

## **Healthy Eating Policy Salesian Secondary College**

### **Policy Statement:**

This policy is being implemented during the school year 2020/21. This policy will apply to the whole school community

### **Formulation of the Policy:**

This policy was drafted by the schools Health Promoting Schools team. A questionnaire was also distributed for views and suggestions from parents, students and teachers.

### **Mission Statement and Ethos:**

The healthy eating policy will be influenced by the school ethos. This policy is inspired by our Salesian Ethos and our school cherishes all pupils equally. To aid them in achieving their true potential, we aim, not only to promote intellectual, cultural, moral and spiritual growth but the healthy physical growth of our pupils also. This policy will serve to further promote the holistic development of our students and is mindful of all stakeholders. It is created in a climate where cooperation, respect and understanding is encouraged between staff, students, parents and all those associated with the school.

### **Rationale:**

Adolescence is a time of physical growth and development – the most rapid since infancy. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients. Eating a nourishing breakfast and a healthy school lunch allows students to take full advantage of the education provided for them. The Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC, 2006) report has shown that many adolescents have poor eating habits. Skipping breakfast and/or lunch is a habit reported by up to 17% of students, while many do not eat good food or drink enough fluid. All this can lessen their concentration levels and make learning more difficult. Research has also show that the foods eaten at lunchtime can affect behaviour in the classroom during the afternoon: consuming food and drink that are high in fats and sugars, especially fizzy drinks, may cause over-activity, resulting in difficult classroom management. For young people to achieve their full potential, it is essential that they eat healthily. The encouragement of healthy eating practices from a young age will help provide the building blocks for lifelong health and

wellbeing. Poor food choices in teenage years can develop into unhealthy food habits which may continue into adulthood and may lead to diseases such as diabetes and coronary heart disease in later life. For young people to achieve their full potential, a healthy diet is essential. It is within this context i.e. the desire for students to achieve all they are capable of and a care for their overall welfare, that the school is concerned with the eating habits of its student.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

This policy aims to help all involved in our school - students, parents, and staff - to develop a positive attitude towards eating and an appreciation of the contribution that good food makes to our physical and mental health. The policy will:

- Contribute to the nutritional knowledge of the students so as to help them develop the skills and confidence needed to make healthy food choices.
- Actively encourage all members of the school community to avail of the healthier alternatives available to them.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.
- Foster positive attitudes towards food with a view to improving concentration, learning and physical energy levels.
- To include all members of the school community in the development and promotion of this policy

### **Action Plan:**

- In implementing and promoting this policy we aim to avail of the following resources: advertising, the canteen, different curriculum and staff resources
- The promotion of healthy eating in Salesian Secondary College will be addressed in Home Economics, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Science, Physical Education (PE) and through art and cultural activities
- Tutor time and pastoral care will be used where possible to reinforce the message of positive food choices on students' physical and mental well-being.

- Increased awareness of healthy eating will be achieved through the use of posters and displays throughout the school building
- Healthy eating week to promote awareness, generate interest and to further students' knowledge of issues related to healthy eating, each school year
- Target parents/guardians with relevant information in relation to healthy eating and food choices. Specifically to provide a leaflet to parents/guardians highlighting to them what food is available to their daughter in the school canteen and the cost of such options.
- Visitors, guest speakers and experts will become involved through the specialised departments like Home Economics, SPHE, Science and PE
- Improve and extend the food and drink options available in the school canteen/shop with a view to looking at healthier options in accordance with circular 0051/2015
- Liaison with students will continue during the school year through the student council

### **Guidelines:**

The school encourages students to consume healthy foods and drinks and the following items are **not** permitted during the school day:

- Fizzy drinks including isotonic and energy drinks e.g. Red Bull, Monster, Powerade, BPM, Lucozade and Lucozade sport
- Chewing Gum

### **Monitoring:**

This policy will be reviewed regularly. It will take into account any legislative changes, new policy and strategy documents either in the school or from the Department of Education and Skills, changes in school facilities and feedback from parents, students and staff. The review will be carried out by the Health Promoting Schools team comprising of representatives from the students and staff. Parental views will be acquired through the Parents' Council.

### **Review Procedures**

- This policy will be reviewed after two years
- The views and experiences of teachers, students, parents/guardians will be surveyed in relation to the success criteria
- School records will be analysed to assess any impact on students' academic progress.

**Signed:**

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**Dated:** May 2019

David O' Dwyer, Chairperson  
Board of Management