



# Chartwells Medical Diets A Parent's Guide

**At Chartwells, the safety of the pupils we cater for is our number one priority.** We understand the importance of ensuring that pupils with medical diets can continue to enjoy a safe, balanced meal alongside their peers in school. As such, the Chartwells medical diet policy has been developed specifically for the school kitchen environment and enables us to cater to as many children as possible, as safely as possible.



This guide has been written to give you a summary of our approach to providing medical diets to pupils who need them. The detail of this is contained in our Medical Diets Policy which is available at <https://loveschoolmeals.co.uk/medical-diets>.

## Medical Diets

A medical diet is required where our standard catering provision is unsuitable and requires adaptation to be made safe for a pupil due to a medically diagnosed dietary requirement. Examples of medical diets include diagnosed food allergies, intolerances and metabolic disorders.

By identifying a pupil's medical diet needs at an early stage, our dedicated medical diet team can help put in place a medical diet menu that has been designed to be safe for their needs.

### Did you know?

Chartwells have a dedicated **Medical Diet Team** available year-round to support with medical diet menus. The team of nutritionists also deliver continual medical diet training to our kitchen teams and work to promote allergen awareness.

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## Medical Diet Menus

At Chartwells we provide two types of medical diet menu:



### Allergy Aware Menu

Our allergy aware menu is a reduced allergen menu which **does not include** the majority of the **14 legal allergens**. The menu can be provided to pupils in state education primary schools and primary academies with allergies to any of the 14 legal allergens or combinations thereof. Our development chefs work hard to ensure the menu is aligned as closely as possible to the school's main menu so that pupils with medical diets can enjoy eating similar meals together.



### Bespoke Menu

For pupils with medical dietary needs which are not limited to the 14 legal allergens, and for pupils at Chartwells Independent schools, the medical diet team can support by writing a bespoke menu with a suitable hot option available every day, providing our risk assessment of our kitchen and your child's unique requirements deems it safe to do so.

### Did you know?

**Nutrient counts** are available for all our current menus. Simply request a copy from your school and Chartwells will be happy to provide them.

We don't provide Medical diet menus for pupils and students in Secondary or Higher and Further education settings. We believe that our menus in Secondary, Higher and Further education provide sufficient choice to allow pupils and students to manage their own medical diets. We will ensure that allergy reports are always available and our teams are on hand to support with any queries about ingredients, allowing secondary age pupils and older students to make informed menu choices.

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## Requesting Medical Diet Support

You can request a medical diet by completing our Medical Diet Request Form and attaching a photo of your child with supporting professional medical evidence. This is an essential industry-standard requirement as adjusting a child's diet should only be undertaken under the guidance of a medical professional - without supporting medical evidence we cannot proceed with any request.

You should submit the completed request form and supporting medical evidence to the school office, who will pass them onto the Chartwells medical diets team. Once the Chartwells medical diets team have received all the information they need, they will prepare a medical diet menu within 3-5 weeks. During which time, Chartwells can either offer pupils a jacket potato with a suitable topping and fruit for dessert or pupils should bring a packed lunch meal as an interim measure.

The Medical Diet Request Form is available at: <https://loveschoolmeals.co.uk/medical-diets>.



## Putting Safety First

We assess each medical diet request on an individual basis, incorporating a risk assessment process to help identify the reasonable steps we would need to take to keep any risk to the pupil's health within a safe limit. This approach has been developed by the 'Lead Association For Catering in Education' (LACA) as an industry-wide risk assessment to support schools and caterers ensure they're operating as safely as possible with regard to managing medical diets.

The process takes account of the pupil's individual needs and the capability of the kitchen facilities to meet those needs. Whilst we endeavour to meet every need, where that risk is considered high and we cannot adequately reduce the risk, we may be unable to provide a medical diet. Where this is the case we advise the parent and school as quickly as possible.



## Identifying Pupils with Supported Medical Diets

Once a medical diet menu is in place it is crucial that our catering team is able to clearly and quickly identify the pupil as they are being served their lunch. We do this in two ways.

### 'Hello My name is...'

We operate a system of 'Hello My name is...' identification posters, displayed only behind the service counters, to provide information about medical diet pupils to our team members.

### Lanyards

In addition, to enhance the identification process we have a medical diet lanyard system of identification. Under this system, lanyards are worn by pupils who are following a Chartwells medical diet menu as they greet our team at the service point. These lanyards are child size, have a safety break if pulled and include a photo and basic important information including the pupil's name and medical dietary requirement. The inclusion and use of this information is in line with GDPR and required to safeguard and protect the vital interests of pupils with medical diets.

Where a lanyard system cannot be used, we may accept other school identification systems providing they have been approved by both the school and ourselves as safe, thorough and robust.

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## Communication with Parents

We work in collaboration with our schools to ensure good communication regarding medical diets and the required documentation. Your school will be able to support you by providing our medical diet policy and request form, supporting you to complete the documentation if required, sharing medical diet menus and providing a photo for identification of pupils following a Chartwells medical diet menu.

For more information on our full medical diet policy please visit:

<https://loveschoolmeals.co.uk/medical-diets>

## Further information

If you would like further information or have a query regarding the Chartwells Medical Diets Policy please contact a member of our medical diet team [chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk](mailto:chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk)

