



## St Dominic's Secondary School, Ballyfermot

### Healthy Eating Policy

#### **Policy Statement:**

This policy is being implemented during the school year 2010/2011

This policy will apply to the whole school community

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

This policy was formulated after consultation with teachers, students and parents of St. Dominic's Secondary School.

A Healthy Eating Committee was established, which consists of Management, 6 teachers, 1 parent, 2 students and 1 member of The Ballyfermot Partnership Programme in order to formulate and review this policy. A questionnaire was also distributed for views and suggestions.

#### **School Ethos:**

The healthy eating policy will be influenced by the school ethos. At St. Dominic's we strive to develop a caring community in the school, exercising concern and respect for the welfare of others in the atmosphere of truth, trust and freedom.

#### **Code of Behaviour:**

In keeping with the main message of St. Dominic's code of behaviour "Truth", which fosters the education of the whole person, the healthy eating policy will serve to further promote this point.

#### **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.

A recent questionnaire carried out in St. Dominic's which correlates with the findings of the HBSC, 2006 report. It highlighted problem areas regarding healthy eating. These include poor lunch choices, expensive lunch choices and eating a wide range of junk foods. This questionnaire also showed that there is a high level of support from students for a better range of food options to be made available within the school.

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.

### **Aims:**

#### **The healthy eating policy aims to achieve the following:**

- To promote healthier informed choices regarding food and nutrition among the whole school community
- To actively encourage all members of the school community to avail of the healthier alternative available to them
- To foster positive attitudes towards healthy food choices with a view to improving concentration, learning and energy levels.
- To include all members of the school community in the development and promotion of this policy

#### **Implementation of Policy:**

- 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 St. Dominic's will be addressed in Home Economics, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Science, Physical Education (PE) and through art and cultural activities
- 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 the school canteen to make it more conducive to eating healthy lunches, through the use of art work, posters and music.
- Improve and extend the food and drink options available in the school canteen/shop with a view to looking at healthier options
- 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:

- Crisps
- Fizzy drinks including isotonic and energy drinks e.g. Red Bull, Powerade, BPM, Lucozade and Lucozade sport
- Sweets
- Chocolate
- Chewing Gum
- Chips and fast food

### **Monitoring procedures:**

The policy will be monitored by the Management/ Board of Management and the Healthy Eating Committee

### **Review Procedure:**

This policy will be reviewed in 2012 by the Management/Board of Management and Healthy Eating Committee.

This Policy was approved by the Board of Management of St. Dominic's Secondary School on

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management