

# Healthy Lifestyle Policy

**January 2017**

## **Policy Statement**

This policy is to be implemented during the school year 2016/ 2017.

The policy is to be applied across the whole school community of Clonturk Community College, including 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 Vision**

‘Our vision is of a welcoming and vibrant school community in which all members will experience a real sense of active participation and belonging.’ Students will be at the centre of this policy and will have an active role in implementing it.

## **School Motto:**

‘Achieving Excellence Together’

This motto will be enhanced by introducing a Healthy Lifestyle Policy in Clonturk Community College. Achieving Excellence Together is about supporting each other to be the best we can be, whether that be academically, in sport or with our health. In order to achieve excellence, students need to be focused, energised and following a Healthy Lifestyle Policy will help them to do so.

## **Rationale:**

According to the World Health Organisation (2003) “A balanced and appropriate diet during childhood and adolescence is likely to reduce the risk of both immediate and long term health problems”.

In addition to this, The HBSC 2006 survey found that only 53% of adolescents exercise four or more times per week despite the fact that it is recommended that all teenagers should engage in at least an hour of moderate physical activity every day.

Adolescents spend a large proportion of their day in school and so it is important that attitudes promoting a healthy lifestyle be fostered by the whole school community.

Research has shown that the foods eaten at breakfast and lunchtime can affect behaviour in the classroom during the afternoon. Foods high in fats and sugars and especially fizzy drinks may cause over-activity and lead to difficult classroom management and a lack of concentration.

For people to achieve their full potential it is essential that they eat healthily and are active. The encouragement of healthy eating practices and exercise from a young age will help to provide a basis for lifelong health and wellbeing.

A recent survey carried out in Clonturk Community College highlighted problem areas regarding healthy eating and exercise. These include habits of not consuming enough Fruit and Vegetables, eating a wide range of foods high in fat, sugar and salts.

- 95% of students admitted to eating at least one item of food from the top shelf of the food pyramid (foods high in saturated fat, sugar and salt) per day.
- 13% of students admitted that they do not do any form of exercise on a regular basis.
- Only 22% of students were consuming the recommended amount of Fruit and Vegetables per day.
- 100% of students thought that they could change their eating habits/ exercise regime for the better.

Here in Clonturk Community College, we believe that encouraging learners to maintain a balance between school work, studies, extra- curricular and other employment along with a healthy diet and an active lifestyle is imperative to help them succeed.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aims of this policy are as follows:

Short Term Aims:

1. Educate learners/ parents to allow them to make informed food choices.
2. Encourage learners to eat less foods high in fat, salt and sugar.
3. Encourage learners to eat more fruit and Vegetables.
4. Encourage learners to be active and exercise regularly.
5. Increase the concentration of learners.

Long Term Aims:

1. Foster positive attitudes towards food and exercise.
2. Live a healthy lifestyle.
3. Work to achieve an 'Active School' Flag.
4. Work to become a 'Health Promoting' school.

## **Action Plan:**

1. Whole-school context

Schools can provide a physical and social environment that encourages a healthy lifestyle. It can ensure that lessons learnt in the classroom are transferred into school life and that messages promoting a healthy lifestyle are consistent throughout the school.

- **Awareness Day:** A Healthy Lifestyle awareness day will be held in school when the policy is introduced. On this day, students will be encouraged to try new foods and participate in activities to get them active. Healthy eating cookery demonstrations will be carried out and an art/ slogan completion will be carried out to spread the message of this policy. In addition to this a sports competition will be held.

- **Marketing the policy:** Posters promoting a healthy lifestyle will be displayed throughout the school to encourage learners to adhere to the policy. In addition to this a healthy eating board and extra-curricular board will be made in the corridors to give learners examples of how they can improve their diet/ activity levels.
- **Support and advise parents:** To encourage parents to play a role, it is important to offer them support. This may take many forms. Upon implementation of the policy, parents will be emailed information on healthy lifestyles. This information will also be made available to them on the website. The information will include a guide on how to use the food pyramid to create healthy breakfasts, lunches and snacks for learners, examples of suitable foods and recipes, and ideas for getting active.
- **Reward Systems:** Students will be actively encouraged to eat healthily and be active in school. Members of staff will be mindful of this and will give learners a ‘praise’ when they notice that they are making an effort to eat healthily/ be active to encourage them to keep up this effort. These praises will be recorded in the school journal.
- **Encouragement:** Learners will be actively encouraged to walk/ cycle to school where possible. We will provide learners with a locked bike rack. In addition to this, the RSA (Road Safety Authority) will deliver a talk to learners on travelling to school safely. They will also provide us with high visibility gear to ensure our learners safety as they cycle/ walk to and from school. Further to this, learners are encouraged to be active at break and lunchtime. Students at Clonturk Community College have access to a yard which they can play football/ exercise in.
- **Extra- Curricular:** Extra- Curricular activities are valued in Clonturk Community College. Teachers run activities every Wednesday after school and learners are encouraged to participate as much as possible. There will be a broad range of activities throughout the year to encourage involvement.

## 2. Teaching and learning

The classroom should be used to inform the whole-school practice and help instigate change. Health education is not only about delivering information but also about developing the skills and confidence required to make healthy choices and be active.

- **Subject areas:** The subject of healthy lifestyle is addressed to varying degrees in many subject areas that offer a unique opportunity for teachers to influence young people in this regard. Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE), Home Economics, Biology, Science, and Physical Education (PE) are examples of subjects on the curriculum for post-primary schools that address aspects of diet, nutrition, physical activity and health. In addition to this a ‘Healthy Eating’ module will be conducted with all learners prior to implementation of this policy.
- **Cross-curricular projects:** These provide valuable learning opportunities. Examples of cross-curricular links include: English (Media Studies), Business Studies (healthy-food accounts in tuck shops) and Art (visual-communication projects in graphic design).

To maximise the potential of teaching and learning opportunities, it is best to plan the curriculum framework in a coordinated way that supports the Healthy Eating Policy. Planning should address specific learning outcomes in terms of content covered, teaching methods and time allocation, to maximise the influence of these classes and reaffirm consistent key messages.

### Review and Evaluation

This Healthy Lifestyle Policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis and may be amended following consultation with the school community.

Ratification:

Ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson

Not needed for good health.

**Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt**

NOT every day

! Maximum once or twice a week

Needed for good health. Enjoy a variety every day.

**Fats, spreads and oils**

In very small amounts

**Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts**

2 Servings a day

**Milk, yogurt and cheese**

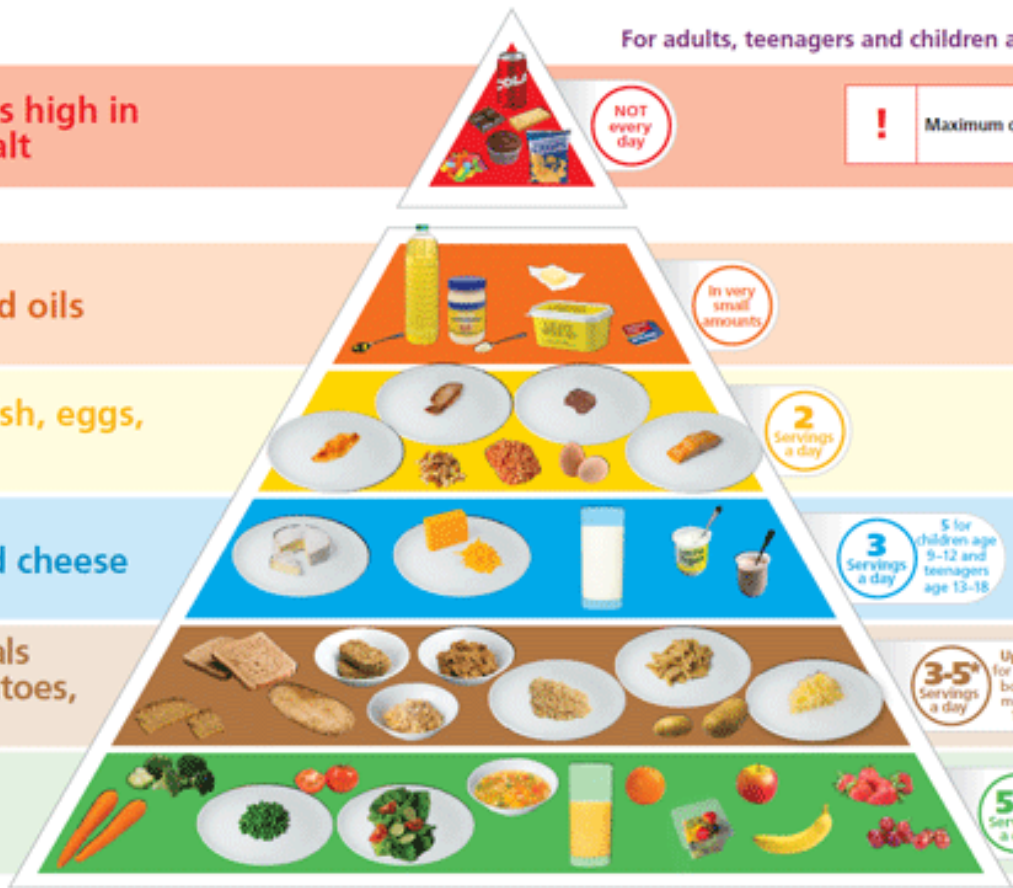
3 Servings a day  
5 for children age 9-12 and teenagers age 13-18

**Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice**

3-5\* Servings a day  
Up to 7\* for teenage boys and men age 19-50

**Vegetables, salad and fruit**

5-7 Servings a day



**Overview**

**The Food Pyramid**

The food pyramid is designed to make healthy eating easier. Healthy eating is about getting the correct amount of nutrients – protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals you need to maintain good health.

Foods that contain the same type of nutrients are grouped together on each of the shelves of the Food Pyramid. This gives you a choice of different foods from which to choose a healthy diet. Studies show that we take in too many calories from foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt, on the top shelf of the Food Pyramid. They provide very little of the essential vitamins and minerals your body needs. Limiting these is essential for healthy eating.

In summary, healthy eating involves:

- Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Plenty of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and cereals – going for the wholegrain varieties whenever you can
- Some milk, cheese and yoghurt
- Some meat, poultry, eggs, beans and nuts
- A very small amount of fats and oils
- And a very small amount or no food and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt

## A Healthy Lunch

The following foods do not support a healthy lunch policy and should be excluded from your child's lunch box; crisps, chewing gum, sweets, bars including cereal bars, cakes, biscuits, lollipops, chocolate, chocolate spread and jellies, artificially sweetened drinks/ fizzy drinks.

A lot of foods may seem healthy but actually contain a lot of hidden sugar, salt and fat. Foods high in fat, sugar and salt will not be permitted in Clonturk Community College. Below is an explanation of how to read food labels found on all foods.

# HOW TO READ A FOOD LABEL

ALL FOODS AND DRINKS SOLD IN IRELAND DISPLAY A TABLE WITH NUTRITION INFORMATION ON IT.

FOODS HIGH IN FAT SHOULD NOT BE CONSUMED OFTEN, ESPECIALLY FOODS HIGH IN SATURATED FAT.

FOODS CAN BE VERY HIGH IN SUGAR. FOODS WITH SUGAR SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE. 1 TSP OF SUGAR = 4G OF SUGAR. THE RECOMMENDED DAILY ALLOWANCE OF SUGAR IS 6 TSPS.

<b>NUTRITION INFORMATION</b>		
Serving Size 1 Bar (50 g)		
Typical Values	Per 100 g	Per 50 g
Energy	1392 kJ 333 kcal	696 kJ 166 kcal
Fat	7.9 g	4.0 g
Of Which Saturates	5.1 g	2.5 g
Carbohydrate	24 g	12 g
Of Which Sugars	8.7 g	4.3 g
Of Which Polyols	14 g	7.0 g
Fibre	13 g	6.4 g
Protein	40 g	20 g
Salt	0.09 g	0.04 g
Sodium	36 mg	18 mg

ALL LABELS MUST DISPLAY THE AMOUNT OF NUTRIENTS PER 100G OF THE FOOD AND PER SERVING OF THE FOOD.

FIBRE IS NECESSARY FOR DIGESTION AND SO SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE DIET WHERE POSSIBLE.

FOODS HIGH IN SALT SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE.













**A healthy lunch box includes:**

- At least 2 portions from the bread, cereals group.
- One portion from the meat and the meat alternatives group.
- 2/3 portions from fruits and vegetables.
- One portion from the dairy products.

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Below is an example of a 5 day lunch box planner:

MONDAY								
1 medium bread roll with chicken and lettuce	+		+	Handful of carrot sticks	+	Pot of low fat yoghurt	+	
TUESDAY								
Small pitta bread with tuna and sweetcorn	+		+	½ wholemeal scone	+		+	Carton of milk
WEDNESDAY								
2 tablespoons of pasta with 1 tablespoon of dried fruit	+		+	2 crackers with low fat cheddar cheese	+		+	Carton of unsweetened fruit juice
THURSDAY								
2 slices of bread with cooked ham and lettuce	+	Small container of fruit in its own juice	+		+	Yoghurt	+	
FRIDAY								
Tortilla wrap with chicken, sliced peppers and lettuce	+		+	Small tub of stewed fruit	+	6 cherry tomatoes	+	

## Healthy snack options (Lower in sugar and fat)

Sometimes it can be difficult to think of alternatives to these. Here are some tasty alternatives.

- Fruit (for example, an apple or banana, handful of grapes)
- Washed, raw vegetable pieces (for example, sticks of carrot, celery, pepper and cucumber).
- Washed, raw vegetables (for example, cherry tomatoes)
- Half a tin of fruit (in its own juice, not sweetened)
- Plain breadsticks, unsalted plain or wholewheat crackers, crispbreads or water biscuits served with fruit or cheese.
- Plain rice cakes (not chocolate flavoured)
- Natural or low fat yogurt with fresh fruit (fresh, frozen or tinned in its own juice)
- Sugar-free jelly pots or fruit jelly.
- Pasta or rice
- Cheese
- Hummus

Healthy choices of drink include water, milk and unsweetened natural juice.

Students should be encouraged to use re-useable containers for safety and litter reasons.

Cans and glass bottles are not permitted.

Useful links for more healthy lunch ideas are:

[Healthy Lunchbox Leaflet](#)

[Healthy Lunch planner](#)