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Board of Management – Annual Report 2023/2024

The purpose of this Board of Management Annual Report of Saint Michael's National School is to provide a summary of information on the operation of the school in line with the requirements of the Education Act 1998. This Report serves as an addition to the information provided on the school's website www.smnslimerick.ie, the various -newsletters issued by the school and information provided via email and the Aladdin Connect Noticeboard.

A message from the Principal

Firstly, I want to thank all our pupils, parents and the staff of Saint Michael's for continuing to make this school the wonderful place it is. Visitors to our school often comment on the positive atmosphere in the school and how wonderful the children are and I have to agree with them!

At the start of the year we welcomed new staff member, Ms. Laurianne Carmody, who was in a shared SET role with Limerick School Project. Term One saw the very welcome return of swimming lessons for pupils from 2nd - 6th class. Throughout the year the pupils really enjoyed a variety of activities such as: GAA training, dance classes, visits to Limerick City Library, Limerick City Gallery of Art and the Hunt Museum, in-school artist visits and Maths, Engineering and Science Week activities. We had some exciting visitors throughout the year, including a parent who helped us learn 'Silent Night' in Polish, another parent who ran workshops as part of Engineering Week and even grandparents came to visit! We enjoyed some performances from our talented singers and musicians in the school as part of our Christmas Carol service and we all enjoyed being accompanied by Bishop Burrows on the organ as part of his Peregrinations. We were delighted to welcome the Bishop back again later in the year to help us celebrate our Green Schools flag raising ceremony. Seachtain na Gaeilge was filled with 'spraoi agus sport' with 'radio na scoile', the céilí mór and the poc fada competition being firm favourites.

All the classes had a lot of fun on their school tours and during various sporting events, such as rugby blitzes, UL School Sports day and our very own Sports Day. There was great celebration the day the Liam McCarthy Cup visited and everyone (or almost everyone!) is hoping we will welcome the cup back this year again. We were delighted to be recipients of a STEM grant for over €8000 and we are looking forward to getting some interesting STEM projects up and running in the new school year.

The whole school community wish Ms. Maria Robinson the very best for her upcoming retirement. Ms. Robinson is going to be missed by everyone but we know she'll come back to visit us from time to time. The Board of Management would like to congratulate Sixth Class as they finish their Primary school years and embark on a new exciting stage of their lives. We hope your time in Saint Michael's has been happy, full of friendships, learning and happy memories. We also have to say goodbye to Portia and Szymon who are both moving. We wish you the very best for your new schools and new homes. To all our other pupils and families, have a wonderful summer and we look forward to welcoming you back on August 29th.

Board of Management

Patron Nominee / Chairperson – The Very Rev'd Niall J.W. Sloane
Community Nominee / Treasurer – Neil Keane
Teachers' Nominee – Ann-Marie Mullane
Parent Nominee – Anne Holmes Siddle
Secretary / Principal – Kate Gleeson
Patron Nominee – Deirdre Doogan
Parent Nominee – Victor Brown
Community Nominee – The Rev'd Dr. Leonard Madden

Under the patronage of the Church of Ireland

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

Parent Teacher Association

Chairperson: Susan Pena
Treasurer: Karen Harkin
Secretary: Bijal & Shane McSweeney
Committee Members: Jean Conlon, Miryam Amigo
Teacher nominee(s): Bríd Stackpoole, Mairéad Doran

The PTA were delighted to have many opportunities to connect with other parents in the school this year, including the first day of school, the Christmas concert, welcoming a guest speaker to speak about online safety for our children, and of course the family fun evening!

We were pleased to welcome some new, as well as returning members this year. There are currently five key PTA members who attend each meeting, plus a further seven parents who have committed to assist with events as needed. It would be great to expand the group further in 2024-2025.

We were very impressed by the passionate involvement of so many school staff this year, not least Ms Stackpoole, Ms Doran, Ms O'Neill and of course Ms Gleeson. It is great to have the school's ongoing support and collaboration.

The 2024 family fun evening was once again a huge success and we raised over €2,200 for school projects this year.

We are hoping to continue this tradition in 2025, and to continue our goal of bringing the Saint Michael's school community together. It would be great to discuss more guest speaker opportunities next year also, as well as engaging with the Church community with the help of Dean Sloane.

Building work / upgrades

The school was successful in applying for an emergency works grant this year to upgrade the gas boiler, as the one was not heating the building sufficiently. This work was carried out during the Easter break and we are looking forward to seeing a big reduction in our gas bills next winter but also to having a much cosier school.

Limerick county is one of the counties selected to begin the roll out of solar PV for schools and we are delighted to have our solar panels installed in the final week of school. This will help to reduce our electricity bills in the coming years.

Croke Park Hours

Both teachers and special needs assistants have completed their commitment to work their Croke Park Hours for 2023/2024.

Health & Safety

At the start of each term the staff carry out a health and safety risk assessment of the school, schoolyard and grounds. All maintenance issues are addressed in a timely manner.

A fire drill was carried out in each term.

School-Based Summer Programme

We are delighted to be offering a school-based summer inclusion programme again this year. The programme will run for two weeks. We are delighted to have teachers Jade Purcell and William Duddy and S.N.A.s Patricia Coombes and Simon Deevy who will work on this programme. They will be joined each day by a member of the In-School Management (ISM) team who will be in school as programme manager.



School Tours

The classes went on the following schools tours this year and a wonderful time was had by all. Thank you to the teachers for arranging tours and all staff who attended and helped make them run smoothly:

Junior Infants, Senior Infants and 1st Class: The Old Rectory
2nd & 3rd Class: Craggaunowen and Cratloe playground
4th & 5th Class: International Rugby Experience and bowling
6th Class: Aviation Museum, Newsail and pizza making

Child Protection

The school's Designated Liaison Person is the school Principal Kate Gleeson. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Ann-Marie Mullane. They are legally obliged to refer all Child Protection matters to TUSLA. At each Board meeting, the Principal presents the Board with the Principal's Oversight Report. All child protection matters are strictly confidential.



Curricular Development

New Curricula

All staff continue to engage with and implement the Primary Languages curriculum and the new Primary Mathematics curriculum. We are continuing to focus on oral language and 'maths talk', as these are areas that were identified by teachers as being a priority. We will continue to engage with staff training in these areas in the upcoming school year.

School Self Evaluation (SSE) / School Improvement Plan

This year we continued to focus on oral language development across the school. Teachers planned tasks and lessons to support oral language and identified and taught key vocabulary in different subject areas. We will now be reviewing and evaluating the work done in this area so far and this will feed back into our plan for next year.

Whole school curricular planning

The In-School Management (ISM) team of Kate Gleeson, Ann Marie Mullane, Maria Robinson and Mairéad Doran have been working together to look at whole school curricular planning, with a focus this year on literacy and maths. There was a new Primary Curriculum Framework published this year, with all curricula areas due to be revised in the coming years. The ISM team will begin to implement these new curricula when they are published in due course.

TUSLA Reporting on Pupil Attendance

The school completed all mandatory reports for TUSLA regarding pupil attendance and we will complete the end of year report on the last day of school. The school is legally obliged to inform TUSLA when any child over six years of age exceeds 15 days of absences.

School Enrolments

There are currently twelve Junior Infants enrolled for September. Projected enrolment for 2024/2025 is 117 pupils.

Principal Release Day arrangements

This year we were delighted to have Ms. Jade Purcell providing principal release cover for Saint Michael's NS, Gaelscoil Sheoirse Clancy and Children's Ark school. We will have a new arrangement next year as we are now allowed to combine our Principal release hours with our SET hours. Ms. Mairéad Doren will be filling this post next year.

EAL

This school year we had retained a full time EAL post and we also had ten additional EAL hours per week, which were filled by Ms. Jade Purcell. Unfortunately, the school has not retained its full-time post for next year. We appealed this decision but our appeal was rejected. We are extremely disappointed with this and will continue to try to have this post restored if possible.



Staffing 2024/2025

For 2024/2025 we will have

- Five Mainstream Teachers
- Two Special Education Teachers
- One Special Education Teacher / Principal Release Teacher
- 2.5 hours per week shared SET and 10 hours per week EAL support
- Two full time SNAs

Class Allocations

All the staff and pupils of Saint Michael's would like to congratulate Ms. Maria Robinson on her retirement at the end of the school year. We would like to thank Ms. Laurianne Carmody and Ms. Jade Purcell for being such wonderful staff members this year. The following are the class allocations for 2024/2025

Junior & Senior Infants – Ms. Kate Gleeson

1st / 2nd Class – Ms. Ann-Marie Mullane

2nd / 3rd Class – Ms. Samantha Shorten

4th / 5th Class – Ms. Bríd Stackpoole

5th / 6th Class – Mr. David McDonnell

SET – Ms. Sheelagh Morrow, Ms. Ruth Halpin

SET / Principal Release – Ms. Mairéad Doran

Board Finances

The financial management of our school is conducted in strict compliance with the Department of Education and Skills requirements. At each Board of Management meeting the treasurer furnishes the board with a detailed report on finances. Accounts are audited each year and available to parents on request.

Staff Training/CPD

A huge amount of professional development has been undertaken by staff this year. This is just a summary of the courses completed.

- Mata sa Rang/ Maths 4 All
- Lego Six Bricks
- Wonder of Words
- Muinín workshop series (new Primary Maths Curriculum)
- Tusla School Attendance Awareness Campaign Webinar series
- Reluctant School Attendance
- RSE
- A Week of Phonics in the Infant Classroom
- Harnessing the Power of Picturebooks for Literacy Learning
- Sensory Regulation
- Junior and Senior Infant Literacy
- Introduction to Children First (every member of staff has to complete this every three years)
- SEN Summer Programme 2024
- Understanding Behaviour and Behaviour Strategies
- Sensory Breaks
- Heart Words
- Phonological Awareness and Phonics
- Effective Literacy Instruction in the Middle Classes
- Reading Difficulties in the Early Years
- The Novel in the Classroom
- Science of Reading
- Work Smarter Be Happier for Teachers
- Introduction to Digital Citizenship
- Getting Active in Physical Education
- Effective Literacy in Senior Classes - Exit Tickets
- Effective Literacy in Senior Classes - Biographies
- Tosach Maith - A guide to building a Positive Classroom Culture



Policy Development

The following policies were developed/reviewed & ratified:

Child Safeguarding Statement and annual review
Anti-Bullying annual review
Health and Safety annual & termly reviews
Critical Incident Policy – review
Posts of Responsibility - review
Admissions Notice
Data Protection – review
Dignity at Work – new policy
Class Division – review
Class Allocations – review
Attendance Strategy Statement – review
Parental Complaints – revised procedures
Protected Disclosures – review
Substance Use – review
Code of Behaviour – review
After School Activities – new policy





Green Schools

This year the school continued our Green Schools journey and we were absolutely thrilled to be awarded our first Green Flag for reducing litter and waste in our school. Our committee and staff have worked hard over the past two years, supported by the parents/guardians in the school. In June we held a flag raising ceremony, attended by Bishop Burrows. The Green Schools committee from the previous two years were awarded certificates and we all sang some songs to celebrate our achievements. We are looking forward to continuing our Green School journey next year, where we will work towards getting the next flag on the theme of 'energy'.

A Message from the Chairperson of the Board of Management

Yet another term has passed and here we are at the end of another school year. In fact, this year marks my eight year of involvement with Saint Michael's. It continues to be a joy and privilege to serve the school as Chairman of the Board of Management.

The children of our school continue to inspire us all through their enthusiasm, curiosity, kindness and fun and I thank each one of them for each particular gift they bring to our school community.

On behalf of the Board of Management I want to express my sincere appreciation to the hardworking, dedicated and committed staff of Saint Michael's, led by the Principal, Ms Kate Gleeson. I also thank my fellow Board members for the time and expertise they invest into Saint Michael's.

We also wish to commend the involvement and work of the parents who so generously give their time, talents and treasures. To those who organise extra-curricular activities, act as class representatives, co-ordinate and facilitate fundraising (in particular the enjoyable and sociable Family Fun Evening) and those in the wider community who support the school we pay special tribute and say 'Thank you'.

And so, we look to the next academic year and all the opportunities and joys that it will bring, with renewed strength and vigour.

I hope you all have a restful and enjoyable Summer.

The Very Rev'd Niall J.W. Sloane
Chairman of the Board of Management.

School Ethos

Saint Michael's National School is a co-educational National School under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Bishop of the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe, the present Patron being the Right Reverend Michael Burrows.

Our staff, in conjunction with the church upholds the ethos. The pupils attend assembly each Wednesday. Our assemblies are led by the following leaders: Dean Niall Sloane and the Rev'd Dr. Leonard Maddan. Assemblies are also a chance for the whole school to get together to celebrate achievements, birthdays and celebrate our ethos through themes such as kindness, respect, staying safe etc.