



## Dietary Needs

### Frequently Asked Questions

**I think my child/ young person has an allergy to certain foods but I am not sure. What should I write on the form?**

If you think your child/ young person has a food allergy then we strongly advise you to seek the advice of either a medical or nutritional professional to obtain further information as soon as possible. If you tell us that your child / young person has an allergy, but you do not yet have an assessment of their condition from either a doctor or a dietician, their diet will be restricted to foods which we believe are unlikely to induce any allergic reaction. Once you have been able to provide a doctor or dietician's assessment of your child / young person's condition we may be able to offer them a wider menu appropriate to their needs.

**I have already told you verbally about the food allergy, why do I need to fill in a form?**

We need to keep a written record with details of any food allergies that your child / young person has so that we can share it in an emergency with medical professionals.

**What is the difference between an allergy, intolerance and medically related dietary requirements?**

A food allergy is when your immune system mistakenly thinks that certain foods are harmful to their body causing it to react. The symptoms are usually those of 'classic' allergy such as a red raised, itchy rash (urticaria), wheezing, vomiting, severe gut symptoms or (very rarely) sudden collapse. These can occur within a few minutes of eating or coming into contact with the allergen. A food intolerance doesn't usually involve your immune system. However, coeliac disease is an intolerance to gluten and does involve the immune system. Some medical conditions may require a special diet, such as modified texture diet such as fork mashed, smooth or pureed. All of the above should be recorded on the form.

**My child / young person has specific cultural, religious or lifestyle food preferences, should these be detailed on the form?**

The dietary information form has a section to capture this information. We believe our menus offer a diverse range of foods to cater for pupils of all backgrounds.

**My child/young person has packed lunch. Why do I need to complete the form?**

In certain educational establishments, children / young people who eat meals prepared by school catering teams will sit with those who eat packed lunches. Some children / young people with food allergies can suffer a reaction by either coming into contact with or being in close proximity to the particular ingredient that they are allergic to. By understanding which child / young person has a food allergen we are able to limit the potential of an incident occurring.

**Providing and sharing medical information about my child / young person.**

Allergen data is considered health data and under the GDPR this is a special category of data which has specific requirements. We ask for this explicit consent from parents / guardians via our Dietary Information Form.