

Enrolment Policy

Section A: General Information

Introduction

The Enrolment Policy of St. Michael's National School has been drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. The Board of Management trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management; Rev. Fr. J. Quinn P.P. Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim and the Principal; Mrs. J. Gallery, St. Michael's N. S. Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.

General Information

St. Michael's National School, Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim (071 9856057) is a co-educational Catholic Primary School serving the people in the Parish of Glenfarne. It is a parish based school. The school has a commitment to diversity and inclusivity while, at the same time, protecting the integrity and Catholic ethos of the school. The Patron of the school is Bishop Leo O'Reilly (the Kilmore Diocese). The teaching staff consists of three class teachers including the Principal and one shared Learning Support Teacher based in our school. The range of classes extends from Junior Infants up to Sixth Class. School hours are 9.20am to 3.00pm. There is a short break at 11.00am. Lunch is from 12.30pm to 1.00pm. The Infant day finishes at 2.00pm.

St. Michael's N.S. complies with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which are based on "Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011".

A copy of the school's Child Protection Policy is available on request.

St. Michael's N.S. depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Dept. of Education and Science and operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department. School Policy is dictated by the resources and funding available.

St. Michael's N.S. follows the Curricular Programmes prescribed by the Dept. of Education and Science. These may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998)

Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act (1998), and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- inclusiveness, particularly in relation to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational needs.
- equality of access and participation in the school.
- parental choice in relation to enrolment.
- respect for the diversity of values beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

Section B: Enrolment Procedures

1. Enrolment usually takes place in the third term by means of written application. Notice of enrolment will be communicated through the parish bulletin, local paper and through the school community.
2. Parents seeking to enrol their children in St. Michael's N. S. will be required to complete an Enrolment Form. **All Parents/Legal Guardians must be disclosed and all must sign the enrolment form**
3. An open half day is held in June each year for parents and children to familiarise themselves with their new environment. Children start school on the first school day of September each year.
4. Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate and support the School/Board of Management Code of Behaviour as well as other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. A copy of the Code of Behaviour is appended to the Enrolment Form.
5. As a general principle and in so far as practicable having regard to the school's enrolment policy, children will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available. (*See note below on Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004*)

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of St. Michael's N. S. is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the B.O.M. reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- a) Size of / available space in classrooms
- b) Educational needs of children of a particular age
- c) Multi-grade classes
- d) Presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs
- e) DES maximum class average directives
(currently a maximum average of 27 children)

The Board is bound by the Department of Education and Science's *Rules for National Schools* which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years.

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed/is expected to exceed the number of places available the following decision making process will apply. The Board will exercise its discretion in the application of the following criteria.

- a) Catholic children living within the parish boundary, and sisters and brothers of pupils in the school
- b) Catholic children living outside the parish boundary who do not have a Catholic school within their own parish boundary
- c) children of current staff, including ancillary staff
- d) other children living within the parish boundary
- e) other children living outside the parish boundary
- f) in the event that priority requires to be given to children within any one of the above categories, older children will be given priority.

Appeals

The Board of Management is obliged under section 19(3) of the Educational Welfare Act 2000 to make a decision in writing in respect of an application for enrolment within 21 days and to inform the parents in writing of that decision.

Where a Board of Management refuses to enrol a student in a school, the parent of the student, following the conclusion of any appeal procedures at school level, has a statutory entitlement under section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. A committee is established to hear the appeal with hearings conducted with a minimum of formality. In most cases appeals must be dealt with within 30 days. Where appropriate, the Secretary General may give whatever directions to the Board of Management that are considered necessary to remedy the matter complained of.

Details on appealing decisions on enrolment under section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007), are available on the Department's website at www.deucation.ie

The Chairperson will inform the parents/guardians of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion. Parents will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms. The Board will prepare a response if and when an appeal is being investigated by the Department of Education and Science (Section 12 Circular 22/02 Processing an Appeal)

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs the Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, will request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs specified in the report. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the Special Education Needs Organiser (NCSE see Circular 01/05) to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological and/or medical report. These resources may include for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.

The school will meet with the parents of the child and with the SENO to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. Where necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher for special needs, Special Educational Needs Organiser or psychologist, as appropriate.

Deferral/Postponement of Admission/Enrolment

As a general principle, enrolment of children with a disability or special education need **cannot** normally be deferred or postponed until additional resources have been approved or allocated by the Department or local SENO.

Exceptional Circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

1. The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education or
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to school staff or to school property.

The parents of any pupil who has been refused enrolment, for any reason, are entitled to appeal that refusal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and in such circumstances, should be advised in writing of their entitlement to such an appeal.

Pupils transferring to St. Michael's N. S. during school year

1. Parents wishing to enrol their child in St. Michael's N. S. during the course of the school year will be requested to apply in writing to the B.O.M.
2. The Board will notify parents of their decision within 21 days of receiving the application. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with school policy.
3. All applications from pupils wishing to transfer from another school to St. Michael's N. S. must be accompanied by a **current** educational progress report and a **current** attendance report

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the school community and was ratified by the B.O.M. on

A review of this policy will take place one year from its ratification to assess its effectiveness.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson B.O.M.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal