

## **Special Diet Procedures**

### **NUT SAFETY STATEMENT**

Chartwells will not intentionally use nuts or any product containing nuts as an ingredient within our food offer. Chartwells may carefully use products with a 'may contain' declaration for nuts as long as no nuts are present in the ingredient list, we will treat such items as 'contains' to reduce the risk to our nut allergy pupils.

All pupils suffering from a nut allergy should request a 'nut free' special diet menu which will remove these products from the menu.

Chartwells do not endorse a complete 'nut free' environment as we believe we have a duty of care to educate our pupils and staff on how to handle and manage their food allergy safely in the school environment in order for them to develop a better awareness to it.

This advice is consistent with external governing bodies and charities who state that a complete 'nut free' environment is artificial and not consistent with the real world which can provide pupils with a false sense of security.

For further information please contact the Chartwells special diets team.

### **CULTURAL OR RELIGIOUS DIETS**

Chartwells do not treat cultural or religious diets as a 'special diet' as we believe our menus offer a diverse range of foods to cater for pupils for all backgrounds. However we acknowledge that in areas of high ethnicity further support may be required in this case please contact a member of the special diets team for further support.

Halal meat can be provided on request to schools where there is a requirement, all halal meat is HMC accredited and Chartwells can provide a 'Halal Operating Statement', please contact your Regional Manager for further information.

### **MODIFIED TEXTURE DIETS**

Some pupils with medical conditions that involve swallowing difficulties (dysphagia) may require a modified texture diet such as fork mashed, smooth or pureed. Chartwells will support these pupils' requirements on an individual basis by working in conjunction with the parent and catering manager to ensure a suitable meal is available each day.

### **NUTRIENT COUNTS**

As per the special diet procedure, Chartwells can provide nutrient counts for the follow nutrients

- ✓ Carbohydrate Counts (for Diabetes)
- ✓ Fat Counts (for Cystic Fibrosis)
- ✓ Protein Counts (for PKU)

### **VEGETARIAN / VEGAN**

All of Chartwells menus will provide a vegetarian option daily, in addition to one 'meat free' day each week therefore this is not regarded as a special diet. Vegan menus can be provided and should be requested following the special diet procedure above with the exception of a medical note.

Schools  
Special Diet Procedure

**CHARTWELLS SPECIAL DIET REQUEST FORM**

*This form is to be completed by the parent / guardian or unit manager once a special diet menu is required and sent to the Chartwells special diet team*

[Michelle.pike@compass-group.co.uk](mailto:Michelle.pike@compass-group.co.uk)

*To ensure ultimate transparency this request form must be supported with medical correspondence or the request will not be processed. Parents / guardians should attach an up to date photograph of their child to help with identification. All information will be kept strictly confidential.*

*Please note there is a 5 week turnaround for all new special diet requests*

*Please tick one of the following options*

1. *I require a special diet menu in place for my child that will be controlled by Chartwells*
2. *I do not require a special diet menu in place and along with my child will self-manage their special dietary needs using allergy reports without any further support from Chartwells*

PUPIL INFORMATION	
Pupil Name:	
School & Year Group:	
Allergies / Intolerances:	
PARENT INFORMATION	
Parent / Guardian name:	
Contact Telephone:	
CHARTWELLS INFORMATION:	
Unit Name & Number:	
Unit Manager:	
Contact Telephone:	
Regional Manager:	
Date Requested:	

**SPECIAL DIET MENU APPROVAL**

*Once a proposed menu is received the parent / guardian should sign & date below to confirm approval of menu:*

PRINT:

SIGN:

DATE:

*Please attach a photograph of your child alternative a copy can be emailed.*

Schools  
Special Diet Procedure

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*1) WHY IS MEDICAL CORRESPONDANCE REQUIRED?*

Medical correspondence confirming the allergy is required to ensure ultimate safety of the pupil by providing complete transparency of their food allergies or intolerances. It also gives us an indication of tolerance levels and possible reactions to look out for meaning we can provide a much more concise menu for the pupil.

*2) WHAT IF THE PARENT / SCHOOL WONT PROVIDE A MEDICAL NOTE?*

For the safety of the pupil and Chartwells staff special diet requests submitted without a medical note will not be processed.

*3) HOW LONG DOES THE SPECIAL DIET PROCESS TAKE FROM START TO FINISH?*

From the moment the special diet team receive a special diet request with all required correspondence there is a maximum turnaround time of 5 weeks.

*4) WHAT FOOD IS THE PUPIL PROVIDED DURING THE THREE WEEK TURNAROUND TIME?*

Whilst the pupil is awaiting their special diet menu they can be provided with a suitable jacket potato option or alternatively bring in a packed lunch from home.

*5) WHAT IF THE PUPIL DOESN'T LIKE A RECIPE INCLUDED ON SPECIAL DIET MENU?*

The special diet menus are used across a number of schools, by a number of different pupils therefore it is impossible for us to safely cater for individual likes and dislikes. The special diet menu will consist of one hot main meal in addition to suitable jacket potato options so the pupils will always have a choice.

*6) CAN THE PARENT SEND IN FOOD FROM HOME TO BE PRODUCED IN THE SCHOOL KITCHEN?*

We believe our special diet menus are balanced and varied and offer our pupils an excellent food offer that meets their needs therefore there is no required need for parents to send in food from home. We understand that in extreme medical conditions where food choice can be extremely limited (e.g. PKU) that specialist foods are provided on prescription to families, in such cases we will work with families on an individual basis.

*7) WHAT DOES 'MAY CONTAIN' MEAN ON PRODUCT LABELS?*

Manufacturers use 'may contain' warnings on product labels to warn consumers of a risk of cross contamination during the production stage of an unwanted allergen in the final product. Chartwells policy is that we will ask treat such warnings as 'contains' to reduce the risk to our special diet pupils. Any special diet menu will remove products with 'may contain' declaration for the appropriate allergen.

*8) IS THERE ANY ALLERGY OR INTOLERANCE CHARTWELLS CAN'T OR WON'T CATER FOR?*

Every special diet request will be considered however there may be rare occasions when we have to reject a special diet request based on safety concerns for the pupil. For example if the pupil has a high volume of allergies or intolerances that's makes providing a balanced menu impossible or if the pupils allergies are so highly sensitive the production risk is too great, this decision is not taken lightly.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

- 📄 Anaphylaxis Campaign [www.anaphylaxis.org.uk](http://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk)
- 📄 Allergy UK [www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)
- 📄 NHS [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Schools  
Special Diet Procedure

**MEET YOUR SPECIAL DIETS TEAM**

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**Alternatively contact the team at:**

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