

Special Diet Guide for Bradgate Education Partnership

The Department for Education states that schools should make reasonable adjustments for pupils with dietary requirements.

This document outlines the steps required.

Every effort should be made to stick to the centrally produced menus each, as the majority of special diet menus needed for your schools will be available.

What is a special diet/ special diet menu?

- A special diet is identified as one where the standard provision requires amendments to be made to ensure that it is safe for a customer, due to a specially diagnosed requirement such as a food allergy or intolerance.
- We do not consider children's preferences as special diets, as we believe that children should be encouraged to try new foods whilst tastebuds are changing and developing.
- Lifestyle and religious choices will not be considered as special diets. If there is no suitable choice as part of the standard provision, operations teams can talk to the nutrition team about offering suitable choices.

Special Diet Menu Process

1. All special diet requests must be accompanied by medical evidence. Acceptable medical evidence should be documentation from a professional medical source i.e., a medical doctor, registered dietitian, nurse, or other qualified NHS special professional. School-composed care plans, private commercial laboratory reactivity results and homeopathic diagnoses are not accepted. The medical note provided must be the most up to date version and, if a newly diagnosed allergy/intolerance, the medical note should be dated within the last 6 months.
2. This information will need to be supplied to the Operations Manager at the earliest opportunity, previous Allergy forms can be used for in year menu changes but will need to be revived yearly.
3. All requests for special diets will need to be accompanied by a completed and signed Allergy form.
4. Special diet menus can only be produced for primary schools or nurseries using Caterlink approved recipes – if the school menu includes recipes that are not on the Caterlink database, no special diet can be produced.
5. Whilst awaiting a special diet risk assessment decision, the pupil may be offered a jacket potato with beans, vegetables, and fresh fruit, if the child's allergens/ intolerances do not include these foods. Operations Manager to double check with the nutrition team if they have any concerns or queries over this.

6. If a special diet menu is requested less than 4 weeks before the end of a menu cycle, the special diet menu will be created for the following menu cycle.
7. Should the pupil's allergy/intolerance change, this medical note should be resubmitted to the school with the most recent information. In the instance that a pupil no longer requires special diet support, parents are also required to notify the school in writing. In both instances the school should let Caterlink know as soon as possible.
8. Our kitchens **should not amend or alter what is being offered to a child with a special diet menu without written confirmation** from the parent that an allergen has changed.

Parents/Carers are able to download this information for free from <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/how-to-get-your-medical-records/>

Please contact Sam Cowie 07990 531350 sacowie@caterlinkltd.co.uk