



Loreto College Mullingar Health Promoting School Policy

Members of working group

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Rationale

A healthy diet and lifestyle is essential for maintaining and protecting students' health for ensuring they perform to their full potential during the school day (both academically and physically) and for their growth and development.

Aim

Our aim is to help the students develop a healthy lifestyle, leading on from good habits learned in primary school, which we hope, will continue into adulthood.

Benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle

- Helps young people develop, grow and do well in school.
- Encourages the development of self esteem and a sense of self-worth.
- Prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia.
- May help prevent health problems in later life, including heart disease.
- Developing good eating habits at a young age is vital as changing patterns in adulthood can be very difficult.

Consequences of an unhealthy lifestyle

- Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems at school.
- Skipping breakfast leads to poor performance and concentration.
- Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of weight problems and obesity.
- Eating disorders are extremely common in young people.
- Research suggests that overweight children are the largest group of bullying victims in schools.
- Many children are overfed but undernourished.

Healthy Lunches Policy

A healthy diet is one that allows for a balance of different foods that sustain the wellbeing of the individual. Different lifestyles result in different dietary needs and individuals need to be aware of the effects of different foods on their bodies. In Loreto College Mullingar we are implementing a healthy eating campaign in the canteen to encourage the students to have a suitably balanced diet. We are cutting back on sugary foods and drinks available to students and educating them on the benefits of eating healthily.

Physical Activity

Every student from 1st to 4th year will have a minimum of one double class of physical education per week delivered by a qualified PE teacher. Fifth and sixth years have optional physical education classes. There are various extra curricular sports available to students at lunchtime and after school.

The school promotes sport and physical activity by providing information to students on sports clubs and physical activity opportunities within the community. In senior cycle PE classes, the aim is to link with clubs and service providers in the community by going to their facilities during the PE class or by instructors coming into school to deliver classes in their expert field.

There is an Active Week held in the school during the school year. During this time extra emphasis is placed on physical activity and its importance. A sports day is also held once during the year where a variety of sports are enjoyed by the students.

Mental Health

The school recognises the importance of mental health and how it is an integral component of general health and well-being, allowing the student to fully realise her abilities. The school promotes mental health education and has an anti bullying policy in place. There is a friendship week every year and the students are asked to do Acts of Random Kindness for each other. Also HPS coordinators deliver a cyber safety presentation to first years during this time every year. The student council is very active in the school and a Positive Optimistic Thinking Week is run annually.

To help highlight the awareness of healthy lifestyles the following will take place:

- Teachers and students will discuss healthy eating and physical activity in SPHE classes each year.
- During the year all classes will receive a minimum of two classes on nutrition during SPHE and Home economics classes.
- Teachers will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
- All students are encouraged to participate in plenty of physical activity with a variety of extracurricular sports available to play at lunchtime and after school
- The school will have an Active Week during the year.
- A Sports Day for All will be held annually.
- The HPS committee will remain active and organise events each year to promote healthy lifestyles
- The HPS committee will consist of the Schools Health Promotion Coordinators, teachers, students, and parent members.

Success Criteria

Interest displayed and feedback from the students.

Timeframe for implementation

September 2013 - ongoing

Responsibility for Review

The policy will be reviewed by staff and the HPS committee. The coordinators for this are Jennifer Bracken and Therese Malone.

Ratification and Communication

The policy will be passed at the next BOM meeting for ratification and parents will be given details of its contents via the website.

Ratified by BOM June 2015

Reviewed June 2017

Memo b blass
8 June 2017