

**Mt. St. Michael Secondary School,**

**Rosscarbery, Co. Cork.**

*(Under the Trusteeship of CEIST)*

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**ENROLMENT/ADMISSIONS POLICY**

The School’s Admission Policy has been formulated with due regard given to the following:

* Current legalisation
* Openness and transparency
* Information and communication

This document sets out the basic ethos of education, the basic mission of Mt. St. Michael and the manner in which students are admitted to and participate in the school.

1. **MERCY PHILOSOPHY ETHOS OF EDUCATION**

Mt. St. Michael is a voluntary Catholic School: inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley (founder of the Religious Congretation of the Sisters of Mercy in 1831). Mercy Education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised.

It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy education is committed to ongoing school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, staff, parents and the wider community.

**MISSION STATEMENT OF MT. ST. MICHAEL**

Mt. St. Michael is a Mercy school inspired by the charisma of Catherine McAuley:

**“to fit the student for earth without unfitting them for Heaven”**

and is entrusted with the mission of imparting Gospel values to youth through Christian education and example.

We envisage the nurturing and the growth of the individual

* With a view to harmony of the whole person in a pleasant working environment where each student and staff member is valued and individual talents and leadership are developed and enhanced.
* Where parents and local involvement is encouraged and true community is facilitated and fostered.
* Where an atmosphere of Christianity, Spirituality and Humanity prevails.

Inspired by these ideals we dedicate ourselves to the continued growth of our school.

1. **OPERATING CONTEXT OF ENROLMENT/ADMISSIONS POLICY**

The Board of Management of the school supports the underlying principles of the school’s enrolment/admissions policy within the:

* Context and parameters of the Department of Education and Skills regulations and programmes.
* The right of the Patron as set out in the Education Act.
* The Religious and Education philosophy of Mercy Education.
* The funding and resources available.
* The provision of the Education Welfare Act of 2000.

The school supports the principles of:

* Inclusiveness and partnership.
* Equality of access and participation in the school.
* Parental choice in relation to enrolments.
* Respect for diversity of tradition, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society.
* Transparency.

**RESOURCES**

The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided by a combination of Department of Education and Skills grants and teacher allocations, voluntary contributions and on occasion fund raising.

Implementation of school plan and policy must have due regard to resources and funding available.

The school operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of The Education Act 1998.

1. **SCHOOL DETAILS**

Mt. St. Michael is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School which is under the Trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education in Irish School’s Trust) and is grant aided by the Department of Education and Skills.

The school is co-educational.

The Principal is Mr. Bart Kerrisk, Deputy Principal is Ms. Dee Keohane.

The school has a Board of Management of which there are 8 members. The Principal is the secretary to the Board of Management. The Board consists of the following members: 4 Trustee Nominees; 2 Teacher Nominees and 2 Parent Nominees. There is also a Parents’ Association and a Student Council.

Senior students play an important pastoral role in helping First Years and new students integrate into school.

Each year the number of teachers on the staff may vary slightly but generally the number of teachers is approximately 28 – 30.

The school currently has a Learning Support teacher and a Career Guidance Counsellor. Occasionally these resources are supplemented by the school/Department of Education and Skills.

The main programmes on offer to students are as follows

* Junior Certificate (Examination after three years)
* Transition Year (Fourth Year)
* Leaving Certificate (Examination after six years)
* Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
* Other programmes/subjects may be considered if a need arises for them e.g. LCA (Leaving Certificate Applied)

**SUBJECTS**

Subjects are categorised as core or optional. All students take the core subjects unless there is a Department of Education and Skills exemption stating otherwise in writing. A full list of subjects is available in the school prospectus.

The school also has a range of extra-curricular activities the list of which is also contained in the school prospectus. Parent teacher meetings are held in the school once a year for each year group. However parents/guardians may at any time during term arrange an appointment to meet with a member of staff.

The school calendar is now set by the Department of Education and Skills.

As the funding received by the school may be inadequate to meet all the expenditure needs the school does request a voluntary contribution. This money is used to help defray part of the huge costs in photocopying (paper, print costs and photocopier machine), postage, stationery etc. This contribution is very welcome and necessary.

1. **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

An Open/Information Night usually takes place in late January or early February in the school at the end of which many students enrol by parents completing the appropriate forms. The meeting is notified through the local press, radio and local announcements. It is possible to enrol at other times by completing and submitting the relevant forms and meeting with the Principal or the deputy Principal or their designate. A closing date for receipt of application forms for enrolment may be fixed.

By applying to enrol, all students and their parents are accepting that they shall participate fully in all aspects of school life and are accepting the following:

School ethos, philosophy, policies, Code of Behaviour and Sanctions, practises and traditions, etc. that constitute our school.

The school does not have an entrance test for admission.

Where places are available in First year for the following September it may be possible to enrol as per enrolment criteria as set out below.

**Enrolment Criteria:**

All applications for enrolment will require the approval of the Board of Management prior to admission of the students to the school. Generally all students who complete enrolment forms and other relevant documentation are accepted for admission by the Board of Management and offered a place in the school.

In any case all applicants for enrolment will be notified of the result of their application to enrol as soon as possible after the date for enrolment. This date is March 1st. That is, applicants who do not apply to enrol on Open/Enrolment night must apply to enrol before March 1st.

The Board of Management sets a maximum limit of 72 places for the first year intake of students basing the limit on the availability of facilities, staff and resources and considering the recommended maximum number of students pertaining to various subject areas.

Applicants who attend the local primary schools of the catchment area are priority enrolment applicants.

Where the number of applicants who complete enrolment forms on Open/Information night or/and before March 1st following enrolment night exceeds 72 in number then the following criteria will be used in the selection process with priority being given to pupils in category1, and so on, on a sliding scale down to category 7:

1. Feeder schools.
2. Siblings of current students.
3. Siblings of past students.
4. Students of families who are domiciled in the catchment area on or before August 31st of that year.
5. Children of staff of the school.
6. Children of past pupils of the school.
7. Thereafter on a first come first served basis.

Until the upper limit of 72 pupils is reached a student may apply to enrol up to August 31st of that year or in exceptional circumstances up to September 20th of that year. However at any point when the upper limit for the year group is reached the year group will be deemed full. The Board of Management does reserve the right to consider enrolment applications over 72 in number in exceptional circumstances only.

NOTE:

1. It is not practice of the school to accept enrolment application in advance of enrolment evening or the date as set out above.
2. Any application to enrol in the school later than September 20th will only be considered under the criteria as set out in the subsection hereunder called ‘Application for entry/transfer at a time other than normal beginning of school year’
3. Requisite documentation includes pps number of student, original birth certs (copied & returned), enrolment form with various sections included, persons to contact form, any educational reports, etc.

**APPLICATION FOR ENTRY/TRANSFER AS A TIME OTHER THAN NORMAL BEGINNING OF SCHOOL YEAR AFTER SEPTEMBER 20TH (E.G. MID-YEAR OF MID-TERM)**

Mt. St. Michael may enrol a student in the school during the school year subject to the following conditions:

The terms of the School Enrolment/Admission Policy will apply

The school will seek information and/or reports from the student’s former/current school regarding the applicant’s record in such areas as attendance, disabilities, special needs, and any other matters relating to the student’s educational progress and deportment as the school management may consider appropriate.

The school will reserve the right to question the suitability of a transfer during the school year and the reasons for it – in the best interest of the student and the school. Consideration will be given to such matters as the consequences of a mid-year transfer on the student’s academic and all round progress.

The school will take due account of the question of available spaces in the school, the suitability of subjects available and subject options available to the student. A factor to be strongly considered is that it may not be possible to provide all the subject options or levels that the transfer applicant has had in his/her current/previous school.

The school may consult the Education Welfare Officer concerning an applicant.

A student’s previous discipline record will have a significant bearing on this school’s decision to consider acceptance or otherwise.

Applicants are to be approved by Board of Management/Chairperson prior to admission.

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:**

The Board of Management welcomes students with Special Educational needs. To allow the school maximum opportunity to meet the needs of such a student and to become familiar with his/her needs it will be necessary for the school to access the student’s records and individual educational programme from the primary school in advance of his/her entry to Mt. St. Michael. The school will also seek parental permission to access to any relevant medical or psychological reports.

Where none are available or furnished to the school, the school will request parental permission for a National Educational Psychologist Services (NEPS) assessment.

The purpose of this assessment will be to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the applicant.

***Appendix.***

**Suspension and Expulsion:**

Preamble:

Suspension and expulsion would be invoked only as a last resort in an ongoing disciplinary issue.

The Board of Management realises the seriousness of any student being suspended or more seriously still being expelled and the consequences of such being recorded on their file.

The Principal may suspend a student for up to three consecutive days and report the suspension to the Board of Management, or up to 6 days in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Only the Board of Management can take a decision to expel a student.

The school authorities will at all times observe the rules and principles of natural justice, in particular the fair hearing of all sides to any dispute and be objective in its analysis.

**Code of Discipline and Sanctions Procedure:**

Mt. St. Michael has a comprehensive Code of Discipline and sanctions procedure. The Sanctions procedure comprises of section 1 to 7.

The document in its entirety is available in the school and all parents of students who apply to enrol in the school and the students who enrol in the school are responsible for making themselves familiar with the contents of the Code and Sanction Procedure and are required to sign indicating their understanding of the contents of the Code and Sanctions Procedures as well as the fact that they accept the terms of the Code and the Sanctions Procedure.

The following is the section of the Code of Discipline that is specific to suspension and expulsion

1. “The following course of action shall be taken by the Principal/Deputy Principal as a means of resolving this problem or any other problem that might lead to suspension:
2. Require the parents/guardians to give in writing an undertaking on behalf of the pupil of future good behaviour and/or
3. Require a similar undertaking from the pupil and/or
4. Impose written condition on the pupil’s right to remain in the school.

The condition may include compensatory action in the case of theft or vandalism, an obligation to report to the principal or to a designated teacher at regular intervals, a withdrawal of privileges and the like.

If the student continues to misbehave he/she may be suspended by the Principal and the matter reported to the Board of Management at its next meeting.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be informed by letter sent either by post or hand delivered by the principal or agent of the principal:

Of reason of suspension

Of the period of suspension

That the pupil will be regarded as being in the care of the parent(s)/guardian(s) from the end of the school day on which he/she was suspended.

1. At the end of the period of suspension the principal will review the situation and decide whether:
2. To allow the pupil back on probation, or,
3. To continue suspension for a further period, or,
4. To refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee as next hereafter mentioned.

**However it is envisaged that most behavioural problems will be satisfactorily dealt with through the procedure outlined in steps 1 – 4.**

1. If after the foregoing courses have been fully pursued, without a satisfactory result ensuing to n fully satisfactory effect, the matter shall be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for the then time being in office.

The student(s) concerned, as well as his/her/their parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required in writing to attend before such committee, at a place and time to be stated.

All parties concerned shall be afforded the fullest opportunity to make submissions or representations as may be appropriate and relevant.

The Disciplinary Committee shall comprise the School Principal, the Chairperson of the Board of Management and a nominee of the school Trustees. The decisions or findings of such committee shall, if it relates to extended suspension, or actual expulsion, be submitted to the Board of Management for consideration and final ruling, at the next succeeding meeting or to a specially convened meeting to such Board, if the issues requires.

**Internal suspension:**

If there is behaviour exhibited by a student(s) that is regarded as being such a nature as to be regarded as persistently disruptive, dangerous, lewd, or suchlike, or prevents the normal work of a teacher and/or class room progressing – and having heard sides to such a situation the Principal may take a decision that such a student may be withdrawn from that class(s) and placed in another supervised area within the school for the duration of the cases from which he/she has been temporarily withdrawn until such time that the issues is resolved.

Suspension from a particular class/subject area: If a student exhibits behaviour in any individual subject or for a particular teacher (e.g. ongoing disruption unacceptable language, persistent disrespect, abusive, or threatening behaviour/language, any compromise of health and safety of teacher, student, any staff member or himself/herself, etc..) the Principal may withdraw that student from the subject or from the teacher’s class(es) where he is satisfied that such a risk to good order and health and safety exists.

**NOTE: Not withstanding anything else contained in these Rules regarding discipline and procedure to be followed it is to be noted that any misbehaviour which the Principal shall deem to be of such a serious nature as to warrant immediate sanction shall, at the discretion of the Principal, in appropriate cases, entitle him to suspend any student who shall be guilty of such misbehaviour without the necessity of invoking the procedures herein set out.**

Note:

* Admissions Policy adopted by Board of Management on 13/2/2012.
* To be reviewed again in Spring Term 2015.

Signed:…………………………………………………….

Sheila O’Regan

Dated:……………………………