



Somerville Secondary College

High Caffeine and High Sugar Content drinks – Student Use

To explain to our school community Somerville Secondary College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students consuming high caffeine and high sugar content drinks during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Somerville Secondary College

BACKGROUND

Whilst we understand that our students must be able to make their own choices regarding healthy eating, as a school we are also responsible for promoting a healthy lifestyle. Energy drinks that have high caffeine content have become commonplace in the lives of young people as they have become cheaper and more accessible, being available in most supermarkets, petrol stations and corner shops.

Energy drinks can often contain high levels of sugar while others may have zero sugar content. Energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine, a legal stimulant that temporarily increases alertness, attention and energy, as well as elevating heart rate, blood pressure and breathing rates. This makes them different from other fizzy drinks often consumed by children, although both can often contain high levels of sugar.

There is also evidence outlining the effects of the consumption of these drinks on young people's behaviour and health. Many students are drinking energy drinks that are unsuitable for their age, as high caffeine energy drinks are not suitable for school age students.

Consumption of high caffeine energy drinks can be damaging to the health of young people and can lead to a variety of different behaviours, including a lack of concentration, hyperactivity, sleep problems, irritability, and headaches. Furthermore, as the caffeine wears off, this can lead to 'a crash' or a period of very low energy. Scientific reviews emphasise that consumption of energy drinks amongst adolescents is associated with potentially negative health and behavioural outcomes. These include sensation-seeking behaviour, use of tobacco and other harmful substances. Binge drinking of these products are associated with a greater risk of depression and injuries that may require medical treatment.

It has become clear that a number of our students either purchase these drinks in the morning on the way to school, or bring them into school and drink them later during the school day, this often includes the purchase of 500ml cans or 750ml bottles.

POLICY

As a school community we believe that the consumption of high caffeine energy drinks is having a detrimental effect on learning. It is clear that excessive amounts of caffeine (and sugar in high sugar drinks) means some students are losing concentration in the short term and, by the end of the day, are feeling flat and less responsive.



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As a school that places a premium on teaching and learning, behaviour and wellbeing and as a school that promotes healthy eating, we have found that the consumption of energy drinks is not beneficial to good learning.

Some of the specific issues that have been identified include:

- Students who consume energy drinks may be more unfocused in lessons.
- Lessons can be disrupted by students because of the effects of these drinks.
- Students are consuming high caffeine drinks during and between lessons and as a result, are struggling to fully engage and causing unnecessary barriers to learning.
- Student's conduct between lessons and at break times and lunchtime is more unsettled.
- Caffeine consumption has resulted in more students having to use toilet facilities more frequently during lessons, causing further disruption to learning.

As a school we aim to promote healthy lifestyles and a positive learning environment by encouraging positive behaviour. It is felt, by the school community, that the consumption of high caffeine energy drinks, at times, prevents this from happening. For these reasons, students will not be permitted to bring energy drinks into school. Should parents/carers wish to provide students with drinks to be consumed during the school day, then water in clear bottles or clearly marked individual portions of fruit juice would be encouraged.

Parents/carers and students are requested to consider the impact of high sugar drinks on health and wellbeing. Only water in clear bottles may be consumed in lessons and during examinations, no other drinks will be permitted. All high caffeine energy drinks will be handed to staff for collection at the end of the school day.

Students will be encouraged, through Health and Wellbeing lessons to drink healthier alternatives including drinks with reduced or zero sugar content. All students have access to water fountains throughout the day and there is a range of drinks for sale in the school that students can purchase whilst on site. All students are encouraged to bring in clear, re-usable water bottle that can be refilled at break and lunchtime using the cooled water fountains.

The policy will come into effect on 1st day of Term 2 2021 and will be followed by a series of assemblies, Health and Wellbeing lessons and a communication to parents and carers. The message will confirm that high caffeine energy drinks (including those with zero sugar content) will not be allowed in school from the 1st Day of Term 2, 2021 onwards.

Failure to comply with staff requests may lead to further behavioural sanctions and contact being made with parents/carers

At Somerville Secondary College:

- Students who choose to bring these identified drinks to school must have them sealed and securely stored during school hours.
- These identified drinks must not be consumed at Somerville Secondary College during school hours, including lunchtime and recess.



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Secure storage

Enforcement

Students who use and/or consume these drinks inappropriately at Somerville Secondary College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

The same implementation of this policy will apply on school camps and excursions.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Code of Conduct, Personal Property,

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on March 2021 and is scheduled for review in March 2024.