



Presentation Secondary School

Church Street, Castleisland, Co. Kerry



Healthy Eating Policy

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 4th March 2026



Our vision is to prepare accomplished, confident, resilient and independent young adults, who follow their passions, develop a love of learning and become positive role models in society.

1. Rationale

As a Presentation Secondary School, we are guided by our Catholic ethos, which places a strong emphasis on care for the whole person, respect for self and others and the promotion of human dignity. Healthy eating plays a vital role in supporting students physical health, emotional wellbeing, concentration and learning.

Adolescence is a key stage for developing positive lifelong habits and our school community has a shared responsibility to promote healthy food choices in a supportive, inclusive and non-judgemental manner.

This policy aligns with our whole-school approach to wellbeing and supports national guidance on student wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. It is also informed by the *HSE Healthy Eating Guidelines*.

2. Aims of the Policy

The aims of this Healthy Eating Policy are to:

- Promote healthy eating habits among students
- Support students wellbeing, energy levels and ability to learn
- Encourage informed and balanced food choices
- Create a consistent approach to food and drink within the school environment
- Reflect the Catholic values of care, respect and responsibility
- Work in partnership with parents/guardians and the wider school community

3. Healthy Eating Guidelines

3.1 Food and Drinks Encouraged

Students are encouraged to bring in the following items to school each day:

- Water
- Fruit and vegetables
- Wholegrain bread, wraps, rice or pasta
- Yoghurts and dairy products
- Lean protein sources (e.g. chicken, eggs, beans, lentils)

These foods help maintain energy levels, concentration and overall wellbeing throughout the school day.

3.2 Food and Drinks Discouraged

Students are discouraged from bringing in the following items to school each day:

- High fat snack foods
- Highly processed foods, which are high in sugar, salt and/or fat.

3.3 Food and Drinks Prohibited

The following items are prohibited, during certain times and locations as follows:

At ALL times on school grounds

- Caffeinated energy drinks e.g. monster, red bull, rockstar etc.
- Fizzy drinks (Coke, Fanta etc.)
- Chewing gum
- Nuts or nut related products (due to students with nut related allergies in our school)

During Class

- Water **only** during class time. Hot drinks, such as tea/coffee must be consumed before class starts.
- No food allowed, unless in a medical emergency e.g. necessary sugar intake.

Please note: prohibited items stated above will be confiscated by management.

The school acknowledges that occasional treats may be part of a balanced diet but we encourage moderation.

4. Lunch and Break Times

- Students are encouraged to eat a balanced lunch each day, including a break time snack.
- Adequate time will be provided for students to eat their food.
- Students are permitted to eat during lunchtime clubs.
- Students are expected to dispose of food waste and packaging responsibly and to respect the school environment.
- Be mindful of the use of appropriate bins in each classroom and around the school as follows:
 - ❖ **Brown — Food waste / compost**
Fruit peels, leftover food, napkins (where composting is available)
 - ❖ **Black or Grey — General waste**
Anything that can't be recycled
 - ❖ **Green – Mixed recyclables**
Paper, plastic and cardboard (clean, loose and dry packaging)

Please make reference to the colour coded signage over each bin for the correct disposal of your waste.

4.1 Breakfast Club

- Tea and toast are provided each morning in our Home Economics room, as part of our free breakfast club, open to all students.

5. Special Occasions and School Events/Trips

- Healthy food options will be prioritised at school events, where possible.
- Food-based rewards will be used sparingly and thoughtfully.
- Cultural, religious and medical dietary needs will be respected and accommodated, where possible.
- Healthy food options will be encouraged on school tours and trips.

6. Role of the School

The school will:

- Implement and monitor the policy daily, through observation, especially outside of class times.
- Promote healthy eating through SPHE, CSPE, Home Economics and Wellbeing initiatives.
- Invite in guest speakers in the area of healthy eating, on occasion and where necessary.
- Model positive attitudes towards food and health daily.
- Provide age-appropriate information on nutrition and wellbeing.
- Support students in making healthy choices without stigma or judgement.

7. Role of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- Support all aspects of this policy.
- Provide balanced lunches and snacks, as much as possible.
- Discuss healthy eating habits at home.
- Communicate with the school regarding any allergies or food intolerances.

8. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of our school's wellbeing programmes and policies, in consultation with staff, students and parents/guardians where appropriate.

Signed: Mary O Keefe
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Pierce Dargan
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 4th March 2026

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