

The background features a collage of various food and health-related icons in shades of blue and purple. These include a bunch of asparagus, a pear, a carrot, a chicken, a strawberry, a bunch of grapes, a carton of milk labeled 'MILK MILK', an apple, a slice of bread, a fish, a slice of watermelon, a corn cob, and a bowl of fruit. In the top left corner, there are three silhouettes of a person in different yoga or exercise poses. In the top right corner, there are two silhouettes of a person in similar poses.

**do
roghainn-sa**
beatha fhallain

**your
choice**
to healthy living
Highland Council and NHS Highland

school food, nutrition and health policy

Food, Nutrition and Health Policy

Establishing healthy eating habits in childhood and providing growing children with good nutrition are key to ensuring optimum health in adult life.

Background

The link between good nutrition and high attainment is well established and is articulated in the second National Priority in Education: Framework for Learning where it is a central element of health promoting schools. Two reports, one national and the other Highland, have brought these issues to prominence in educational settings.

'Hungry for Success – a whole school approach to school meals in Scotland' (Scottish Executive, Nov 2002) made recommendations so that schools can provide attractive, nutritionally balanced meals to all children who wish to take them, without fear of stigma, in an environment that is welcoming, comfortable and fun.

Your Choice to Healthy Living (Highland Council, 2003) took a broader approach to children's nutrition; whilst incorporating the Hungry for Success (H4S) recommendations on school meals, it also included guidance on the provision of all food in schools and Highland Council Sports Centres – vending machines, break services, tuck shops and breakfast clubs*.

This broad approach to children's nutrition has to be considered in the context of the various ways in which food and health are connected. The food we choose to eat has an impact on individual health, and also that of the environment, and of the people involved, from the farm to the plate. In short, for children to become healthy and responsible members of society, they need to understand not just how foods affect their health, but how their food choices affect the health of others.

Aim

The policy aims to create an environment in which young people, parents and school staff are more likely to make healthy and responsible food choices.

Principles

The key principles which inform food and nutrition practice are:

- **A whole school approach to food and nutrition**
All members of the school and the wider community should contribute to the development of a healthy food culture. This contribution can be made in the classroom; it can also be made at home, in the school dining room, the tuck shop, breakfast club, local shop and mobile food van.
Where possible there will be explicit links between learning and teaching and what happens when young people eat and drink
- **Social Inclusion**
The approach to food and nutrition within schools should be sensitive to religious, cultural, medical, financial constraints.
- **Food has a Social Value**
Management of meal and break times should also provide opportunities to encourage new choices, improve social skills and manage money.
- **Environmental Impact**
The growing, production, transport and preparation of food have environmental impacts whether in food miles, animal welfare, waste or pesticide use. Where practicable these impacts will be minimised.
- **Food Workers**
The food choices we make have social and economic impacts on all those employed in the food chain from farm workers to hauliers, to caterers. Our choices should support the principles of fair trade, where possible.

*the 'Your Choice to Healthy Living Implementation Plan 2005/6' can be found at: www.forthighlandschildren.org

Food, Nutrition and Health Policy

Characteristics

Schools which apply the key principles will demonstrate the following characteristics:

A whole school approach

- School health and health and safety policies take full account of food and nutrition issues.
- The SNAG and/or School Council play(s) a leading role in providing, developing and monitoring all aspects of food and nutrition provision and education.
- There are demonstrable links between the curriculum and all eating and drinking in the school e.g. exploitation of real situations to improve money management skills.
- There is ongoing close liaison between the school management team and the school cook.
- School tuck shops/vending/snack provision conforms to Highland School Snack Guidance (Separate leaflet).
- All sources of sponsorship, nutritional advertising and display promote healthy living.
- Parents are regularly consulted and receive clear information about nutritional matters including recommendations concerning packed lunches, snacks and home baking offered on school premises.

Social Inclusion

- The School encourages parents to take up free school meal entitlement.
- Arrangements for those taking free school meals ensure anonymity as far as possible.
- The School encourages young people to take school meals and informs families about menus.
- Arrangements for those with special dietary requirements meet needs as far as possible in accordance with the Highland Special Diet Policy (Appendix I).
- Meals provision and curricular programmes take account of different religions/cultures.
- Parents and pupils are regularly reminded about the need to tell the school about special dietary requirements.
- Fresh, cool drinking water is available and encouraged.
- Where applicable and feasible school takes opportunities to engage in productive dialogue with local retailers about such issues as the promotion of healthy options, access and safety.

Food has a Social Value

- The school dining room is attractive and opportunities are taken to use display to promote a healthy food culture.
- School meals and breaks are timed to allow staff and young people to appreciate their food and to socialise. This could be by encouraging children who take a packed lunch and those taking school meals to sit together.
- Queuing is minimised by employing such strategies as staggered sittings, multiple serving and payment points, pre ordering.

- Supervision is organised to ensure safety, promote healthy eating and support social interaction.
- Schools make use of any opportunities to work with parents, caterers, local providers to encourage new food choices through organising taster events, theme days, creative advertising, campaigns etc.
- School and parents work in partnership to teach young people about acceptable behaviour and social interaction during meal times.

Environmental impacts

- School waste practices relating to food take full account of its environmental impact e.g. recycling, composting and litter.
- Schools make use of opportunities to work with local growers and producers so that food in schools contributes to a sustainable food economy and reduces food miles.

Food workers

- Schools consider all those involved in food work (including growers, producers, caterers and those transporting food) and takes any opportunities to ensure they are not exploited. Examples of exploitation could include restriction of Trade Union membership, paying less than the minimum wage, breaches in health and safety legislation, exploitation of child labour and discrimination.

The above characteristics describe very good health promotion in relation to Food and Nutrition. The grid which follows summarises the recommendation of Hungry For Success and details the responsibilities of all partners.

HMIE will use the recommendations as criteria on which to base their evaluation of provision in schools and local authorities.

Nutrition

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
H4S 2 Develop a policy for delivering, in partnership with parents and carers, medically prescribed diets and appropriate provision for children with special needs.	A policy for health related special diets in schools has been produced, as described. (Appendix I).	✓	✓		✓	Parents
H4S 3 The Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches be adopted and education authorities should have them in place in all special and primary schools by December 2004 and in all secondary schools by 2006.	The Catering Service will ensure:	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All food purchased will comply with its nutrient specification (broadly these set maximum fat and salt contents for foods) 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Menus will be devised which conform to local guidelines and promote balanced and healthy meals. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dishes will be prepared following standard recipes which are based on healthier cooking techniques. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food will be served in portions sizes outlined in the Nutrient Standards. 	✓				
H4S 15 Senior management within schools should strongly support and endorse their school meal provision as part of the whole child approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All menus will be analysed using the Nutmeg Nutritional analysis programme and compared against standards set by the Scottish Executive and amended as necessary. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools will include information about the school meal service in any general literature about their school. 		✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools will address queuing, supervision, the length of the lunchtime break and the social experience of the lunch time as part of the whole child approach. 		✓			

Nutrition

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
H4S 20 Consider the introduction of staff incentive schemes to recognise innovations and celebrate success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Catering Service will celebrate success and innovation through publicity within the service on training days, newsletters and the local media. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catering staff will be invited to appropriate awards ceremonies and launches, and be included in appropriate school activities. 	✓	✓	✓		
H4S 22 All school catering and dining room supervisory staff should undertake appropriate training, for example, the REHIS Food and Health training course as part of their programme of development. Interested parents and teachers should also be encouraged to undertake training in food and health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All catering staff will undertake approved Elementary Food Hygiene courses. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area catering managers and lead cooks will receive appropriate nutrition training designed to meet their needs on a regular basis. 	✓				
Minority Ethnic Communities and Special Religious Dietary Requirements It is important to ensure that Education Authorities ensure that schools and caterers have access to suitable information, support and resources to ensure these needs are met in a sensitive, informed and appropriate manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and caterers will work with families from minority ethnic communities/religious communities to provide appropriate food. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and caterers will make these pupils welcome by considering an appropriate theme day in partnership with the SNAG. 	✓				

Improving uptake

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
H4S 8 Schools should consult with pupils on a regular basis on provision of school meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are encouraged to establish School Nutrition Action Groups as an effective means of consulting pupils on meals and food provision in the school in general. Training is in place to support SNAG development in schools. 		✓		✓	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Area Children's Service Fora and a Health Promoting Schools officer will to support and encourage the work of SNAGs in their development of a school food policy. 			✓	✓	ACSF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a recognised route for complaints and compliments about the school meals service. 	✓	✓			
H4S 16 Caterers should consider appropriate means of labelling food and methods of conveying information on content to parents. Through existing school communication channels, menus should be forwarded to parents at least once per term. Schools and caterers should consider presentation, marketing and pricing to incentivise healthier choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and caterers will work together to ensure that menus are forwarded to parents once per term through existing channels. 	✓	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catering staff will receive regular training and updates on the presentation and marketing of healthier food options. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy choices will be promoted through pricing, meals deals, bonus points and theme days. 	✓	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pilot project on food labelling will be conducted and evaluated. 	✓				

Improving uptake

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
H4S All schools to review their current practice in establishing links between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in the school.			✓	✓		
H4S 9 Process maximising anonymity for free school recipients should be explored as a priority in all schools. Primary schools should review their ticket allocation practices to ensure anonymity for FSM is maximised and education authorities should adopt early introduction of school meal application for multiple use cards, in particular in secondary schools.	A needs assessment of free school meal uptake will be commissioned to examine the situation in Highland. The needs assessment will seek to make recommendations to be implemented for improved uptake of FSM.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
H4S 10 As part of the introduction of card systems, education authorities should ensure there are sufficient validators in easily accessible areas within the school not only in the dining room and that they are easy to use.	Await outcome of need assessment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
H4S 19 Consider the introduction of incentive schemes to promote healthier choices and increase the take-up of school meals.	All healthier choices will be promoted through positioning, pricing and promotion. Promotions will include school based activities such as theme days, reward schemes and peer support. Highland wide promotions will encourage healthier choices through for example, point systems on smart cards.	✓	✓	✓	✓	

The Dining Room

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
H4S 4 School Meal Facilities should not advertise nor promote food or drink with a high fat or sugar content.	Within school premises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment which promotes/advertises unhealthy food/drinks will be withdrawn from dining rooms by 2006. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional materials and prizes which advertise unhealthy food/drinks will not be used, this includes stickers, shelf talkers, display stands etc. 	✓	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caterers and Schools will not participate in promotions for unhealthy food/drinks e.g. crisp packets for books, coke sponsorships of minibuses etc. 	✓	✓			
H4S 11 All schools should examine their seating and queuing arrangement to ensure that the social experience of school meals is maximised.	Schools should examine their queuing and seating arrangements through SNAGs and pupil councils.		✓			
H4S 12 To address queuing difficulties and in any review of the length of the lunch break, the factors opposite should be considered.	<p>School and caterers will provide systems which minimise queuing times, where possible, as detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple service points. More cash points in cafeterias. Staggered arrivals of diners/separate sittings. Pre-ordering facility. Separate counter for pre-ordered meals. Delivery of pre-ordered meals to lunchtime clubs. Examining the potential for additional outlets. The needs of disabled pupils. 	✓	✓			

The Dining Room

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
H4S 14 In line with the agreement set out in A Teaching Profession for the 21st century, education authorities should consider deploying classroom assistants and dining room assistants to undertake a supervisory role in dining rooms.	Supportive supervision of school meal times has a huge impact on the lunchtime experience and uptake of healthy choices. It is crucial in providing an environment that is welcoming and fun.		✓	✓		
H4S 17 Improvements to the dining room to enhance its atmosphere and ambience, and encourage its use as a social area should be considered as a priority, and should be taken into account in their wider school estate planning. It is desirable wherever possible, that a separate dining area should be provided.	A survey of all dining areas will be undertaken and from this a priority list for improvements will be established.			✓		
H4S 18 Furniture design, layout and usage, along with other factors such as décor and background music, should be considered by all schools, with significant pupil input and programmes for change drawn up.	A blueprint for surveying the above will be developed and circulated to SNAGs, pupil councils and public health practitioners.		✓	✓		ACSF

Other Meals, Snacks and Drinks

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
Introduce Healthy Vending in schools, swimming pools and leisure centres.	Healthy vending machines have been introduced in several secondary schools. Unhealthy vending within the above centres will systematically be replaced with vending that fulfils the criteria outlined in the Health Promoting Schools toolkit by 2006.				✓	Sport and Leisure
Promote water consumption in schools.	Fresh, chilled drinking water will be freely available in all schools. Pupils and staff will be encouraged to water to ensure adequate hydration throughout the school day through various projects and initiatives e.g. Cool in Schools. These projects include guidelines on allowing water in the classroom, hygiene etc.		✓	✓		
Extend Breakfast clubs across Highland.	Target primary schools are to be supported in the establishment of Breakfast clubs. Training will be provided based on a best practice 'Tool Kit'. 50% funding for these Breakfast clubs will be sought, with the aim that they should eventually become sustainable.		✓	✓	✓	ACSF

Other Meals, Snacks and Drinks

Recommendation	Action	Responsibilities				
		Caterers	Schools	Education	Health	Other
Provide fruit and vegetable at break times in schools; the removal of 'tuck items' from tuck shops.	Highland caterers will implement a phased removal of carbonated drinks, high sugar drinks, confectionery, high sugar and high fat bakery and replace these with suitable alternatives, working towards the complete removal by Dec 2006.	✓				
	Schools will be supported to achieve the same specifications in their tuck shops, breakfast clubs and afterschool clubs through the health promoting schools programme.		✓		✓	



Appendix I – Policy for the Provision of “Medically Prescribed Diets” and Meals for Children in need of Learning Support in Highland Schools

This policy provides guidance on school provision of “medically prescribed diets” to school and catering staff, parents and carers, and young people. It also covers the needs of children in need of additional support for learning.

The guidelines are intended to clarify rights and responsibilities in relation to the provision of meals for children who need to follow a particular diet for health reasons.

Principles

The special diet policy is based on 2 key principles of the food and health policy for schools. These are:

A Whole school approach to nutrition

- Children with special dietary needs should be offered a suitable, nutritionally adequate menu that meets “Hungry for Success” standards.
- Staff should aim to improve the range of foods eaten by children with selective eating habits, rather than simply accepting food preferences as fixed.
- The provision of special diets in school should be balanced by the need to maintain quality and variety for children who do not have a special diet.
- The provision of special diets needs to be managed in a way that is realistic for school catering, teaching and support staff.

Social inclusion

- Children should not be made to feel different because they are on a special diet. While it is important to celebrate diversity, the child may want to eat the kind of food eaten by other children. Some differences in ingredients will be required, but it should be possible to make many of the same menu items using modified ingredients.
- Children, parents or carers should not be financially disadvantaged by their children’s need for the provision of a particular diet. Some suitable products can be purchased by the school meals service.
- A small number of children have diagnosed psychological difficulties with food and can not be expected to adapt to healthier “Hungry for Success” menus as quickly as other children.
- Children who are on a “special diet” for “health reasons” should be encouraged to seek supervision from a doctor or state registered dietitian. However, food allergies and intolerances are very much on the edge of the current body of medical knowledge. Therefore, if parents decide not to seek a medical opinion, then school meal providers will still consider the request seriously.



“Special Diets: roles and responsibilities”

Person	Responsibility
Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure special diet procedure is understood by parents, teaching and office staff. • Ensure parents are given all relevant and current documentation relating to special diets • Ensure completed request forms are sent to catering services for approval prior to the special diet provision commencing. • Ensure catering staff are given photograph of children to be displayed with the diet information in the kitchen (away from view of children). • Inform those involved in providing food that is school related other at lunch (e.g. Home economics, social events, school trips). • Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of an emergency. • Where relevant, take steps to ensure the dining room environment is Autism friendly (avoiding sensory overload).
Parent/Carer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek medical supervision for the special diet (Dietitian or Doctor). • If required, request special diet for school meals via Special Diet Form available on Highland Council website. Guidance notes also available on the website. Links below • Keep the Special Diets Team and School Cook informed of changes to your child's special dietary needs and about any changes, including school transfers. • Make plans with head teacher for school related food provision other than school lunch (e.g. home economics, social events, school trips).
Pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of own special dietary needs (appropriate to level of development). • Not swap food with other children (if food allergy or intolerance).
School Cook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure they have a current special diet request form that has been approved by Central Catering Services before a special diet is commenced. • Keep up to date records of all pupils with special dietary needs who attend for school meals; information held on pupils who move to other schools or no longer require a special diet should be shredded. School kitchen records should match Central Catering Service records. These records should be provided on request from Catering management • Ensure all catering staff are aware of how to provide the special diet. • Should not discuss medical information about the child with non-catering or non-school staff. • Ensure parents are aware that most “special” ingredients can be provided by the Catering Service and parents should not supply their own ingredients without prior approval. • Make reasonable adaptations to standard menu to ensure that selective eaters on the Autistic Spectrum are catered for appropriately.
Area Catering Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should identify and arrange any necessary training for school catering staff. • Ensure that any relief staff are fully informed about special diets in the school if school cook is absent.
Catering Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure suitable “free from” products can be ordered by schools. • Obtain clear up to date information from suppliers about which foods are free from which substance. • Review current supplies to minimise the unnecessary use of ingredients that large numbers of children need to avoid (e.g. Food additives, milk products and gluten).
Support for Learning Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate regularly with parents of “selective eaters” on the Autistic Spectrum to establish the best approach to increasing food acceptance. • Encourage other children to “model” healthy eating habits for selective eaters.
Dietitian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise catering and parents on appropriateness of special diet. • Support and advise catering officers on provision of special diets. • Train Support for Learning Staff in practical ways of tackling selective eating among children they work with.
Special Diets Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update special diet documentation and guidance. • Approve all special diet requests. • Hold a Highland wide Register of special diet pupils • Create all special diet menus in line with current government legislation and • Work closely with parents, cooks, head teachers and dietitians to ensure the most appropriate diet can be provided for each child • Advise cooks and head teachers about complex special diets.

The most common special diets are likely to include the provision of:

- Milk product free (lactose or casein intolerance).
- Gluten Free.
- Nut Free.
- Egg Free.
- Food additive avoidance (e.g. preservatives, azo food dyes, flavour enhancers and aspartame).
- Texture modification.
- Food for Selective Eaters.

Other special diets should be considered on a case by case basis.



Guidance notes for specific types of special diet

1 Severe Food Allergies

Some food allergies can be serious or even fatal. Nut allergy is the best known but it can apply to any food in a particular case. Some parents may wish to send their child to school with a nutritious food that is a known allergen to another child. For example, nuts are a good source of unsaturated fats, soluble fibre and vitamin E, all nutrients associated with a decreased risk of degenerative diseases.

In schools where there is a child with a severe allergy to nuts, head teachers may request that nuts are not brought into the school either by staff or pupils. However, it is not practical or feasible to call the school a "Nut free zone". This would give false re-assurance that cannot be guaranteed in practice. For example, schools cannot guarantee that every cereal bar in every packed lunch is nut free and it is not practicable to request other common allergens such as milk or egg are excluded from a school setting. In the example above it would be better to call the school a "nut aware" school. The child with a severe allergy must be taught by parents and school staff not to swap food with other children. The school should discuss with parents appropriate ways of reducing the chances of exposure to the offending substance (e.g. cleaning protocols).

2 Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Children with ASD are particularly likely to be highly selective in their food choices. This is often symptomatic ASD. The child is not simply being fussy or awkward.

There is a need for many ASD children to look for patterns, structure and repetition in many aspects of their lives including meal times. Also, many children with ASD are extremely susceptible to "sensory overload" from the noise, smells and visual stimulation of the dining room, and the texture, taste and smell of the food. Meal times therefore can be highly stressful.

For some children with ASD, it is unrealistic to expect them to accept "healthy and nutritionally balanced" school menus immediately. Broadening the diet of such children is a difficult, painstaking task that requires persistence, patience and a measured approach. Caterers, support for learning staff, parents and pupils should work together to develop a pragmatic and phased approach to dietary improvement.

3. Children with communication difficulties

Some children have difficulty reading but respond well to visual images. Others can read, but find it difficult to establish a clear mental image of what that food will actually be like. Therefore appropriate visual images of food choices should be available to help children decide what they want to eat.

4 Children requiring texture modification

Many other children find that certain textures are difficult to manage. This may be because they have poor oral motor skills and find chewing and/or swallowing certain foods difficult. Learning to chew and swallow a range of textures is important for normal development of speech. Therefore, children who could manage a diet with more mixed, complex and challenging textures should be given such foods.

5 Obesity

Children who are obese or overweight do not need a "special diet". The changes being implemented as a result of Hungry for Success will increase the number of appropriate choices and reduce the number of inappropriate choices for all children. This will have even greater benefit for overweight and obese children. There will be more choice of nutrient dense foods, and less foods that are high in fat and added sugars.

6 Diabetes

Children with diabetes should follow similar healthy eating guidelines to the rest of the population. Difficulties in controlling blood sugar and increased risk of cardiovascular disease mean that there is more likely to be harmful health consequences to poor diet than for the general population. Insulin regimes should be designed around the child's lifestyle (rather than the other way around).

Special Diet Request Process

If your child requires a special diet for health, religious or ethical reasons, you will need to fill in a special diet request form.

Special Diet Request Forms for school and nursery pupils are available via School Offices and on The Highland Council website <https://www.highland.gov.uk> and by searching for "special diet". These should also be completed for children in an ELCC who need special diets regardless of whether they are taking school lunches or not as they receive snacks in their setting.

All completed forms should be sent to:-

Special Diets
Catering Services
Highland Council
Ruthven House
Drummond Road
Inverness
IV2 4NZ

Tel: (01463) 644102

Or scanned and emailed to Special.Diets@highland.gov.uk

Please note it is not currently possible to complete an electronic version of the form.

Catering Services will assess the request to ensure the special diet can safely be provided and will advise the parents accordingly. If it is a complex diet, a meeting with the parents may be arranged. Please note it may not be possible to accommodate all requests.

Catering Services will contact the School Cook to discuss the special diet and a suitable start date for receiving school lunches.

Requests normally take 5-10 working days to process but on occasions may be slightly longer.

Parents should advise the School and Catering Services about any changes to their child's special diet, or if no longer required.

PLEASE NOTE: If your child will be taking school lunches, please provide a packed lunch until catering services have approved your request and you have a start date.

- The current SPECIAL DIET FORM can be found at the link below
https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/65/special_diet_request_form
- The current PRIVACY STATEMENT can be found at the link below
https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19856/special_diet_privacy_notice

Guidance Notes to Special Diet Request Form

1 Selective eaters:

This term is used to describe children whose diets are unusual limited due to serious diagnosed psychological difficulties. For example, a proportion of children on the Autistic Spectrum are exceptionally fearful of new foods and have very limited diets. In these cases, packed lunches are usually the best option. However, it may be possible for these children to enjoy a school lunch on days where the cook is able to make minor adaptations to the existing menu. For selective eaters who bring a packed lunch regularly, it may still be possible to provide a sample "taster" of something from the school menu, to try along side the packed lunch.

2 Foods containing offending substances that can be included in the diet:

Some children with food allergies or intolerances can tolerate a small amount of the offending substance in a food. Also, someone with an intolerance to something in one food (e.g. protein in milk, or gluten from wheat) may tolerate it well in another (e.g. yoghurt or oats). Please provide this sort of specific information on the form, including a list of actual foods.

3 "How often would you like this special diet to be provided?"

Some special diets are not easy to provide every day. Please have a look at the weekly menus. Some days may require very little alteration to the standard meal options. You might want to ask the school to provide a meal on the "easier days" and send a packed lunch on the other days. If you take this option, please ensure that the school knows on which days a meal needs to be provided.

4 Diets not prescribed:

If you are requesting a diet for health reasons, but this has not been prescribed by a dietitian or doctor, we recommend that you inform your GP so that they are aware of the situation and they can provide any necessary supervision or advice. If you do not wish to do this, don't worry. We will still consider your request.





Further information from:

NHS Highland, Assynt House, Beechwood Park, Inverness IV2 3HG

Local website: www.forhighlandschildren.org

National website: www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk

Current Special Diet Documentation added in October 2020