

Supporting Special Diets
(Additional information to support The Administration of Medicines and Meeting Child Health Care Needs)

Introduction

Clackmannanshire Council has a statutory duty to provide school meals for children and young people attending schools as part of The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007ⁱ . Free school meals must be provided for those children and young people from families with low income. The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008 ⁱⁱ set out nutrient and food standards which define the types of food and drink that pupils should be offered in school lunches and also extend to food and drink sold or served in schools out with the school lunch. These Regulations include guidance on:

- The provision of healthy meals that comply with the national Nutrient Standards for School Lunches
- Removing the stigma of free school meal entitlement
- Provision of special diets
- Making strong connections between school meals and the curriculum. The links between food, nutrition and the curriculum are reinforced through Better Eating, Better Learningⁱⁱⁱ- a context for learning about food in Scotland

Rationale

Due to the increasing number of children diagnosed and requiring medically prescribed diets (for a number of reasons including allergies/intolerances, diabetes and complex medical conditions) it is necessary to provide supporting advice and guidance to all educational establishments to ensure that children and young people's individual health care needs are met.

This guidance supports the Administration of Medicines and Meeting Child Health Care Needs Policy (2016)

Schools, nurseries, parents/carers and catering staff need to work in partnership to ensure that ,as far as possible, the menus and the conditions in the dining room or areas where meals are served, enable as many of those children requiring medically prescribed diets to be accommodated and have access to school meals if they so wish.

Each establishment is therefore required to record the number of children in their establishment who require a **medically prescribed diet** on an annual basis and submit this information to Catering Services. This may also form part of a Care Plan embedded within the Administration of Medicines and Meeting Child Health Care Needs Policy (2016)

If a parent/carer requests a diet for medical or health reasons, but this has not been prescribed by a medical professional or dietician, it is advisable to encourage the parent/carer to contact their GP or local Dietetics Department so that advice and guidance can be gathered to best support the health needs of their child.

Principles

All authority establishments, including schools and early year's provision should ensure that they have mechanisms in place to be proactive in identifying and providing for those children/young people who require medically prescribed diets. These mechanisms should include:

- Information in the school/establishment handbook, school website, parent/carer notice board for parents/carers on the provision of medically prescribed diets.
- Information gathering at enrolment and placement and annually thereafter. Schools should ensure that the requirement for medically prescribed diets is part of the enrolment discussion with all parents/carers and that, where necessary, they are provided with information about the meals provided
- Submission of data on the numbers of children and young people needing medically prescribed to Catering Services.
- Annual formal updating of Referral Form (Appendix 1) and Parental Declaration (Appendix 2) by parents/carers, (part of a Care Plan)
- Continuous updating and sharing of information, in line with Confidentiality and Data Protection, on children and young people requiring medically prescribed diets with identified staff to ensure that they are aware of vulnerable children and young people.
- Discussion at parents' evenings and meetings.

Procedures for Provision of Medically Prescribed Diets

For all children and young people identified, by a medical professional, as having special dietary requirements, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Educational establishments, as part of GIRFEC^{iv} Principles and Practice will convene a meeting with parents/carers and Catering Services to discuss the dietary needs of the child/young person. The child/young person may attend (if appropriate).
2. If, after full discussion, the parents/carers wish their children to receive meals provided by Catering Services then they must complete the attached Referral Form (Appendix 1) and the Parental Declaration (Appendix 2). Both forms **MUST** be completed and signed, **annually**, by the parent/carer.
3. If the special diet is part of a medical Care Plan(as outlined in the Administration of Medicines and Meeting Child Health Care Needs) only relevant information should be shared with Catering Services
4. Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 should be kept in the establishment but a copy of each must be given to the parent/carer and a copy of each must be submitted to Catering Services

5. Additional information about any GP/Dietitian involvement and Care Plan must also be noted on the Referral Form (Appendix 1).
6. Educational establishments must ensure that relevant staff members are aware of the guidelines and also the specific dietary needs of individual children. Staff should be given access to appropriate training, if required.

Additional guidance for dietary requirements.

Catering Services provide advice and guidance to support children and young people with complex dietary needs, providing information to parents/carers on nutritional content and possible allergens within the menus. Some children and young people with allergies or intolerances can tolerate a small amount of the offending substance in food. Also, some with intolerance to something in one food (e.g. protein in milk) may tolerate it well in another (e.g. yoghurt). It is important that Catering Services are made aware of this at any meetings or via Appendix 1.

Vegetarian Diets

The standard school meals service menus include a non-meat option and this is clearly highlighted for parents/carers and children on the menu planner.

Nut Allergy

Catering Services have a comprehensive index of all substances and ingredients which may contain traces of nuts. As a result, some dishes may be considered “nut free”. Parents/carers should be advised that while the ingredients of meals identified as nut-free do not contain nuts, they have not necessarily been prepared in a nut free environment and may contain traces of nuts.

It must be realised that there can be no guarantee that food has not been contaminated during any stage of the production, manufacturing or preparation processes with traces of nuts.

When a child or young person has been identified as having a nut allergy, establishments should, in consultation with children and young people, staff, parents/carers develop and implement an establishment nut policy/guidance. This should:

- Identify the steps that will be taken to reduce the risk of accidental contact with nuts and consider the degree to which it is possible for the school /establishment to be a nut free zone
- Raising awareness of children, young people and staff about the dangers posed by nut allergies
- Include advice about food brought from home by staff and children/young people containing nuts or traces of nuts
- Include advice about the use of nuts within the curriculum e.g. class cooking, art and craft, bird feeders

- Address any staff training needs on the use of epi-pens, according to the guidance contained in the Administration of Medicines and Meeting Child Health Care Needs in Schools Policy.

Other allergies/ intolerances including diabetes

Most of the needs of the children and young people requiring support for the above conditions can be provided within the standard School Meals service menus. This will be achieved through the support of the establishment staff, partnership working and full co-operation from parents/carers.

Children and young people with diabetes may require more detailed information which Catering Services provide to highlights a range of allergens on the menu.

Equality and Diversity

As part of its statutory duty, Clackmannanshire Council is obliged to promote diversity, equality and prevent discrimination.

The standard School Meals service menus are likely to meet most needs in relation to dietary requirements for cultural and religious reasons. Where the standard menus do not meet such needs, parents/carers of children and young people may request additional information and support in deciding whether or not to access school meals.

The following services can be made available:

- Parents/carers can request information on products used in individual meals and the supply/procurement of products
- Parents/carers may visit Class Cuisine, Catering Services to view the facility and service provision

Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluating is an essential part of the quality assurance measures of both Education Services and Catering Services. As such, the implementation of these guidelines will be monitored through:

- The collation of the numbers of children taking school meals with a diagnosed requirement for a medically prescribed diet
- The number of children, whose parents/carers have requested access to school meals and have signed the Parental Declaration (Appendix 2)
- The number of requests for medically prescribed diets that have not been fulfilled / have been fulfilled
- The uptake in school / nursery lunches
- Feedback from parents/carers
- The number of incident forms, completed by establishments, reporting any adverse reactions caused by unintentional exposure to a food allergen

APPENDIX 1

Medically Prescribed Diet Referral Form

Name of Establishment
Name of Child Date of Birth
Year / Stage

Parent/Carer Contact Details
.....
.....

This **MUST** be completed by Parent/Carer

Type of Diet/Allergy –please indicate

LACTOSE FREE		WHEAT FREE	
GLUTEN FREE		MSG FREE	
EGG FREE		DIABETIC	
NUT FREE		OTHER	

Any other – Please specify
.....
.....

Details of medical professional/dietician prescribing diet
.....
.....

Other Relevant Details

Name of Doctor/Consultant
Name of Dietitian & Contact Number (if different from above)
.....

What are the symptoms?
.....
.....

Any other relevant information

Please attach a copy of prescribed diet sheet from the Care Plan if relevant.
(This will allow the correct diet to be provided).
Is your child able to self select? Yes/No

Parent/Carer signature
Head of establishment signature
Date

PLEASE UPDDATE AT THE START OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR.

APPENDIX 2

Medically Prescribed Diet – Parental Declaration

Catering Services has adapted the current menus to meet the demands of the most common medically prescribed diets.

The menus use fresh produce wherever possible and where manufactured products are used, Catering Services is required to rely on the information provided by the manufacturer regarding food allergens and will not knowingly supply foods that are not suitable.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to give permission for the child requiring a medically prescribed diet to partake of school meals.

Names of Parents/Carers

Name of Child/Young Person

Address

Name of Establishment

To be completed by parents/carers of children requiring medically prescribed diets, wishing to take school meals:

We/I _____,
(parents/carers) of _____ (child's name),
acknowledge and accept that whilst every effort has been made by Catering Services to ensure that the food provided to children/young people meets the requirements of their medically prescribed diets, Catering Services cannot guarantee that the food has been processed and/or prepared in an environment free from particular products and therefore it may contain traces of such products.

We/I further confirm that we/I accept the advice regarding the risks to our/my child and wish him/her to take food so provided.

Signed _____ (parent 1/carer1)

Date _____

Signed _____ (parent 2/carer2)

Date _____

ⁱ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2008/05/08160456/0>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2008/09/12090355/0>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/03/1606>