

August 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Student Health and Wellbeing Awareness**

Childhood obesity is a major health concern in today's modern society and Northern Ireland is no exception. Recent research undertaken in the province has shown that one in five boys and one in four girls is either overweight or obese. As children and young people spend on average a quarter of their waking lives at school, one prominent step to improving the nutrition of the children is to provide and positively promote healthy food and drinks throughout the school day.

The Department of Education produced guidelines to ensure students receive a balanced diet in school. As a result of these guidelines, the college do not sell drinks such as cola, lemonade, juice style drinks (e.g. Five Alive/Sukie) and sports drinks (e.g. BPM, Powerade).

St Killian's College view the health and wellbeing of our students as a top priority. A 'Whole School Food Policy' is reviewed annually and the consumption of fizzy drinks in school is banned. Students are encouraged to drink alternatives such as milk and water. Free, fresh drinking water is available throughout the school day. Recent research has linked hydration levels with improved concentration, a benefit of switching to water.

Northern Irish children also have the highest rate of dental decay in the whole of the UK and it is hoped promoting awareness about the oral problems associated with the consumption of fizzy drinks may help reduce this alarming statistic.

If you have any concerns please contact the college.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Patricia McKay

**Head of Home Economics**