



ADMISSIONS POLICY

St. Michael's Community College is a co-educational school under the trusteeship of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. The school operates within the rules laid down by the Department of Education and Skills.

This policy applies to all students who wish to enrol in the school and to their parents. The school is open to all the children of the community. Having regard to the resources available and provided to it, the school supports the principles of inclusiveness, equality of access and participation, parental choice in relation to enrolment in the school, respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in Irish society.

Objectives of the Admission Policy

1. To outline the procedures to be followed by parents/guardians in applying for the admission of a student into the school or educational programme.
2. To outline the criteria to be applied in the event of applications exceeding places available
3. To define the means by which decisions made by the school may be appealed

A.Enrolment of First Year Students

1. Annual intake, class size and closing dates are set by the Board of Management.
2. Applications for First Year intake are invited in the first term of sixth class.
3. An Open Night for parents /guardians and prospective students is advertised through the primary schools, in local papers and radio.
4. Application forms are distributed during Open Night, through the primary schools and from the school office.
5. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is in attendance and available for meetings.
6. Completed Applications are submitted together with signed acceptance of the Code of Behaviour.
7. Following a meeting of the Board of Management, acceptance letters are sent to parents/applications within 21 days of the closing date.

Allocation of places

Allocation of places in First Year will occur after the closing date in the following order if the number of applicants is greater than the number of places available.

- (i) Students living within the catchment area
- (ii) Students from feeder schools
- (iii) Sibling/step sibling of a student currently enrolled in the school,
- (iv) Son/Daughter of staff in the school
- (v) Sibling/step sibling of a past student, where the past-student is defined as one who has completed five academic years in the school.
- (vi) Son/Daughter of past staff in the school
- (vii) Son/Daughter of a present or past member of the Board of Management
- (viii) All other applicants

If there are more applicants than places remaining in any category from (i) to (ix) a lottery system will apply, overseen by the Principal, Deputy Principal and a Parents Representative. Names will be numbered and put in order as they are drawn and any vacancy will be filled in that order.

The Board of Management reserves the right to allocate place(s) to applicant(s) whose family circumstances the Board of Management deems to be exceptional.

Any valid form received after the relevant closing date will be deemed late and the student will be placed at the end of the waiting list. The Board of Management does not accept any responsibility for late applications.

The school will date and stamp each application. An acceptance letter will be issued within three weeks of the closing date to the parents/guardians of each student who has enrolled successfully. Other applicants will be informed at the same time if a waiting list applies. Please contact the school if you do not receive a reply following your submission of the application form.

B. Students with Special Needs

A student with Special Needs is defined as;

- A student who, because of attributes arising from a disability, is unable to benefit from an ordinary school programme without special classes or other special education services.
- A student who has been in receipt of special education programmes or services immediately prior to the application process will be deemed to have special needs.
- A student whose parents claim them to have need of special education services will be deemed to have special education needs for the purposes of the application to enrol.
- A student who in the view of the school, based on the information provided on application will be deemed to be a student with special education needs and shall be so treated under the terms of the application process.

Within the overall criteria for enrolment in the school and having regard to the facilities and services available in the school, the school welcomes students with disabilities and/or special educational needs.

It is school policy to have the Special Educational Needs Coordinator available on First Year Open Night in order to discuss the special needs of prospective students with their parents and to begin the process of putting arrangements in place for First Year. Further meetings are held as required at the request of parents or the school. Parents of students with special education needs who wish to transfer from another school will be requested to attend a meeting with the Special Needs Coordinator and Principal/Deputy Principal.

In order to assess the requirements of a student with special needs, to organise the resources necessary for his/her education and to fulfil its duty of care, the Board of Management requires the following information from the parents/guardians on receipt of application:

- An indication of the student's needs
- A copy of the student's medical/psychological/occupational therapist/ speech and language report or any relevant professional reports
- An individual education plan, if this is available from the Primary School or Post Primary School in the case of a transferring student.

Following receipt of the application and the report(s), the Board of Management will assess, in consultation with the Principal, how the school can meet the needs specified. If the Board deems that further resources are required, it may, prior to commencement into the relevant school year and in cooperation with the parents/guardians, request through LCETB to apply to the Special Education Needs Officer and the Department of Education and Skills to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child. If a report is not available, parents/guardians will be asked to have the child assessed immediately. The purpose of this assessment is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child and to profile the support services required.

Following Application

1. The school will make every effort to make the necessary arrangements
2. The Principal/Special Educational Needs Coordinator will arrange such meetings as are necessary to discuss the student's needs and the capacity of the school to meet these needs with the parents /guardians
3. In some cases it may be necessary to arrange a case conference with the professionals/agencies working with the family
4. The staff and Board of Management will do as much as possible to identify, plan and provide the supports necessary.
5. The Board's decisions on such applications will be made within 21 days of all the required information being made available to the school.
6. Lack of information or failure to provide required reports may be a basis for a decision to defer the commencement of the educational programme for the student in the school.

Deferred Enrolment

Commencement of an educational programme and attendance at the school for a student with special educational needs will be subject to the availability of the requisite resources at the school, for the appropriate educational programme for the student, relevant to his/her special needs and the support services required.

It may be necessary to defer commencement of an educational programme and attendance at school pending receipt of the resources required for the special education needs of the student. In such circumstances the school will make every effort to make arrangements for any compensatory programme which will be required so that the student can benefit fully.

C. Transfer of Students

In the case of students seeking to transfer from another post-primary school or seeking readmission into any year from Second to Sixth year inclusive, the following procedures apply:

1. An Application Pack will be made available from the Office. This will include an application form, options form, and a reference request form for the previous school, a school prospectus, admission policy and Code of Behaviour.
2. An application must be fully completed. Incomplete application will be returned to the parents /guardians for completion.
3. Applications must be accompanied by the following
 - Completed Application Form
 - Original Copy of Birth Certificate (This will be returned to the parents/guardians)
 - The two most recent school reports
 - A complete Student Reference/ Reference Form signed by the Principal/Deputy Principal
4. Parents/Guardians and the student will attend a meeting with the Principal. Parents of students/students over 18 with special educational needs who wish to transfer from another school will be requested to attend a meeting with the Special Needs Coordinator and Principal/Deputy Principal. Please to section B of this policy
5. The Principal, (in consultation with other staff members if necessary) will assess the application and will inform the Board of Management.
6. The Board of Management may recommend an alternative programme.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse to offer a place to any applicant on the following basis; that in the opinion of the Board of Management:

- a) No suitable accommodation/place exists in the school/year group/specific subjects or levels within subjects
- b) The school programme is unsuitable to the educational needs of the student
- c) An offer of a place would have a negative impact / outcome on pupils already enrolled in the school, and on the capacity of the school to deliver programmes and support to other students in the school.
- d) An offer of a place may pose a threat to the health and safety of pupils already enrolled in the school
- e) An offer of a place may pose a threat to the health and safety of staff
- f) That an offer of a place may put the property of the school and L.C.E.T.B. at risk
- g) That an offer of a place may have a negative impact on the applicant

A decision about the transfer of the student shall be made and parents/guardians will be notified in writing, within 21 days subject to all the required data having been received by the school.

D. Admission to Transition Year

The availability of the programme and the number of places on the programme will be determined each year by the Board of Management.

Parents will be invited to attend a Transition Year Information evening and procedures for applying will be outlined. Students will be required to return application forms by the closing date indicated at the time.

Due to the increased freedom students have, the initiative they are expected to exercise, and the independence they are expected to develop, the decision to offer places will be based on the applicant's academic and disciplinary record.

Places will only be made available to students from another second level school in the area under exceptional circumstances and only after applicants from the school are accommodated.

E. Repeating a Year

Consideration will only be given to students who wish to repeat a year in exceptional circumstances and for reasons acceptable to the Department of Education and Skills as set out in Circular Letters M57/87, M33/93, and M2/95, which are available on the department's website or from the school.

F. Repeating the Leaving Certificate

The school does not run a repeat year programme but may accommodate a small number of applicants depending on resources. Applicants must meet with the Principal/ Deputy Principal and the Department of Education and Skills guidelines must be followed. The following will be considered;

- Subject availability
- Class size
- Behaviour record
- Attendance record
- Impact on enrolled students

G. Applicant 18 Years old and over

Such applicants will be required to pass Garda Vetting before an application is considered.

H. Queries

Parents/Guardians are welcome to telephone or visit the school should they have any queries regarding The Admissions Policy or the enrolment/application procedures.

I. Review of the Policy

The Admissions Policy is subject to review at the discretion of the Board of Management but sufficiently in advance to allow changes to be communicated to interested parties.

Parents/Guardians should ensure that this is the current Admissions' Policy and that they follow its provisions.

J. Right to Appeal

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for admission in exceptional circumstances. Should a student's application for admission to the school be refused the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have the right to appeal, in the first instance, to the Board of Management of the school.

The Board will make provision to meet the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may request a meeting with the Board of Management. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed in writing of the Board's decision and the reasons why the student was not accepted will be clearly stated. The right to appeal will be restated (Circular M48/01) and Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be advised of the subsequent procedures for appeals to the C.E.O. of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. Appeals must be made, in writing, within 14 days of notification to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), of the Board of Management's decision. The Appeals Application Form will advise Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the information required for such appeals.

Should an applicant be unsuccessful in her/his appeal to the C.E.O., Limerick and Clare ETB., any subsequent appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills should be made in writing within the specified time advised from the date the decision of the C.E.O. was notified to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) concerned. (Circular M48/01) The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and the Board of Management will be informed in writing of the decision of the appeal.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 12th February, 2015