



Leicestershire Nutrition and  
Dietetic Service

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Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Re: Requesting a special menu**

### **Notes for completing the medical diet- school meals request form**

You have been given this medical diet school meals request form as your child either has an allergy or intolerance to a food(s), or they need to follow a special diet for another medical reason.

Please complete all the sections on part A of the form. Part B must be completed by a Health Professional (e.g. Doctor, School Nurse, Practice Nurse, Dietitian or Health Visitor). Please note part B must be completed before a special diet can be provided. (see notes overleaf for explanation)

Once the form has been completed, please return to the address at the bottom of the form; **and keep a copy for your records**. Once I have received the form, you will either receive a special menu for your child by post or be contacted by phone to discuss your child's special diet requirements. The same menu will also be sent to your child's school cook. If you are happy with the menu then please inform the school office as to when you wish to start school dinners.

The school meals Dietitian will make every reasonable effort to cater for all pupils' medical needs but for some really complicated dietary requirements this may not always be possible, for these children we will contact you to discuss the options available and this maybe to have a packed lunch provided from home.

**Please allow 15 school days for your menu to arrive** (Please note at certain times of the year this maybe longer due to increase volume of forms being sent in this tends to be September & October).

To protect the health of your child until you receive a special medical menu and you have informed the school office of a start date or you have completed a disclaimer form (see next page for more information on the disclaimer form), your child should be having a packed lunch provided from home.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries or concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Jessica Mhesuria  
Senior Dietitian (School Meals)

## **Frequently asked questions:**

### **1. My child is following a vegetarian, halal, meat or fish free diet?**

If your child is following a vegetarian, halal, pork, lamb, poultry, or fish free diet and **does not have a food allergy or intolerance** please do not complete this form but contact your school catering team.

### **2. My child is vegetarian and does not eat eggs or is following a vegan diet?**

If your child is vegetarian and does not eat eggs or is following a vegan diet and **does not have a food allergy or intolerance** please contact us as you will need a different form and then return to the address at the bottom of the form. This form does not need to be signed by a Health Professional.

### **3. Why does a Health Professional need to sign part B of the form?**

The form needs to be signed by a Health Professional to confirm that your child needs to follow a special diet; this is to prevent parents/guardians requesting a very restricted special diet school meal which could be life threatening to their child without the support of a Healthcare Professional. Although your child's special diet requirements may not be too restrictive the same rules have to apply for all special diets that are requested, to protect the health of the child.

In the past I have also received special diet requests from parents/guardians due to their child disliking a certain food, as you can imagine if a special diet were provided, the school cooks would not be able to cope with the extra volume of work. It would be hard to separate the special diets needed for an allergy/intolerance or other medical reason compared to a fussy eater.

### **4. I cannot get this form signed by a Health Professional.**

I will also accept a copy of a letter from a Health Professional stating the food(s) that must be avoided or the type of special diet needed (e.g. puree/ soft options) if it is less than 6 months old.

Your doctor or other Health Professional should not charge you to sign this form as the dietitian who completes the special menus works for the NHS.

### **5. My child can manage their special diet without needing a special menu (Disclaimer Form)**

I understand that for some children they can manage their dietary requirements without following a special menu. If this is the case there is a disclaimer form you can complete, which is available from your school office. (Please note school menus cannot be altered with this option).