

School Food Support  
Room 400,  
County Hall,  
Glenfield,  
Leicester  
LE3 8RB

Dear Parent/Guardian

Tel 0116 305 7058

**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 the form including the Health Professional details; it will need to be signed by a Health Professional (e.g. Doctor, School Nurse, Practice Nurse, Dietitian or Health Visitor) before a special diet can be provided.

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 and then a menu will be sent out to you.

Please allow 10 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).

Once you have received your child's menu I ask that you contact me to confirm that you are happy with the menu and discuss a start date. Your child's school cook will also get a copy of the menu and once we have discussed the menu and start date I will inform your child's school cook.

To protect the health of your child until I receive either a completed medical diet school meals request and you have confirmed start date or you have completed a disclaimer form (see next page for more information on the disclaimer form), and have received confirmation back, 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,



Paula McKee  
Senior Dietitian (School Meals)



## Frequently asked questions

### **Do I have to complete this form if my child is following a vegetarian, meat or fish free diet?**

If your child is following a vegetarian, beef, 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.

### **Vegetarian and egg free diet**

If your child is following vegetarian and egg free diet and **does not have a food allergy or intolerance** please complete this form and return to the address at the bottom of the form, it does not need to be signed by a Health Professional

### **Do I have to complete the form if my child is following a vegan diet?**

If your child is following a vegan diet and **does not have a food allergy or intolerance** please complete this form and return to the address at the bottom of the form, it does not need to be signed by a Health Professional.

### **Do I have to complete the form if my child is following a vegan, vegetarian, meat or fish free diet and needs to follow a special diet?**

Please complete this form and a Health Professional will need to sign the form to confirm your child needs to have a special menu.

### **Why does a Health Professional need to sign 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.

### **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.

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

I understand that for some children they are able to 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).