

St Felim's National School



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Charity No: 20109967
Principal: Mrs. Eilís Keegan
Deputy Principal: Mrs. Patrice Clarke

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September 2025

Board of Management – Annual Report for the academic year 2024-2025

The Annual Report of the Board of Management of St. Felim's National School, The Vale provides a summary of the school's operations in line with the requirements of the Education Act. It is intended to complement the information available on the school's website www.thevalens.com as well as the updates shared through Aladdin Connect.

The 2024-2025 school year was another active and productive one for the Board of Management. This report outlines the key areas of our work during the year.

Board of Management

The Board of Management of St. Felim's National School is composed of volunteers who generously give their time and expertise to support the governance and development of the school. The current Board was appointed in 2023 and will serve a four-year term, concluding in 2027. The officers of the board are as follows:

Chairperson and Patron's Nominee- Gerry Sheanon
Patron's Nominee- Fr Ultan McGoohan
Principal & Secretary- Eilís Keegan
Teacher's Nominee- Kerrie Anne Moynagh
Parent's Nominee- Pdraig Sheridan
Parent's Nominee- Catriona Clarke
Community Nominee & Treasurer – Geraldine Clarke
Community Nominee & School Premises Officer- Francis Tierney

Ethos

At St. Felim's National School, our Catholic ethos is lived out daily through prayer, care for one another, respect for all, and participation in the wider parish community. The *Grow in Love* programme continues to be the religious education programme in use across all classes. Each classroom has a sacred space that is updated regularly, and a central sacred space in the school corridor reflects the liturgical calendar.

The school community gathers monthly for prayer assemblies, led by the senior classes. These assemblies provide opportunities to pray together and to celebrate the values of our ethos. We are particularly grateful to Fr. Ultan and Pastoral Assistant Andrea Connolly, who led the Ash Wednesday assembly and distributed ashes to the pupils.

In January 2025, the school celebrated Catholic Schools Week. As part of these celebrations, the Junior and Senior Infants warmly welcomed their grandparents for a special celebration, marking the important role grandparents play in family life.

We were also pleased to welcome Mr. Terry Leddy, Religious Advisor for the Diocese, to the school on 28 November. He commended the commitment of staff and pupils in nurturing and supporting the ethos of the school.

During the year, pupils also celebrated the sacraments: Sixth Class received the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Anne's Church on 29 March 2024; pupils in Second Class received the Sacrament of Penance on 20 March 2024, followed by the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on 17 May 2024.

The Board of Management wishes to acknowledge and sincerely thank Ms. Kerrie Anne Moynagh, Ms. Martha Reilly, Pastoral Assistant Ms, Andrea Connolly and Fr. Ultan for their dedication in preparing the children for the sacraments, as well as the parents and the wider parish community for their valued support.

Child Protection

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection is **Mrs. Eilís Keegan**, and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) is **Mrs. Patrice Clarke**.

In line with Department of Education and Skills (DES) guidelines, a Child Protection Oversight Report was presented at each face-to-face meeting of the Board during the school year.

Staffing

During the 2024–2025 school year, St. Felim's National School employed eleven permanent teaching staff, three Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), a school secretary, a part-time cleaner, and a part-time caretaker.

The following staff were employed in the school during this period:

Administrative Principal	Eilís Keegan
Junior Infants	Martina O Connor
Senior Infant & DP	Patrice Clarke
First Class	Úna McCormill
Second Class & AP II	Kerrie Anne Moynagh
Third Class	Emma McShane
Fourth Class	Jane McGuinness
Fifth Class	Annette Cooney
Sixth Class	Martha Reilly
SET & APII	Valerie Donohoe
SET	Lisa Sharkey Term 1 Noeleen Kelly Term 2 & 3
SET -Shared	Tara Kelly AP II Martina Smyth
SNA	Julie Phillips & Sinéad Fleming (Job Share) Lucia Sheridan Jean Brennan
Secretary	Marie Brady
Cleaner	Pauline Farrelly
Caretaker	William Byrne

Policy Development

During the 2024–2025 school year, the Board of Management ratified and reviewed a range of policies and plans to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to support the effective running of the school.

Legislative/Mandatory Policy	Organisational Policies	Curricular Plans
Child Safeguarding Statement Anti-Bullying Policy (Annual Review) Health and Safety Statement (Annual Review) Admissions Policy (Annual Review) <i>Bí Cineálta</i> – New Policy	School Development Action Plan 2024–2025 Critical Incidents Policy (Annual Review) School Accident & Injury Policy School Tours and Excursions Policy Irish Exemption Policy Class Formation Policy Data Protection Policy	History Policy Geography Policy Science Policy Digital Learning Plan (2024–2025 & 2025–2026) PLC – Irish PLC – English Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy Social, Personal and Health Education Policy

The Board also made the decision to move to a five-year School Development Plan (2025–2030) to facilitate meaningful engagement with the new Primary Curriculum Framework and curriculum specifications at primary level.

The Board of Management remains committed to the regular review and development of school policies and curricular plans, ensuring that they reflect best practice and support the needs of all pupils.

Curriculum-Based School Events & Activities

Throughout 2024–2025, pupils participated in a range of curricular and co-curricular events and activities.

Cultural & Heritage	Health, Wellbeing & Arts
Field Trip – Leinster House & Kilmainham Jail (R5 & R6) Visit to Relics of St Killian R6 School Tours	Swimming Lessons Weekly Recorder Classes from Rang 2 (PA funded) Gymnastics (PA funded) Active Schools Week GAA Coaching Say Yes to Languages Programme R3-R6 Jiving & Taekwando Taster Sessions Shay Mouse Play

Community & Partnership	Sporting Activities
Internet Safety Talk – hosted for parents Community Garda Visits (Rang 4, Rang 5, Rang 6) Wetland Workshop R6 – hosted by St Anne’s Green Group	Schools Cross County Competition FAI Soccer Competitions Cumann na mBuncscol: Boys & Girls Football Competition INTO Football, Hurling and Camogie Skills Competitions Golf Taster Sessions (R3-R6)

Christmas Concert

The whole school took part in a performance of *Hosanna Rock* in St. Anne's Church, Bailieborough, on 18 December 2024. The concert opened with a recorder recital of Christmas music by pupils in Rang 2-6 conducted by Mr. Gaskin.

The Board of Management wishes to thank Mr. Gaskin, Thomas Hanley, and past pupil Caolán Cullen for providing instrumental music at the performance of *Hosanna Rock*.

The Board also acknowledges the commitment of the staff in preparing pupils for the performance. Special thanks are extended to Mr. Gaskin, whose dedication and enthusiasm continue to greatly enhance music education in The Vale.

Continuous Professional Development

The Board of Management recognises the importance of continuous professional development in supporting high-quality teaching and learning. During 2024–2025, staff engaged in training across a range of areas including teaching and learning, literacy and numeracy, wellbeing, leadership and management, and special education.

In addition, the whole staff took part in *Oide* sustained support in Restorative Practice, reflecting the school's commitment to fostering positive relationships.

School Self Evaluation

In 2024–2025, we were in Year 2 of our School Improvement Plan. Irish remains the area targeted for development, with particular focus on improving the selection of texts and reading experiences for pupils from Rang 2 to Rang 6. A delay in the publication of books in our chosen reading scheme at senior level was a disappointment; however, these resources are due to be published and will be purchased early in the 2025–2026 school year. The plan continues to be implemented and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Digital Learning Plan

Work continued on the implementation of the Digital Learning Framework during 2024–2025. Seesaw digital portfolios were used across the school to capture pupil learning, assign tasks, and assess reading in both English and Irish. Pupils also created digital content across curricular areas using tools such as Green Screen and Book Creator.

Special Education Teaching Hours

An increase in our allocation of Special Education Teaching hours came into effect in 2024–2025. As part of this allocation, St. Felim's, The Vale became the base school for a shared SET (Special Education Teacher) position with the Model National School in Bailieborough. The board welcome this increase in hours as it strengthens the school's capacity to support pupils with additional learning needs.

Changes to school Profile

The Board was disappointed that there were no changes to the pupil–teacher ratio in Budget 2024. Following the publication of the staffing circular in Term 2, we did not have sufficient pupil numbers on roll on 30 September 2024 to maintain eight classroom teachers in 25.26. As a result, the Class Formation Policy had to be implemented.

For the 2025–2026 school year, we will have a multi-grade Senior Infants/First Class and a multi-grade First/Second Class arrangement.

The Board is grateful to both staff and parents for their cooperation in adapting to these changes.

Health & Safety

A health and safety audit of the school building, yard, and grounds was carried out at intervals throughout the year. Any maintenance issues identified were addressed in a timely manner.

Croke Park Hours

In line with the Public Service Agreement, all staff completed their commitment to Croke Park Hours for the 2024-2025 school year. These hours were used for supervision, staff meetings, school planning, policy development, and professional collaboration to support the effective running of the school.

CLÁR Funding

The Board applied to Cavan County Council under Measure 1: Developing Community Facilities and Amenities for funding to develop an outdoor all-weather play area. We now await the outcome of this application and wish to thank all those who supported us in preparing and submitting it.

Treasurer's Report

The financial management of the school is conducted in line with Department of Education and Skills requirements. At each Board of Management meeting, the Treasurer provides a detailed financial report for review.

The school accounts are certified annually by an external accountant in line with DES guidelines. These certified accounts are then submitted to the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) and to the Kilmore Diocesan Secretary.

The Board notes that the school continues to face financial pressures, particularly given the level of government funding and the impact of rising costs. In the 2023–2024 school year, the accounts recorded an overall deficit of €6,855.38, highlighting the ongoing challenges involved in managing school budgets.

Tusla Reporting on Pupil Attendance

The school completed all mandatory reports to Tusla regarding pupil attendance at the required intervals throughout the year, in line with statutory obligations. Overall, school attendance for 2024–2025 was 93.9%. The Board is encouraged by this upward trend and will continue to promote regular attendance and punctuality.

Teaching Placements

During the 2024–2025 school year, the Board facilitated teaching practice placements in Rang 2, Rang 5, and Senior Infants. In addition, a Transition Year student from Bailieborough Community School completed a Transition Year placement in the school.

Parental Involvement

The officers of the Parents' Association Committee for 2024–2025 were elected as follows:

Chairperson – Jackie Gregory
Vice Chair- Denise Gilsenan
Secretary – Helena Lynch
Vice Secretary – Helena O Grady
Joint Treasurers- Louise Fulton & Sinéad Murray

Meetings of the Parents Association took place throughout the school year.

The Parents Association's Annual Christmas Draw Fundraiser were well supported and a great success.

The money raised supported the following items/events:

- PA Insurance and NPC membership
- Music Lessons for all children in 2nd – 6th classes
- Gymnastics Lesson for all classes
- A Christmas treat for all the children delivered by Santa
- First Communion Refreshments & Treats for the children and the choir, Gifts for staff
- Entry Fee for Cumann Na mBunscol quiz
- Graduation Treats- 6th class

Hot Meals

In 2024–2025, the Board received Hot Meals funding from the Department of Social Protection. Glanmore Foods continued as the school's meals provider under this scheme.

The Board wishes to acknowledge the work of Jacinta Woods in preparing, distributing, and cleaning up after the meals each day. Míle buíochas Jacinta.

Community Links

The Board acknowledges the wonderful support it receives from the local community. Various groups and individuals contribute regularly to the life of the school and this support is greatly valued and appreciated.

This year, we wish to make special mention of St. Anne's Green Group for donating a bird box and camera to the school and for organising a Wetlands Workshop for Sixth Class at the Town Lake outdoor classroom. We also thank Deputy Niamh Smyth, who facilitated a visit to Leinster House for Fifth and Sixth Class and kindly provided goody bags for pupils.

The Board is grateful to Bailieborough Community School for their support in transition activities and for facilitating visits that help prepare our pupils for post-primary education. We also appreciate the continued co-operation of our local preschools, who always warmly welcome us when facilitating preschool visits.

School Improvement

Several improvements were made to school facilities during the 2024–2025 school year. A new internal phone system was installed, and a new smart board was fitted in the Senior Infant classroom. Additional library resources were purchased for all classes, with pupils involved in selecting the new books.

In addition, new GAA goalposts were provided following a generous donation from Sineád and Michael Murray, for which the Board is very grateful.

The Board also oversaw the rollout of the Solar Photovoltaic Programme. The contract was awarded to Blackwell Contracts, and the panels were installed after Easter 2025. This investment will help reduce energy costs and promote sustainability within the school.

Summer Works Application

The Board of Management applied for the Summer Works Scheme in 2024–2025 for mechanical and climate action works. We await the outcome of our application.

Free Books Scheme.

The Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme was introduced in 2023–2024 and continued in 2024–2025. The Board is grateful for this funding, which provides valuable support to families and ensures that all pupils have access to the necessary school books and copies.

Recruitment

During 2024–2025, the Board appointed Noeleen Kelly to cover the maternity leave of Mrs. Lisa Sharkey. Over the summer of 2025, the Board welcomed the appointment of three new teaching staff — Tomás Cooney, Neamh McCooey, and Hannah Fitzsimons — who will take up positions in the school for the 2025–2026 school year. The Board looks forward to working with all new staff members.

The Board also welcomed the recruitment of William Byrne as school caretaker. We wish to acknowledge the wonderful contribution William has made in his first year. His attention to detail and pride in maintaining the school grounds to such a high standard have greatly improved the school environment.

Student Council

The Student Council worked very hard during the 2024–2025 school year. Members contributed to a *Bí Cineálta* poster project promoting kindness across the school and were actively involved in a playground resources project to support play and wellbeing. The Board acknowledges and values the contribution of the Student Council in representing pupil voice and helping to improve school life.

A new Student Council will be elected in Term One of the 2025–2026 school year.

Farewells and Acknowledgements

During the year, the Board said farewell to a number of valued colleagues. We thank Ms. Noeleen Kelly, who was with us from December 2024 to June 2025, and Ms. Martha Reilly, who served on staff from January 2023 until June 2024. We send Martha our warm congratulations on the birth of her baby girl during the summer and wish her every happiness. We also extend our best wishes to Ms. Úna McCormill as she commences her career break in New York.

The Board extends special gratitude to Ms. Valerie Donohoe on the occasion of her retirement after 35 years of dedicated service. Her long-standing commitment and contribution to the pupils and the life of St. Felim's National School are deeply appreciated. The whole-school celebration and prayer service held in her honour will always be remembered, and we wish her every happiness in the years ahead.

The Board of Management is grateful to the teaching staff, the SNA team, our school secretary Mrs. Brady, and our school cleaner Mrs. Pauline Farrelly for their professionalism and commitment throughout a very busy 2024–2025. Special thanks are due to our wonderful pupils, central to the life of our school, and to their parents for their ongoing support of our work.

As we look ahead to 2025–2026, the Board remains committed to supporting the ethos of St. Felim's National School, to ensuring high standards of teaching and learning, and to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all.