



**Lucan Community College**

**Healthy Eating Policy**

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Date: *19/6/24*

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## Mission Statement of Lucan Community College

The distinguishing features of Lucan Community college are:

- It is multi denominational, catering for students from a wide variety of religious backgrounds
- It is co-educational, catering for boys and girls equally
- It is comprehensive, offering a broad educational experience.

The motto of the college, Aontas meaning Unity, encapsulates the ethos of the college. Our fundamental belief is that school, and in particular the work and the activities involved, should be a pleasant as well as an enriching experience. We therefore lay total emphasis on the school as a community – of students, staff and parents – working in harmony. We consider that everyone has an absolute right to work and develop in a happy atmosphere free from unnecessary stress and tension.

We, the educational partners (students, staff, parents/guardians) of Lucan Community College are committed to being an active learning community with sound educational principles, where each person is valued and respected for who they are.

Within a supportive, safe and friendly environment, we foster collaboration and promote equality and tolerance as preparation for life and involvement in society.

As a community, we provide a free and fair education through broad, balanced yet diverse curricular and co-curricular activities endeavouring to meet the needs of all. We encourage commitment through participation, coupled with the promotion of honesty, integrity, self-discipline and self-worth in everything we do, so that the full potential of all is developed.

## Introduction

The Board of Management of Lucan Community College recognises that parents/guardians are first and foremost the primary educators of and providers for their children in relation to food choices. This policy is designed to ensure that Lucan Community College can support the work of parents/guardians in relation to encouraging students to eat healthily. This policy was formulated in consultation with the teachers, students and parents/guardians of Lucan Community College.

## Rationale

The healthy eating policy will enable Lucan Community College to develop and maintain a shared philosophy on all aspects of food and drink, including:

- Developing consistent messages about healthy eating across the curriculum.
- Ensuring consistency between the messages in the curriculum and food available in Lucan Community College.
- Ensuring food provision in the school canteen is in line with healthy eating guidelines.
- Creating a positive eating environment for students.

Findings from the National Teen's Food Consumption Survey II (IUNA, 2021) found that:

- Intakes of fruit and vegetables are low, average intake of less than 3 servings a day, well below the recommended 5-7 a day.
- Intakes of sugar, salt and saturated fat are higher than recommended.

The Junior Cycle Framework (Department of Education and Skills, 2015) contains 24 statements of learning. Statement of Learning 13 relates to developing student's understanding of the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices.

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023 (Department of Education and Skills) states that:

- "The school environment is conducive to promoting healthy eating choices. Drinking water is freely available and rewards other than food are used to motivate children and young people."
- "Opportunities are provided for children and young people, staff and parents to have an active voice in decisions relating to school improvement."

Department of Education Circular 051/2015 Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post Primary Schools states that:

- "Schools should prioritise the development and implementation of their healthy eating policy".
- "Regulating nutrient intake is not the job of schools. However, schools are well placed to support students to develop an understanding of the nutrient value of common and easily accessible products, as well the skills to make informed decisions about their nutrient intake".

## Aims

The healthy eating policy aims to achieve the following:

- Promote healthy eating in Lucan Community College, in line with national healthy eating guidelines and school curriculum.
- Take a whole school approach to promoting healthy eating in our school including culture and environment, teaching and learning, policy and planning and relationships and partnerships.
- Ensure that food provision in school meets the needs of our students.
- Make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience for students.
- Foster positive attitudes towards nutritious food choices which will aid concentration and energy levels to benefit learning.
- Involve all stakeholders; students, teachers and parents/guardians in the development and promotion of this policy.

## Objectives

Healthy eating will be promoted in Lucan Community College through the four key areas of wellbeing promotion.

### Key Area 1. Culture and Environment

- Food provided in the canteen is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it meets the needs of our students.
- Drinking water is freely available for students by the two water fountains.
- The eating environment for students should be clean and comfortable.
- Junior students are allowed home for lunch, with permission from parents/guardians.
- Senior students may go to the local shops but are not allowed to bring back fast-food onto school grounds.
- Non-food rewards should be used by staff where possible.
- Students should not bring peanuts or products containing peanuts to school to ensure safety for students with peanut allergy. This will be reviewed regularly based on student allergies.

### Key Area 2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Ensure a coherent and consistent cross-curricular approach when teaching and learning about food in the curriculum, e.g. SPHE, Science, Home Economics, PE, and Biology etc.
- Useful resources for teaching and learning are available on the shared drive.
- External agencies e.g. Registered Dietitians may be used in line with the guidelines from the Department of Education; Circular 0043/2018.

### Key Area 3. Policy and Planning

- Curriculum planning in SPHE to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to teaching and learning about food, health and nutrition.
- Teachers are supported to attend relevant professional development courses.

### Key Area 4. Relationships and Partnerships

- The healthy eating policy will be uploaded onto the school website and sent to parents and staff.
- The Parents' Association were consulted in the policy review.
- Food provided in the canteen is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it meets the needs of our students.

## Communication

- **Whole school community:** The policy will be available on the school website.
- **Staff:** The policy will be published in the staff handbook and staff will be reminded of the policy at staff meetings.
- **Students:** Tutors/Year Heads/Senior Management will inform and remind their tutor classes about the healthy eating policy. It will be printed for tutors to have in their tutor room.  
  
SPHE/Home Economics/Science/PE teachers will remind students about the healthy eating policy during their lessons on healthy eating and nutrition.
- **Parents/guardians:** The policy will be available on the school website and reminders about the policy may be given e.g. at Parent information evenings.
- **Canteen:** The policy will be printed and given to the canteen staff and sent to the manager of the canteen via email.

## Implementation

The policy will be communicated to the whole school community and implemented as outlined above. Senior Management and teachers will ensure the following sanctions are applied if necessary:

- Students who return at lunch with fast food will be asked to consume the products outside of the school grounds. They will also be reminded to comply with our healthy eating policy.
- Fizzy drinks or high-energy drinks are not allowed at any time. They will be confiscated from students and will not be returned to students.
- Chewing gum is not allowed by students on school grounds. Students will be fined €5 for chewing gum. This fine is payable to the front office.

## Resources

The following resources may be of benefit for students, teachers and parents/guardians.

- The Safefood website is a very useful resource for information: safefood.net In particular they have information specific for teenagers: [Healthy eating tips for teens | safefood](#) and [Nutrition for sporty teens | safefood](#)
- Irish Nutrition Dietetics Institute Resource: [Teenager's Health - INDI](#)
- The Dental Health Foundation provides information on their website: dentalhealth.ie
- Bodywhys, the Eating Disorders Association of Ireland have information on their website: bodywhys.ie
- The Coeliac Society of Ireland have information on their website: coeliac.ie

Resources for parents/guardians are uploaded to the following link available on the school website: <https://padlet.com/embed/yqmmooghthgpaav3>

#### Key Documents Referenced

Framework for Junior Cycle (Department of Education and Skills, 2015)

<https://ncca.ie/media/3249/framework-for-junior-cycle-2015-en.pdf>

Department of Education Circular 051/2015 Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post Primary Schools. <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2015/51.pdf>

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023 (Department of Education and Skills, 2019)

<https://assets.gov.ie/24725/07cc07626f6a426eb6eab4c523fb2ee2.pdf>