

**To both secondary school communities in Ballinasloe**

**St. Joseph's College and Ardscoil Mhuire**

**NAME OF AMALGAMATED BALLINASLOE SECONDARY SCHOOL ANNOUNCED**

Planning for the amalgamation of Ballinasloe secondary schools St. Joseph's College, Garbally, and Ardscoil Mhuire, has reached an important milestone with the naming of the new school which will open on 1st September 2025. After an extensive consultation process by the Amalgamation Steering Committee locally with the school communities, the Patrons are pleased to announce that the new school will be named

**“Clonfert College”.**

St. Joseph's College, Garbally, was founded by the Diocese of Clonfert, and Ardscoil Mhuire was founded by the Sisters of Mercy of the Diocese of Clonfert. It is therefore very fitting that the new school name should reflect the historical and religious origins of the two schools, and the location of the amalgamated school in the Diocese of Clonfert which is under the Patronage of St Brendan the Navigator (c. AD 484 – c. 577).

The newly amalgamation school will continue to draw on the richness of the Catholic Tradition of Education promoting Christian values and high educational standards in a coeducational setting. The new school will not only serve Ballinasloe town, but the surrounding areas and the 21 feeder primary schools which have traditionally supported the two schools.

As it was important to develop an identity for the new school as soon as possible, the Amalgamation Steering Committee got down to work straight away last November, planning for immediate work to be completed during school year 23/24, the name of new School, the new school uniform and crest, staff development and Mission Statement.

The new school uniform has already been decided, with a decision on the crest to be announced soon after consultation within the schools. A staff development day has already been held, with another planned for next term.

Other ongoing work during school years 24/25 will involve planning for the introduction of co-education, Integration of both school staffs, parents'

associations and students' councils, admissions policy, code of behaviour, curriculum planning, booklists etc. An Interim Board of Management is expected to be appointed before the Summer.

The patrons wish to thank the Amalgamation Steering Committee and all in the school communities who have been involved in bringing the amalgamation project to this important stage. Our prayers are with all in the Ballinasloe secondary schools as they prepare for this exciting development in education for the area, and we wish every blessing on the new school, Clonfert College.

**Michael Duignan**

Bishop of Clonfert

Bishop of Galway and Kilmacduagh

Apostolic Administrator of Kilfenora

**Gerry McGuill**

Chief Executive Officer

CEIST