

In 2018 the Congregations of the Sisters of Mercy and Presentation engaged CEIST to carry out the Trustee function in Community Schools and Designated Community Colleges under an Agency Agreement. This legal Agency Agreement commits CEIST to carrying out the 'Active Trusteeship' of the Mercy and Presentation Sisters in the schools where they are co-Trustees. The agency agreement was signed and extended for a further three years in October 2021. See 2020 Report.



The Agency Agreement functions include:

- Ensuring the maintenance of the characteristic spirit of the schools,
- Securing Trustee nominees to the Boards of Managements,
- Involvement in the appointment of the BOM under legislation,
- Securing Trustee nominees to Selection Boards for Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal , Principal and Chaplains posts.
- Keeping in touch with school life,
- Acquiring BOM Minutes and maintaining a relevant archive of same.
- Ensuring that relevant policies are in place.
- Liaison with the Provincial Leaders in approvals for major building projects or refurbishment,
- Working in partnership with the ETBs and other Catholic Trustees where relevant,
- Working with ACCS and other relevant organisations.



Our Faith Leadership & Governance (FLG) Co-Ordinators are only too happy to visit schools and offer assistance and support.



Capital Building Projects



CEIST, at the request of the Department of Education and Skills, agreed to fulfil the role of Project Executive for a number of Capital Projects in our schools. At present, CEIST is Project Executive on the following with further projects coming on stream.

- BANDON - Coláiste na Toirbhirte
- CALLAN - Coláiste Abhainn Rí
- CLONAKILTY - Sacred Heart Secondary School
- GALWAY - Calasanctius College
- GALWAY - Coláiste Muire Máthair
- GALWAY - Presentation College Headford
- KANTURK - Scoil Mhuire
- KILLARNEY - St. Brigid's Secondary School
- LIMERICK - Ardscoil Mhuire
- MIDLETON - St. Mary's High School
- NAVAN - St. Joseph's Secondary School
- RUSH - St. Joseph's Secondary School



This initiative has the objective:

- To deliver school building projects for Boards of Management.
- To accelerate delivery and achieve value for money in delivering school building projects where construction management experience and local knowledge, can assist with the process and obtain efficiencies in delivery, while still complying with procurement guidelines.
- To build up a level of educational design and procurement expertise external to the Department of Education and Skills
- To maintain quality of design and compliance with design guidelines by appropriate oversight in accordance with the Capital Appraisal guidelines.

St Joseph's Rush @stjosephsrush · 9h
Meeting with An Phríomhoide Tim Ó Tuachaigh @GaelscoilRosEo on the site of our new schools. Exciting plans ahead for the schools and Rush Community.



Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblaney



BANDON'S Coláiste na Toirbhirte has got the go-ahead for an extension comprising 16 classrooms.
The Department of Education has given the green light for four construction/technology/engineering rooms, one technical graphics room, two multi-media rooms and one design and communication graphics room.
There will also be three science laboratories, two home economics rooms and one music room. The new extension will also include a special education needs base which will accommodate two classes.



St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport



St. Brigid's Secondary School/Coláiste Abhainn Rí, Callan



Consultations on the Future of Catholic Post-Primary Education

Background and Context

As Catholic Patrons, we must ensure that our schools are in a position to provide Catholic education into the future, with the facilities and supports necessary for full educational provision and faith development. Significant changes emerging on the Irish educational landscape, together with falling student numbers, amalgamations etc. necessitates the ongoing evaluation of the future of our post-primary schools. Schools deserve clarity about the future - decisions about capital investment, infrastructure etc. are required in a timely manner to enable the provision of better educational facilities.

Tuam Report Commissioned by Catholic Archdiocese of Tuam and Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust (CEIST)

This Report was commissioned by the Patrons of the three Catholic post-primary schools in Tuam:-

- St. Jarlath's College
- Scoil Bhríde Mercy Secondary School
- Presentation College

In November 2020, a full consultation began with the local partners - Boards of Management, school staffs, parents, students and parents of Primary school children in the catchment area - on the future of Catholic post-primary education in Tuam. This consultation was supported by both patrons and conducted by an independent facilitator.

Aims of the consultation:

1. To gather the perspectives (in all three schools) of Boards of Management, staff, students and parents on the future of Catholic post-primary education in Tuam
2. To gather the perspectives of parents of primary school children in the Tuam catchment area on the future of Catholic post-primary education in Tuam
3. To capture the joys, concerns, hopes and anxieties of all which will inform a unified vision for Catholic post-primary education in Tuam to serve the community for decades to come.

A report was issued to the Boards of Management in November 2021 and it was agreed that the specifics of the consultation would be presented, in person, to each individual Board of Management, in February 2022.

Northside Cork City Report Commissioned by Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST), Religious Sisters of Charity and Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust (CEIST)

The consultation process is ongoing and has already included extensive discussion with the relevant stakeholders of each of the three voluntary secondary schools listed below:-

- St Vincent's Secondary School
- North Monastery Secondary School
- North Presentation Secondary School

The next phase of the process is to carry out a survey of Primary school parents in the local area. This is due to be completed in January 2022 and a full report will then be presented to the individual Boards of Management and Trustees.

New Frontiers

Coláiste Muire Máthair, Galway opened its doors for the first time on 1 September 2021, bringing about the amalgamation of Our Lady's College, Galway and St. Mary's College, Galway. This new venture, under the joint trusteeship of CEIST and the Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora represents the marriage of historic education traditions with a new co-educational entity that will provide an excellent, modern, outward-looking educational facility for the present and future generations of young people in Galway. September 2021 also saw a break with tradition when Coláiste na Toirbhirte, Bandon and Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount Dublin, changed their status to become co-educational schools.

In Bandon, the all-girls' secondary school responded positively to a request from the Department of Education and Skills to address the critical and immediate need for additional school places. The BOM and school community are to be commended for their generosity of spirit which will witness a process of incremental growth as the co-educational campus expands. The DES has agreed major capital investment over the next six years which will ensure Colaiste na Toirbhirte becomes a state-of-the art Catholic post-primary school serving the boys and girls of Bandon for generations to come. Changing times however call for a change in status and this school has embraced the opportunity to welcome boys this academic year. Throughout the summer months, extensive enabling building works have been taking place to accommodate boys and girls and facilitate a broadening of the curriculum.

The amalgamation process continues at Callan in preparation for the coming together of St. Brigid's Secondary School (CEIST) and Coláiste Éamann Rís (ERST). The new enterprise, Coláiste Abhainn Rí will be led by an Interim Board of Management. The building project is underway and on track for opening in September 2022.

St. Seton's Secondary School, Ballyfermot is an amalgamation of the three local voluntary secondary schools in Ballyfermot. Our own Caritas College and two local Le Chéile secondary schools St. John's College and St Dominic's College will join forces to provide a new school for 800 students. Due to delay on the building works this amalgamation has been postponed until September 2023. However, the appointment of a new Principal and an Interim Board of Management will ensure work on curriculum planning, student supports and building is in train to ensure the future of Catholic education provision for students and the local community in Ballyfermot.

In Ennistymon three second level schools (ETB, ERST, CEIST) are working towards an amalgamation with the building due for completion in September 2023. An Amalgamation Steering Committee for the new Community School is preparing policies, curriculum etc.



A Unified Admission Process (UAP), a facilitated process overseeing the development and implementation for entry to first year in four post-primary schools in Ennis was initiated last year. After many meetings and positive collaboration this initiative proved hugely successful with all children successfully securing places for September 2022. It is hoped that a similar process might be adopted in other parts of the country.

Governance & Management

CEIST continued to promote excellent corporate governance. The Chairperson and CEO of CEIST held two informal meetings during 2021 with CEIST Members to appraise them of the ongoing work of the Trust.

In 2021 the CEIST Board of Directors held ten meetings:-

- 28th January 2021
- 25th March 2021
- 6th May 2021
- 26th May 2021
- 17th June 2021
- 18th & 19th August 2021
- 30th September 2021
- 19th October 2021
- 4th November 2021
- 9th December 2021

The AGM of the Company took place on 17th June 2021.

Board of Directors

Mr Bernard Keeley	Chairperson
Ms Anne McDonagh	
Sr Mary Rossiter	To 17/06/2021
Mrs Anne McDonnell	
Mr Donal Cronin	
Mr David Cox	
Ms Maria O'Rourke	
Sr Margaret Farrell	
Mr Paul McEvoy	
Rev Dr Tomás Surlis	
Monsignor Gearóid Dullea	From 17/06/2021
Mr Andrew O'Leary	From 17/06/2021
Sr Marie Wall	From 17/06/2021

Audit Committee

Mr Paul McEvoy

Chairperson

Sr Mary Rossiter

To 17/06/2021

Mr Donal Cronin

Mr Andrew O'Leary

From 17/06/2021

The CEIST Audit Committee held ten meetings during the year.

In order to monitor our schools with symptoms of financial stress, updated reports on current schools in financial difficulty and schools showing symptoms of potential stress are presented regularly to the CEIST Audit Committee. These reports are reviewed and discussed in detail by the CEIST Audit Committee and the CEIST Board of Directors. Schools identified as being “at risk” are monitored closely. CEIST works with these schools to encourage an increase in income and decrease in expenditure so that they might return to financial stability.

The CEIST Executive is grateful to schools for their continued engagement, hospitality and assistance in so many ways throughout 2021. Schools submitted Annual School Budgets, Annual School Accounts and applications for approval, by CEIST, of all Capital Expenditure. Board of Management Minutes and Finance Subcommittee Reports were reviewed and monitored by the Executive. In the 2020-2021 school year, every school received a formal school visit from the school Coordinator although many were online due to the ongoing pandemic. Trustee matters, including the school's ethos in practice were discussed at each visit.

Following consideration, a recommendation that the remit of the Audit Committee would be extended to include Risk Management in accordance with the code of practice for Charities was presented to the Board of Directors at the 2021 AGM. It was agreed that the name be amended to Audit & Risk Committee in order to widen its governance and be compliant with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA). Changes to the terms of reference, to reflect the added responsibility of risk was adopted in line with the CRA.

2021

CEIST CLG - 2021 Financial Performance

The CEIST CLG Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2021 are prepared in accordance with The Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102.

Financial Summary

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
<u>Income</u>		
EDUCENA Funding	709	515
Licence Fees	398	394
Ethos Development Donations	13	13
Presentation Sister NE Provence Donation re Galway Schools Amalgamation	37	0
Miscellaneous Income	43	52
Department of Education Funded School Building Projects	<u>5,650</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>6,850</u>	<u>974</u>
<u>Administrative Costs</u>		
Employee Costs	639	661
Depreciation	11	10
Rent	25	25
Travel and Subsistence	31	28
Website Development IT Costs	22	21
Rationalisation of Schools	58	22
School Training/Publications/PR	43	23
Ethos Development Expenditure	13	13
Other Costs	143	152
Department of Education Funded School Building Projects	<u>5,650</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>6,635</u>	<u>955</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>215</u>	<u>19</u>

Note:

CEIST CLG operates on a break-even basis each year, with the accounts generally indicating a deficit equal to depreciation (non-cash item). The surplus of €19k in 2020, funded a capital spend of €29k during the year. The surplus in 2021 is as a result of once off additional funding from The Educena Foundation to eliminate the accumulated deficit that had arisen in the CEIST CLG Financial Statements. This deficit arose primarily from the write-off of assets in year ended 31st December 2012 when CEIST CLG moved from Maynooth Business Campus to the Kildare town premises and depreciation thereafter. These losses related to the non-cash element of the work of CEIST CLG.

No internal control issues arose from the audit of the CEIST Company Limited by Guarantee Financial Statements in respect of the year ended 31st December 2021.

Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027

The Strategic Plan has been in preparation since autumn 2020. The Chairperson of the Board and the CEO have been involved throughout and have shaped the focus of the plan to ensure its relevance and connection to the Mission of CEIST. The process has been independently facilitated. There have been consultations with the Members of CEIST, with the Board, the team of FLGs and the CEIST office team. There was also engagement with school leaders. There are five strategic goals, reflecting the five Values of the CEIST Charter. These Values intersect and overlap, reflecting different dimensions of a unified and integrated mission. A focus on one enhances and strengthens all others.

Each Value, enshrined in our Charter, has a set of ambitions – statements of how that Value is expressed in the work of CEIST in schools and in all of our structures and practices. The Strategic Plan sets the direction for CEIST as we continue on our mission to provide holistic education in the Catholic Tradition. The Plan is a journey, one we embrace together

These assertions are followed by specific actions which are commitments undertaken by CEIST for the period of this strategic plan, 2022 to 2027. The Board established Working Groups to examine the Founding Documents in the context of the Strategic Plan. In Autumn 2021, the Board established a Subgroup to oversee the development of the Strategic Plan on behalf of the Board. Covid 19 caused delays in bringing the plan to fruition. The Founding Documents – the Master Agreement, the Funding Agreement, the Articles and Memorandum of Association – as well as the CEIST Charter, have been critical sources to ensure that this Strategic Plan honours the founding intentions and safeguards the legacy of CEIST.

CEIST Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Living out our Founding
Mission and Catholic Ethos

CEIST STAFF

Chief Executive Officer

- Clare Ryan

Faith Leadership and Governance Co-Ordinators

- Rob Halford From 01/09/2021
- Kate Liffey To 27/08/2021
- Rita McCabe
- Johnny McCormack From 01/09/2021
- Sharon McGrath From 01/09/2021
- Gerry McGuill To 27/08/2021
- Colin Roddy To 31/05/2021
- Gerry Watchorn

Co-Ordinator for Community Schools and Designated Community Colleges

- Pádraigín Uí Riordáin

Finance Officer

- Bernadette McKeown

Information and Communications Systems Manager

- David Conway To 19/01/2021

Administration

- Rosemary Greene

Executive Administrator

- Helena McKenna



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