



Healthy Eating Policy

Edmund Rice College, Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

Introduction:

The Board of Management of Edmund Rice College, Carrigaline, accepts that parents are first and foremost the primary educators of their children in relation to food choices. This policy is designed to ensure that Edmund Rice College can support the work of parents in relation to encouraging students to eat healthily. This policy was formulated in consultation with both teachers and students of Edmund Rice College.

Policy Statement:

- This policy is to be implemented during the school year 2017/2018
- The policy is to be applied across the whole school community of Edmund Rice College incorporating students, staff and parents.

School Ethos:

By working to promote the health of students we are contributing toward the provision of a healthy learning environment. The various issues of health will form part of an expansive curriculum which caters for the diverse needs of the school community.

School Mission Statement:

This policy will further aim to promote the holistic development of students in a caring environment (In accordance with the mission statement of Edmund Rice College).

Rationale:

- Adolescence is a time of rapid physical growth and mental development. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients necessary for daily activities.
- According to the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA, 2008), Irish teenagers are consuming foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt. These foods include carbonated drinks and confectionary, and are often very low in iron, calcium and essential vitamins. Consequently the consumption of such 'junk food' is leading to an increase in health problems such as anaemia, osteoporosis and obesity.
- In addition The Health Behaviour in School Aged Children (HBSC 2010) report highlighted the fact that 16% of teenagers never eat a breakfast. Skipping breakfast and making poor food choices at lunch can have a serious effect on concentration levels and makes learning more difficult.
- 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 later in 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 students.

Healthy Eating Committee – Edmund Rice College.**∅ Staff Representatives:**

- Niamh Walsh (Home Economics teacher)
- Conor Bowen (Physical Education teacher)

∅ Student Representatives:

- Abbey Lester
- Zara O'Donovan
- Billy Duggan

Aims:

This Healthy Eating Policy aims to achieve the following:

- 1) To **promote** the importance of Healthy Eating throughout the entire community of Edmund Rice College.
- 2) To **actively encourage** the practice of Healthy Eating habits within the school.
- 3) To **increase awareness** of Healthy Food Choices and the impact that food has on general health amongst the students, staff and parents of the school community.
- 4) To **foster positive attitudes** towards healthy food choices with a view to setting the foundations for lifelong healthy food choices and practices.

Objectives (Short Term):

- 1) To frequently remind students of the Importance of Healthy Eating through poster displays and up to date information leaflets available around the school with particular emphasis on the canteen rooms.
- 2) To focus on Healthy Eating Issues, and to highlight these by organising a “Health and Fitness Week” each school year.
- 3) To encourage students to try out healthy snack foods in school and to encourage students to bring healthy lunches.
- 4) To generate interest and to encourage students to further their knowledge of Healthy Eating by organising frequent competitions related to the issue.
- 5) To introduce a ban on fizzy drinks and flavoured milks. Students will also be **encouraged** to cut out sweets, crisps, popcorn, chocolate, biscuits and jellies.
- 6) To continue good healthy eating habits that students have learned in Primary School through programmes such as ‘Food Dude’.

Objectives (Long Term):

- 1) To ensure that, if a canteen was set up in the future of the school, it would only stock a selection of healthy food and snacks.
- 2) To liaise with local shops, supermarkets and garages with a view to promoting healthier lunch options and providing possible Healthy “Meal Deals” for the students of Edmund Rice College.

Action Plan

This plan outlines the actions that will be taken to support Healthy Eating in Edmund Rice College and was drawn up in consultation with the Home Economics and Physical Education Departments:

- The promotion of healthy eating in Edmund Rice College will be addressed through the following subjects: Home Economics, Physical Education (PE), Wellbeing, Social Personal Health Education (SPHE), and Science, as well as through social and cultural activities.
- Cross-curricular links with subjects such as Business, Art and English will also be used to promote healthy eating.
- 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.
- A Health and Fitness Week will be held each year to increase knowledge, promote awareness and generate interest in healthy eating.
- Visitors and guest speakers who are knowledgeable in the area be invited where possible to offer their expertise on physical and mental health.
- Engagement with students to take place on an ongoing basis to further develop and promote healthy eating in the school.
- Students will be actively encouraged to bring healthy lunches to school. Competitions will be run in the school to increase student involvement.
- Parents will be made aware of relevant healthy eating information in the school and in general via the school website, leaflets and through the Parents’ Council.

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 Healthy Eating Committee comprising of representatives from the students and staff. Parental views will be acquired through the Parents' Council.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Edmund Rice College on

Date: 15 May 2018 and will be reviewed on a regular basis.