

## **PENCOED COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SCHOOL ENERGY DRINKS POLICY**

**For all students in Years 7-13 at Pencoed Comprehensive School and  
Penybont 6<sup>th</sup> Form College**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of review: \_\_\_\_\_ (every two years)

*This document is freely available to the entire school community. It has been approved by the School Governing Body and learners, through consultation with the school council, and made available on the school website. The policy has also been discussed with the Penybont 6<sup>th</sup> Form College Joint Committee.*

## **Background**

*Whilst we understand that our pupils and 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.*

*A number of retailers in the UK have now prohibited the sale of energy drinks to young people under the age of 16. There is also recent media coverage 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 children under the age of 16 and will be labelled "not recommended for children" on the product.*

*A key factor in young people's decision to buy energy drinks is their low price compared to other drinks. Media reports often refer to the fact that young people recognise a strong gender element to energy drinks, feeling much of the advertising is aimed at boys and that boys tend to drink them more, as they associate them with sports and computer gaming.*

*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.*

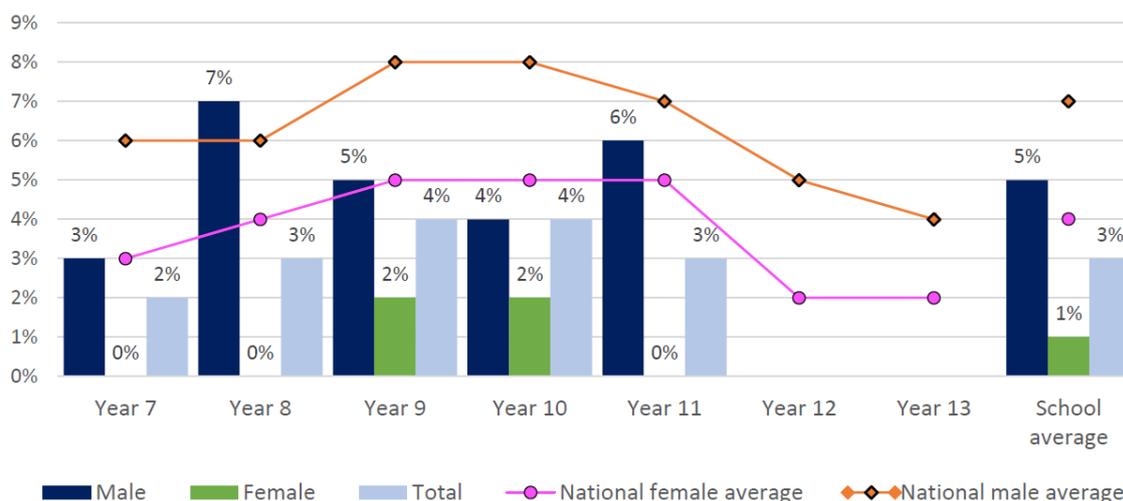
*Scientific reviews emphasise that consumption of energy drinks amongst adolescents is associated with potentially negative health and behavioural outcomes. These include sensation-seeking behaviour, use of tobacco and other harmful substances, and binge drinking, which are all associated with a greater risk of depression and injuries that may require medical treatment.*

*It has become clear that a number of our pupils and 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. Results from the SHRN Survey for 2017/18 suggest that 5% of our pupils in Year's 7-11 drink one or more energy drinks each day*

## Results for the SHRN Health and Well-being Survey Pencoed Comprehensive School 2017/18

### Energy drinks

Fig. 4 Pencoed Comprehensive School: Students who usually drink one or more energy drinks a day



### Responsibility of the governing body to promote healthy eating and drinking

Within the Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009, governors are responsible for:

*Promoting healthy eating and drinking by pupils in maintained schools and must include in the governors' report information taken to promote healthy eating and drinking by pupils of the school.*

#### Consultation with the School Council

Members of the School Council support the implementation of this policy.

*They expressed concerns regarding energy drinks stating that they are aware of pupils that drink in excess of 3 cans a day and that it is perceived as a 'cool' thing to do.*

*They did not think that sports drinks (as opposed to energy drinks) should be banned provided they were only used before sports. (These are Isotonic Drinks that do not include a reference to high caffeine content)*

*Pupils think that reusable bottles to re-fill with water should be promoted and encouraged more and that a campaign, linked to plastic pollution could be carried out. The School Council were happy to be involved with this, an initiative that would be supported by the school where a number of water drinking fountains have already been installed.*

*Pupils felt that rules regarding canned drinks should also be consistently applied in, that the drinking of water only in classrooms should be allowed.*

## **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.*

*As a school that places a premium on teaching and learning, behaviour and well-being 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 as a result 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 for students 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 pupils need 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 that are labelled as 'not recommended for children/ or those aged 16 or under' will be confiscated and disposed of by staff. Sports Drinks that are not labelled as 'unsuitable for those aged 16 or under' and high sugar drinks will be allowed on school premises but will not be allowed to be*

*consumed during lessons. Pupils 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 canteens and vending machines 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 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 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 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2018 onwards. These are drinks that are labelled “not recommended for children/ or those aged 16 or under and that contain high levels of caffeine”.*

*The procedure that will be in place for high caffeine energy drinks is as follows:*

*If pupils or students are seen drinking a high caffeine energy drink labelled as “not suitable for children/those under 16” then it will be confiscated and disposed of by staff and the incident will be recorded on SIMS. Failure to comply with staff requests may lead to further behavioural sanctions and contact being made with parents/carers.*

### **Monitoring and Review of this policy**

*This policy will be reviewed every two year though changes may be implemented should Welsh Government policies or guidelines change.*