

Oxfordshire County Council's Catering Services

Medical Diet Procedure

OVERVIEW

Oxfordshire County Council are passionate that every pupil has the same opportunity to eat school food regardless of their medical requirements, therefore medical diets are an extremely important part of our catering provision. We define a medical diet as a requirement different to the choices offered on the main menu due to a food allergy or intolerance. Lifestyle choices such as vegetarianism and religious diets are not defined as medical diet as we are confident our main menu offers a variety of different foods to cater for these needs.

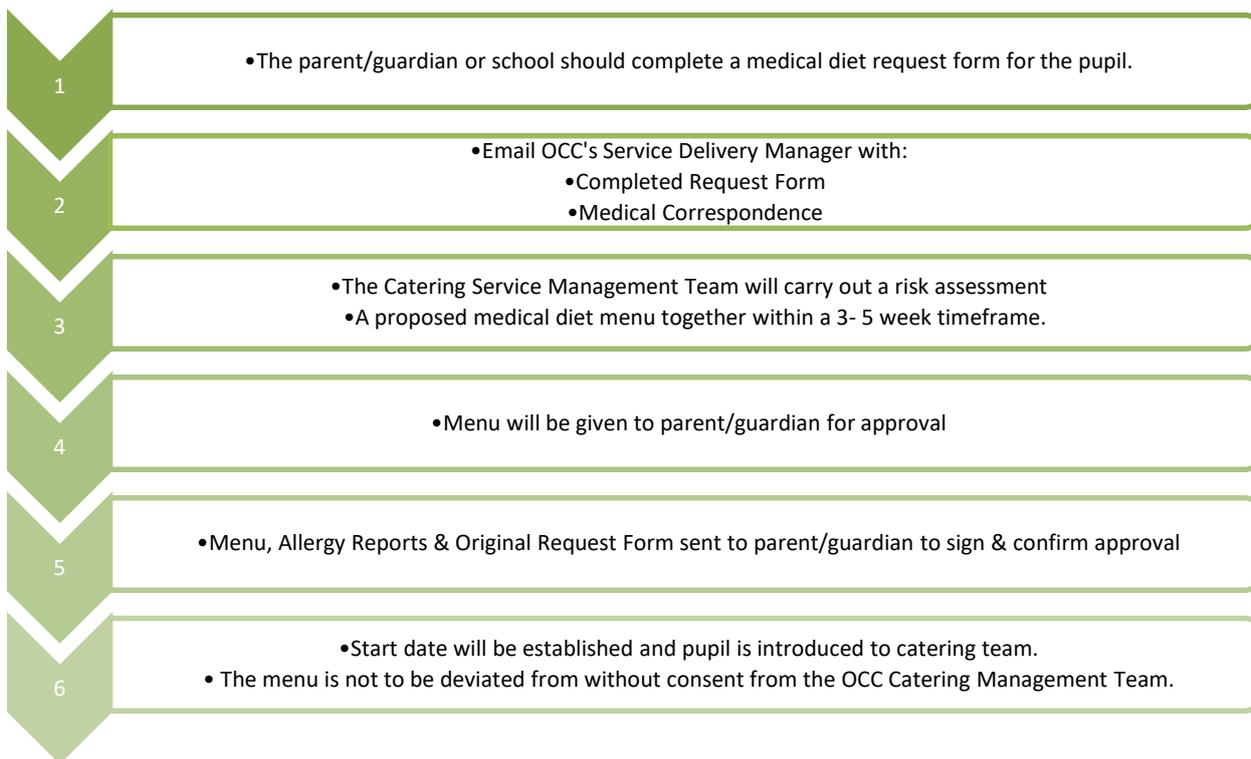
OCC has a dedicated medical diet team which supports all medical diet queries and requests whether it be alleviating parent concerns or creating medical diet menus for single or multiple allergens, a medical diet nutritionist will be available all year round to support our catering teams and medical diet pupils eat safely with us. For further information please contact the medical diets team.

MEDICAL DIET – KICK OFF

Who is involved?	What do you need?	What will you receive?
OCC's Catering Service	Medical Diet Request Form	Medical Diet Menu
School	Medical Correspondence	Allergy Reports
Parent	Copy of school menu	
Catering Supervisor	Parent contact details	
Service Delivery Manager	Risk Assessment	
Pupil		
Catering Support Team		

MEDICAL DIET PROCEDURE

This process needs to be repeated with every menu change



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Always be aware of who is trained to administer adrenaline injections/EpiPen within the school.

- Dial 999
- Inform headteacher & parent immediately
- Inform HSE manager
- Inform nutrition team

NUT SAFETY STATEMENT

OCC will not intentionally use nuts or any product containing nuts as an ingredient within our food offer. OCC 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' medical diet menu which will remove these products from the menu.

OCC 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 your local OCC contact.

CULTURAL OR RELIGIOUS DIETS

OCC do not treat cultural or religious diets as a 'medical 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 Catering service 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 OCC can provide Halal Certification, please contact your local OCC contact 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. OCC 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 medical diet procedure, OCC can provide nutrient counts for the following nutrients:

- Carbohydrate Counts (for diabetes)
- Fat Counts (for Cystic Fibrosis)
- Protein Counts (for PKU)
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VEGETARIAN/VEGAN

All of OCC's menus will provide a vegetarian option daily, therefore this is not regarded as a medical diet. However, Vegan menus can be provided in some instances and should be requested following the medical diet procedure above.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is medical correspondence 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 more concise menu for the pupil.

2. What if the parent/school won't provide a medical note?

For the safety of the pupil and OCC staff, medical diet requests without a medical evidence will not be processed.

3. How long does the medical diet process take from start to finish?

From the moment the Catering Management team receive a medical diet request with all required correspondence, there is a maximum turnaround time of 3 – 5 weeks.

4. What food is the pupil provided during the 3-5-week turnaround time?

Whilst the pupil is awaiting their medical 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 a medical diet menu?

The medical 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 medical 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 medical diet menus are balanced and provide our pupils an excellent food that meets their needs. Therefore, there is no requirement 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. Any medical diet menu will prove products with 'may contain' declaration for the appropriate allergen.

8. Is there any allergy or intolerance OCC can't or won't cater for?

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

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Anaphylaxis Campaign: [Anaphylaxis Campaign](#)
- Allergy UK: [Allergy UK | National Charity | Free Allergy Support & Resources](#)
- NHS: [The NHS website - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)