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School Prospectus

The school operates in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the relevant Department of Education & Skills Circulars and Guidelines. Saint Michael's National School welcomes you and your children to the school and looks forward to a happy, friendly and profitable partnership over the coming years.

Saint Michael's National School is a co-educational school under Church of Ireland Patronage with approximately 130 pupils on roll. Priority is given to Protestant applicants.

The aim is to educate pupils in a friendly atmosphere and to develop high standards of social and moral behaviour. An opportunity is provided for each child to reach his/her full potential and to develop the capacity to think clearly, creatively and critically. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to get to know and understand as much as possible of what is happening within the school through contact and discussion with the members of staff and the Principal, the members of the Board of Management (BOM) and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and to take advantage of the opportunity provided for consultation.

Under the patronage of the Church of Ireland

Saint Michael's National School, 11, Barrington Street, Limerick V94 A0K7

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1. School History

Saint Michael's N.S. enrolled its first pupils in November, 1882 and became part of the National School system in January 1885. At this early stage the school was comprised of a two-roomed building with 34 girls and 43 boys on roll. Many of these pupils had never been to a national school before, having been educated at home or at private schools. Others came from The Model School or Saint Munchin's School.

The school fees in 1885 were 6 shillings and this increased to 8 shillings the following year. Subjects taught were Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar, Geography, Book-keeping, Geometry and Mensuration. Girls attended Needlework Classes, while the boys were taught Agriculture.

The school was located on the present site at 11, Barrington Street and was extended in 1953, 1964 and 1968. Later in 1968, Villiers Primary School amalgamated with St Michael's N.S. Numbers of pupils increased over several years, and by 1971, it was a five-teacher school. In 1976, it reverted to being a four-teacher school. The present classrooms were added in 1984, giving the school four classrooms, a resource room, a gymnasium/hall, library, staff room, office and storage rooms. The numbers have risen steadily during the last decade, and there have been five mainstream class teachers since September, 2008. Since 2000, the Department of Education & Skills (DES) has invested in teaching and ancillary staff for Special Educational Needs (SEN) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils. In 2019 the school opened their 5th Classroom following an extensive building project.

2. Staff

Teacher Status

Ms Miriam Smyth	Principal/ Class Teacher
Ms. Ann Marie Mullane	Acting Deputy Principal/Class
Ms Sally Fossitt	Special Duties Teacher/Class Teacher
Ms Lorraine Moran	Deputy Principal/Class Teacher
Ms Maria Robinson	Special Duties Teacher/SET
Ms Sandra Wallace	Class Teacher
Ms Sheelagh Morrow	Special Education Teacher
Ms Noirín Meade	Shared Special Education Teacher
Ms Karen Gleeson	Shared Special Education Teacher
Ms Siobhán Hayes	Special Needs Assistant
Ms Patricia Coombs (Part-time)	Special Needs Assistant
Ms Annette O'Neill (Part-time)	Secretary
Mr Denis Hayes (Part-time)	Caretaker

3. Ethos of Saint Michael's N.S.

Saint Michael's N.S. is a co-educational National School under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Bishop of the United Dioceses of Limerick & Killaloe, the present Patron being the Rt. Rev. Kenneth Kearon. In line with DES advice in **Rules for National Schools**, that " ... a religious spirit should inform and vivify the whole work of the school ..." The Board of Management (BOM) of Saint Michael's N.S. and the staff seek to promote the development of honesty, truthfulness, courtesy, punctuality and responsibility in each individual pupil attending the school. A proper regard for the rights and views of others is encouraged. A caring and tolerant attitude to other people and to the environment is nurtured.

It is expected that pupils extend these values and attitudes in their dealings with other children in the school, with members of school staff, with parents/guardians, friends and others who may have occasion to visit the school.

It is the formal policy of the school to foster these attitudes both by explicit teaching in the classroom and in the informal life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as members of a community, where all are entitled to live irrespective of age, sex, and ability or family circumstances. It is advocated that senior pupils adopt a caring and responsible attitude to the junior pupils. The end of each term is marked by a service to which all parents/guardians and friends are invited.

4. Board of Management (BOM)

The Patron of the school is the Church of Ireland Bishop of the United Diocese, currently the Rt. Rev. Kenneth Kearon. The Board of Management (BOM), which has a four-year term of office, is responsible for the appointment of staff and the overall running of the school. It provides for the insurance, heating, cleaning and general maintenance of the school. It has among other things, final responsibility for the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour within the school and for the implementation of the Health and Safety and Welfare at Work Act. The Board of Management is constituted according to DES guidelines. The BOM was officially in place for 1st December, 2019 and its current term will expire on 30th November, 2023.

The present members of the Board are: -

Dean Niall Sloane	(Chairperson)	Patron's Nominee
Deirdre Doogan		Patron's Nominee
Brian Beck		Parent's/Guardian's Nominee
Jennifer O'Leary		Parent's/Guardian's Nominee
Sheelagh Morrow		Teachers' Nominee
Miriam Smyth		Principal

5. Parent/Teacher Communication

Parents/guardians are actively encouraged to meet with their child's teachers. Should your child bring home a story, or if you have any queries or worries regarding your child, contact your child's teacher via Seesaw. Children have wonderful imaginations, so please remember to check the veracity of any story you are told about school with the teachers first.

During the year a formal parent/teacher meeting will be arranged.

The BOM encourages a friendly atmosphere in the school, but is firm that certain criteria must pertain to informal parental visits. Parents/guardians should make an appointment with the teachers through Seesaw to discuss a child's progress or other school-related issues, at a time and place convenient to all, when children and other adults are not in earshot.

6. Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

The school has a very active Parent-Teacher Association, which is both supportive and helpful in keeping parents/guardians informed on all educational matters. The PTA exists as a forum for discussion between teachers and parents/guardians, and also as a liaison between parents/guardians and the Board of Management. In addition, the PTA also helps to raise money for the school over and above that supplied by the Department of Education & Skills.

7. School Times and Holidays - these may vary in 2020/2021 due to Covid 19

School starts/opens:	08:40 hrs.
Morning Break:	10:15 hrs to 10:25 hrs
Lunch:	12:00 hrs to 12:30 hrs
School Ends: Infants	13:20 hrs
Others	14:20 hrs

Holidays: The list is issued each year with the end-of-year reports in June. Other closures are notified as soon as possible to parents/guardians, generally by text message/email.

8. School Contribution

While the Department of Education & Skills (DES) provides a grant towards the costs of running the school, it only covers approximately a third of the actual

expenditure. Heating, cleaning and general maintenance costs are continually increasing. In the circumstances, and to keep the condition of the school up to the standards we expect for our children, contributions from parents towards the maintenance costs will be invited.

9. Punctuality

The school starts at 8:40 am every morning. However timeslots will vary in 2020/2021 due to covid 19. It is important that parents/guardians have pupils in school on time to prevent disruption to the classes. Infants should be collected promptly at 13:20 hrs and all remaining pupils should be collected promptly at 14:20. It is requested that parents/guardians collecting their children should remain outside the school building until their teacher dismisses the children. The Board of Management (BOM) is not responsible for pupils in the school grounds before or after school hours i.e. 8:40 am or 14:20.

10. Epayments, Emails, Web-texting

Emails and notices via Aladdin Connect are sent to families frequently. You are advised to check your Aladdin Connect App/emails regularly to keep up to date. Our school uses the Aladdin software service for administrative purposes and the e-Payment system will give you access from an internet browser on your computer, phone or tablet to make secure payments to the school using your credit or debit card. The purpose of the e-Payment system is to facilitate the easier payment of school money collections for parents/guardians and to reduce the amount of cash and cheques being sent into our school in line with recent central bank directives. Notes are sometimes sent home through school bag post so please check your child's school bag regularly. School administration is unable to enter into email correspondence with a parent/guardian concerning his/her child, as the school only has a part-time secretary.

If you wish to contact the school to discuss some matter with a member of the school staff, please contact the school by telephone (061 - 315 927), leaving a clear, brief message including your name and your contact phone no. **All meetings with staff must be arranged through the office.**

II. Absence Notes

1. All absences should be recorded using the Aladdin Connect APP

A *written* note must explain every absence, as this is required for the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). ***Please do not contact the school office with the reason for your child's absence.*** Medical certificates are required for absences longer than five consecutive days.

(Please note that pupils will not be marked absent if prior notification is given for absences such as dental appointments, medical appointments, other health personnel, examinations or religious ceremonies.)

2. Children leaving early. Please message the child's class teacher via Seesaw 24 hours in advance of collection. A child cannot leave the premises except in the company of her/his own parent/guardian. If another adult is collecting the child during school hours, the school must be notified ***in writing. Please do not expect the school office to pass on messages about your child's re-arranged collection/transport from school.***
3. Following 20 school days absence, the school is required by law to furnish the NEWB with your child's contact details and the types of absence accrued.

Parents/guardians are asked to maintain the integrity of the school year by arranging holidays to coincide with school closures.

12. School Reports

Reports are issued once yearly for all classes. If your child is transferring to another school, please notify the Principal in good time. Transfer forms may be required by the receiving school, which have to be completed by our staff. When the school office receives written confirmation that your child has been enrolled in another school, a school report and the results of Standardised Tests will issue to that school. A copy will be forwarded to you at the most recent address, which Saint Michael's N.S office has for your family.

13. Labelling

In your own interest, please label all your child's belongings.

14. School Buses

Buses to and from school vary in number and routes. School Transport office is located on Roxboro Road, Limerick contact telephone number: 061217445.

Transport D Scheme

The Church of Ireland Board of Education of the General Synod provides a small fund to compensate eligible families for the cost of transporting their children to primary school. To qualify for a grant, families must conform to three basic criteria: -

1. The scheme is for Protestant families only.
 2. The family must live at least 3.2km from the school under Protestant management, or from a scheduled bus service, which is deemed to “service the school”.
 3. The children must attend their nearest Protestant Primary school.
- Please contact the office if you are interested in applying for this grant.

Behaviour on school buses is outside the control of the school. However, in the interest of safety and for the school’s good reputation, parents/guardians should endeavour to ensure that a good code of behaviour is maintained by their children, whilst travelling on the bus.

15. School Books

Each year in June, booklists & book-bills are issued for the coming year. This gives parents/guardians adequate time to purchase the required books for September.

The school operates a Book Loan Scheme and a book bill will issue in June each year, which covers the cost of renting reading books, textbooks, Art & Craft materials, tests, report books and other sundry items. All bills are to be paid by the due date and all books purchased for the first day of the new school year. This scheme is operated by some parents/guardians under the auspices of the BOM.

16. Homework

Homework should become part of the routine of the child’s day. It is a habit, which, if acquired at a young age, will be of immense value to him/her at a later stage. Parents/guardians should ensure that the homework given is done well.

The following is a GENERAL GUIDELINE and should not be taken as absolute: -

	Reading/Sounds Book/Words				
Infants					
1st & 2nd Classes	10-15	minutes	written	work	plus
learning/reading					
3rd Class	15-20	minutes	written	work	plus
learning/reading					
4th Class	20-25	minutes	written	work	plus
learning/reading					
5th Class	20-30	minutes	written	work	plus
learning/reading					

6th Class
learning/reading

30-40 minutes written work plus

The above times are guidelines only and it must be remembered that some children work more quickly than others do. If you feel your child has too little written work, the class teacher will suggest additional workbooks which may be supervised by parents/guardians at home. If you feel your child has too much written homework, please sign the homework itself to indicate where you allowed your child to stop. **Each pupil, from 1st to 6th classes, must have a Pupil's Journal, which should be signed by Parent/Guardian each week.** In the event of a child coming to school without completed homework, a note will be required.

17. Insurance

All school activities are covered by our Insurance Policy. 24-hour Personal Accident Insurance is available for all children for a small yearly sum. Parents/guardians are notified of this each year. This is organised through the school office.

18. School Lunch

Healthy eating habits are encouraged. Children bring a packed lunch to school, which should be in unbreakable containers. **Chewing gum is NOT allowed** either on the school premises or on outings or field trips, where pupils are representing Saint Michael's NS. In the interests of safety, lollipops/nuts are not permitted.

19. Medical Problems

It is vital that the school is notified of any medical problem from which your child may suffer e.g. allergies, asthma, aural or sensory difficulties, etc. If your child has been ill overnight, please do not send him/her to school the next day. Please be positive that your child is completely well again before returning him/her to school. This should be a natural consideration to the staff and fellow students.

The Mid-Western Health Board Medical Authorities visit the school to perform optical and aural examinations. A dental examination is also undertaken by the school's dentist. You will be notified in advance about these and any other services offered by the Health Service Executive (HSE), for which you will be required to sign an authorisation form. In the case of infectious diseases, please notify the Principal **in writing**, as certain diseases have to be notified to the HSE.

If a pupil needs to take medication during school, the Principal must be notified in writing. This includes inhalers. The matter will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management, which will decide as to whether or not you will be required to sign a medical indemnity form.

20. Emergencies

The School Doctor is Dr. Philip Cullen, who may be called in cases of emergency. As part of the school's enrolment process you would have completed an Acceptance Form for Admission. Every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian, or the person(s) nominated on this form. The information you provide will also be used to fill the DES requirements for the Pupil On-line Database (POD).

It is each parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify any changes of address, phone numbers or designated people, to the school office in writing. No member of staff may alter this document

21. Activities

The following are additional activities (for which there may be a small charge) currently provided by the school: Swimming, Library, Arts & Crafts, etc.

The pupils are involved in reducing energy/water consumption, composting, recycling certain goods and keeping the grounds litter-free.

22. Parental Involvement

Areas of parental involvement include supporting the school culture and ethos, Fun Day, Food fair etc. All such activities are organised by arrangement with the members of the PTA and in consultation with the Principal. Parents/guardians have nominees on the Board of Management, the current parents being Caroline Ritchie and Brian Beck.

23. Car Parking/Traffic

The following rules must be observed for your and your children's safety at the junction of Pery Square and Barrington Saint:

- a) Do not double park.
- b) Cars may not be left unattended on Pery Square/Barrington Street.
- c) Staff cars only may enter the school grounds.
- d) Please consider the safety of children boarding school buses.
Do not park in the Bus Stop zone.
- e) Infant parents must come into the school grounds to receive their child/ren from the Infant teacher.

24. Code of Behaviour

The Board of Management of Saint Michael's NS and the staff seek to promote the development of honesty, truthfulness, courtesy, punctuality and responsibility in each individual pupil attending the school. It is hoped to inculcate a proper regard for the rights and views of others. A caring and tolerant attitude to other people and to the environment will be promoted. It is expected that pupils will extend these values and attitudes in their dealings with other children in the school, with members of school staff, with parents, friends and others who may have occasion to visit the school. It is the formal policy of the school to promote these attitudes both by explicit teaching in the classroom and in the informal life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as members of a community where all are entitled to live irrespective of age, gender, intelligence or family circumstances. Senior pupils are encouraged to adopt a caring and responsible attitude to the junior pupils. Behaviour in the school also includes the school vicinity, school field trips / functions, school buses, etc.

Good behaviour in the school depends on the support, the co-operation and the example of staff, members of BOM and PTA, parents and guardians. For the smooth running of the school it is essential that certain rules be adhered to. Certain behaviour is forbidden: -

1. The use of bad language
2. Bullying, kicking and spitting, punching, injuring others
3. Throwing rubbish around the school premises
4. Leaving the school premises during school hours without permission
5. Climbing on trees, walls, railings, etc.
6. Throwing of sticks, stones, etc.
7. Damage to school property or property of other pupils, staff members or visitors.
8. Disrespect for other pupils, staff members or visitors.
9. Violence towards other pupils, staff members or visitors.
10. Continually causing disruption in the classroom.

All teachers are responsible for the day-to-day discipline of their own classes and will devise the appropriate sanctions as they feel necessary. However, continuous misbehaviour will result in referral to the Deputy Principal or Principal, when the offender's name may be recorded. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately for certain misbehaviour. In specific instances, it will be referred to the BOM and suspension may be the option. Parents/guardians are expected to support staff in their endeavours to maintain good behaviour within the school. Responsibility for the running of the school lies with the Board of Management.

The example of adults has a profound effect on children. To this end, all staff and other adults on the school premises are asked to remember to knock on the door of a room, wait to be acknowledged, before entering it if others are working or discussing matters. Staff may not discuss children's progress or other issues regarding a child during school hours, unless an appointment has been made to adequately supervise the child/children for whom s/he is responsible. All appointments must be made through the office, when both the class teacher and the Principal will be made aware of a forthcoming meeting. All meetings to discuss progress or other issues have to be recorded. *(Email correspondence about children is not acknowledged by the school staff.)*

The above is a summary from the Code of Behaviour Policy for Saint Michael's National School.

The contents contained herein, prepared by representatives of the Parents/Guardians, Teachers and Board of Management, will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

25. Dress Code

A formal dress code document may be written and distributed to parents/guardians in the future. However, the dress code should at all times be appropriate to the age of the child. What is appropriate shall be decided by social and cultural convention. If the child looks out of place in the company of his/her peers, the parent/guardian should be aware that this may increase the risk of subtle bullying. Similarly, parents/guardians should be aware of the peer pressure to have the most fashionable outfits. The school endorses comfortable, sensible and age-appropriate clothing in the absence of a school uniform. Most particularly, make-up, hats, heeled shoes, sunglasses, mini-skirts, jewellery (apart from watches and ear studs), heeled shoes and heavy boots indoors are not allowed. It is recommended that skirt/dress hems should be knee-length (no mini-skirts) and shorts should be of reasonable length down the thigh (no hot-pants).

26. Use of Electronic Equipment

iPods, MP3s, camera phones, cameras, DS, Gameboys, mobile phones and other electronic devices are not allowed on the school premises. If a parent/guardian requires a child to have a mobile phone during school hours, a letter must be sent to the BOM for its first meeting of the school year **on an annual basis**. The school will also not be held responsible for the use or misuse of any devices while the student is in school or is travelling under the auspices of the school, or to or from school.