



HEALTHY EATING POLICY OF ETSS WICKLOW

SCHOOL ADDRESS: THE GLEBE, WICKLOW TOWN

ROLL NUMBER: 68345R

SCHOOL PATRON: EDUCATE TOGETHER

Introduction

At ETSS Wicklow, we encourage our students to lead a healthy lifestyle by teaching them the importance of healthy eating and how to make healthy food choices each day. By establishing a culture of healthy eating in our school, we believe that this will lead to lifelong healthy eating habits among our students as well as develop their understanding of nutrition and the positive effects it has on their mental and physical health, growth and development.

Adolescence is a time for developing the skills to make informed choices and decisions that will last throughout their lives. Young people need to be aware of the importance of good nutrition for health in order to optimise their growth, health and developmental potential through their teenage years and beyond and we at ETSS Wicklow are committed to promoting this.

Rationale: Why is it necessary to devise a policy?

For young people to achieve their full potential, it is essential that they eat a consistently healthy diet. Healthy eating provides the building blocks for lifelong health and wellbeing. Eating a nourishing breakfast and a healthy school lunch allows children to take full advantage of the education provided for them.

Our goal as a school is to engage the student council and the parent-staff association in promoting the concept of healthy eating and active living at ETSS Wicklow.

The home plays the major role in determining healthy eating habits. However, the school, in partnership with parents/guardians, can make an important contribution. In developing this Healthy Eating Policy, the school will address two key action areas: a) the whole-school context and (b) teaching and learning. This ensures that an action plans to develop a supportive whole-school environment is created and that consistent messages are provided through the curriculum.

Aims:

- To encourage the nutritional and overall health and wellbeing of our students
- To heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet
- To encourage students to make wise choices about food and nutrition
- To recognise the dietary needs of all students and aim to ensure that all students' individual and cultural needs are met
- To support students in developing life-long healthy eating practices and a positive approach towards food
- To raise levels of concentration within class due to consumption of healthy foods
- To monitor and review the school's practice and policy and, if necessary, make amendments
- To teach students the nutritional value of food and understand food production and where it comes from

Action Plan

- Study food choices and nutritional value through the wellbeing subjects (SPHE, PE and CSPE), Science and Home Economics. These lessons are important elements in our health education programme and vehicles for instigating positive change in guiding students towards healthy eating choices
- Limiting unhealthy eating choices within the school environment – e.g. Tuck Shop sells healthy food and drink options
- Consulting with parents/guardians through the PSA
- Promoting initiatives such as a healthy eating week/day to educate the school community about making healthy food and drink choices – this can include activities such as inviting guest speakers, providing a healthy eating food event, organizing a demonstration of how to prepare healthy eating options, a cooking competition and an art awareness campaign;
- Involving the student council in awareness campaigns to help spread the word about the importance of healthy eating;
- Supporting and advising parents/guardians through newsletters and our webpage on healthy eating
- Participating in projects such as Young Social Innovators or school business projects

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The policy is promoted by all staff in the school
- Specific guidelines are presented by class tutors to students and to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year to encourage a healthy lunch-box/healthy eating. Feedback will be presented to the principal at staff meetings and at PSA meetings in terms of the implementation and success of these initiatives
- Students are expected to bring their own healthy packed lunches to school
- Students need permission to leave the school premises to visit shops during school hours
- All special dietary requirements will be respected, inclusive of dietary needs and cultural dietary habits. These requirements must be communicated to the Principal/Deputy Principal

- Students are not allowed to drink high energy drinks or fizzy drinks at ETSS Wicklow. We ask students and parents/guardians to respect this by not bringing such drinks into school. In the case of an error, the student in question should hand the drink over to a staff member upon request. The student may collect this drink at the end of the day – parents/guardians will be informed. Students have the right to appeal to management in situations where there is a dispute about whether a drink fits the profile of a high energy drink
- Staff members will regularly inform students in school assemblies of the importance of healthy eating and healthy lunches

Review:

- The policy will be reviewed in two years and every three years after that in consultation with the whole school community
- The review will consider any legislative changes, new policy and strategy documents, changes in school facilities and feedback from parents, students and staff.