



# Health Promoting Schools Policy

## Rationale

St. Michael's College is a Health Promoting School (HPS). As a HPS, we focus on two priorities:

1. Promoting Positive Mental Health
2. Creating more awareness of the importance of physical health  
(Please see the HPS Action Plan for more details)

Our school has "believe, belong, become" at the core of its ethos. We hope to build on the very healthy school we already have. We aim to create a sustainable health promoting school that is active all year.

## Health Promoting School Team

We have formed a team that carries voices from the student body, school management, parents' association and staff room all aimed at Health Promotion. In being part of the HPS structure, we have a good support network. We aim to maintain the continuous presence of a HPS team in school for the foreseeable future.

## Positive Mental Health

In promoting positive mental health, we seek to do two things. We want those who struggle to realise they are not alone and that they can take very real steps in managing their emotional difficulties. We also want to make all students and the whole school community more aware of the importance of maintaining good mental health throughout their lives.

We hope to have marquee events that highlight our priorities and main themes that complement the activities that focus on those priorities. This will take the form of one week in January that focuses the school community on the importance of Positive Mental Health.

## Physical Health

In creating more awareness of the importance of physical health, we hope to encourage all members of the school community to reflect on various aspects of their physical health in an interactive and fun environment. We want to make people more informed about what they eat and how they can incorporate more exercise into their lives. We also want to encourage everyone in the school community to undertake more exercise. Another marquee event of one week in September will help focus the school community on these targets at the beginning of the school year. We hope this compliments all the other initiatives that take place during PE and Extra-curricular activities.

Both of these weeks will be included in the school calendar. We also hope to intertwine these priorities because as we know there is a huge link between physical and mental health.

### **Healthy Eating**

Consequently, the school's education around food and the food served in the school canteen should facilitate the school community to make healthy choices in line with our aims and rationale outlined above. A separate team have been formed to promote healthy eating in the canteen and wider school community.

The school canteen operators should:

- Sell food that is freshly prepared, healthy, balanced, nutritious and affordable
  - Sell more fruit and vegetables
  - Avoid selling fizzy drinks and food that is high in added sugar and calories
  - Take account of the school timetable, providing meals and snacks in line with both the academic and extra-curricular schedule
  - Be specific about canteen opening and closing times
  - Share and display the weekly/daily menu in advance, including all prices, with the school community (and on the school website)
  - Collaborate with representatives of the school community on a monthly basis
  - Work with the team and school management to set performance indicators for the canteen to achieve which would be assessed regularly
  - Achieve a generally positive satisfaction rating among most of its customers
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