

September 2015

Special Diet Protocol

The following information explains the process by which ISS Education are able to cater for pupils with special dietary requirements. The process is primarily designed to safeguard children with medical conditions whilst supporting the catering staff involved in the preparation and service of the meal(s).

- **What is a Special Diet?**



At ISS Education, school menus are designed to cater for the majority of the school population however, some pupils may require a 'special diet' for medical reasons and need to be catered for individually.¹ For the purpose of this document, the term 'special diet' refers to any medically prescribed diet e.g., gluten free, egg free, dairy free etc (and a possible combination thereof). Please contact your school for further information if:

1. Your child is registered with us as a special diet pupil and they require a packed lunch for a school outing etc.
2. Your child has alternative dietary requirements owing to religious or personal choices, e.g., vegan, not covered by the general school menu.

- **Nuts, Shellfish and Kiwi**

All ISS kitchens and recipes are free from nuts, shellfish and kiwi.² Whilst we go to extreme lengths to ensure that our menus are nut free, a minority of the products we use, from some manufacturers, are produced in factories where nuts have or may have been present. We therefore advise parents/guardians to inform us and the school if their child has one of the aforementioned allergies so their condition is known to ISS Education and the school staff.



- **Allergen Labelling**

Evidence suggests the rates of allergy are increasing.^{3,4} The number of foods to which people react is extensive, however, the majority of reactions are associated with a relatively small number of foods. Since 13th December 2014 new legislation has been in force; this legislation is called EU Food Information Regulation (FIR). This legislation ensures clear, comprehensive and legible labelling of foods thus enabling consumers to make informed choices when purchasing food. As previously mentioned, it is company policy that all children with allergies and, or intolerances go through our special diet procedure to individually safeguard children. However, in addition to this, and in compliance with the legislation, the school cook will hold a list of all allergens present in each dish as served. The allergens listed will be those key 14 allergens as stated by the legislation.⁵

- **The Special Diet Menu**



Once a menu has been devised and the approval slip has been received by the Catering Manager, the menu will be implemented and the child will be provided with a daily meal but a daily choice can't be guaranteed (although every effort will be made to ensure the menu will be as varied as possible to provide nutritionally balanced lunches). For nut, kiwi and, or shellfish only referrals, no menu changes will be made. However, a cover letter will be sent to the parents/guardians along with a copy of the Nut Policy so they can make an informed decision as to whether or not our meal provision will be suitable for their child and meet their dietary requirements. A copy of the dietary referral form will also be sent to the school cook so all catering staff are aware of those pupils with nut, kiwi and, or shellfish allergies.

- **Modified Texture Meals**

If your child requires a soft mash or puree menu because of chewing difficulties or any additional medical reason then we are able to accommodate your request. If however your child requires a puree menu owing to swallowing

¹ Please refer to ISS Education Special Diet Definitions for further information.

² Please refer to the ISS Education Nut Policy for further information.

³ Allergy UK <http://www.allergyuk.org/why-is-allergy-increasing/why-is-allergy-increasing>

⁴ Food Standards Agency (2008) The provision of allergen information for non pre-packed foods.

⁵ FIR 14 Key Allergens : Cereals containing gluten; crustaceans; eggs; fish; peanuts; soybeans; milk; nuts; celery; mustard; sesame; sulphur dioxide & sulphites; lupin, and; molluscs.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/82663/consult-fic-guidance-20121116.pdf

difficulties (dysphagia) where there is a high risk of choking then we shall provide pre prepared pureed meals where possible to limit any risks associated with this condition.

- **Salad Bars & Additional Food Service Points**



It is important that any food or drink which is either served to pupils or where staff (kitchen, school and/or supporting meal time staff), help pupils to make a choice, is covered by the special diets procedures. All staff at additional food service points must be aware of pupil's special dietary requirements and have knowledge of ingredients within recipes and allergens present. The special diet salad bar guide should be available in all kitchens and visible at additional service points as required.

- **Important Additional Information**

If the Company Nutritionist or Nutrition Assistant requires further information on a child then they will contact the parents/guardians, the school or the Catering Manager directly. The Company Nutritionist will meet with parents/guardians and the Catering Manager to discuss a certain child's diet as and when is required; Area Managers will also be invited to attend.

- **Renewal of a Special Diet**

At the start of a menu change, e.g., at the start of a new academic year, all special diets recorded on the database will be updated in line with the new menu. **NB** The diet referral form for any existing pupil doesn't need to be re-sent unless there has been a change to their dietary requirements. In such cases, a supporting letter from their GP, dietician, paediatrician or school nurse will again be required for our records. All menus and parent/guardian letters will be sent to Area Managers who in turn will post all documents to the respective schools.

It is the Company's right to refuse to provide a meal if the child's allergy/medical condition is deemed too serious and they feel they are unable to accommodate that child with a meal which is safe and meeting their requirements.

Special Diet Referral Process

ISS Area Managers and Area Support Managers should ensure all schools have a copy of the updated special diet referral form.

1. The parents/guardians should request a copy of the special diet referral form from the school reception and complete Parts A and B in full.
2. One form must be completed per child and should be returned to the school along with supporting documentation from the child's GP, dietician, paediatrician or school nurse, confirming their dietary requirements. **Please note, any form received without supporting evidence will not be processed.**
3. The school should return part A to the Company Nutritionist/Nutrition Assistant by post or fax and retain Part B of the form and pass it to the Catering Manager. The school are advised to take a copy of part A for their records if required.
4. On receipt of the form, the Company Nutritionist/Nutrition Assistant will:
 - a. Devise a menu for that child (consulting with Catering Managers and parents/guardians as and when required). ***NB - ad hoc special diets cannot be requested, the referral process must be adhered to for ALL pupils.***
5. All new menus will be emailed to the Area Manager to post to the school, along with a supporting letter for the parents/guardians and an approval slip for the parents/guardians; a further copy of the menu will be posted to the Catering Manager. The school must then notify the parents/guardians and pass this documentation on to them.
6. The special diet will be provided once the parents/guardians have confirmed with the school they are happy for the menu to go ahead by returning the approval slip to the school reception staff. School staff must then pass this approval slip on to the Catering Manager. **NB catering staff are only to implement a special diet menu once they have received the approval slip as signed by the parent/guardians and cross checked the menu with the information as provided on Part B of the referral form.**

