



**Glenlola  
Collegiate  
School  
Bangor**

# **Education Authority Guidance for the provision of Special Diets in schools.**

**August 2024**

Version 3 2

## **Educating Girls in Bangor for over 125 Years**

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Headmaster: W E Thompson BSc MSc MEd PGCE PQH(NI)



## **1. Introduction**

### **Special diets for medical conditions**

Special diets can be required for a wide variety of medical conditions including food allergies, food intolerance, diabetes and coeliac disease. A medically prescribed diet is one which has been prescribed by a medical consultant, general practitioner (GP) or registered dietitian. In some circumstances diet may be the only treatment of a medical condition or can form a major part of it. Pupils with specific food related medical conditions can be catered for if sufficient information is provided from the pupil's medical consultant, general practitioner or registered dietitian to ensure that school catering services can safely meet the needs of the child.

### **Religious, Cultural and Vegetarian and vegan diets**

Other children follow special diets for religious or cultural reasons, or because they are vegetarian or vegan. Standard school catering services menus are likely to meet most needs in relation to dietary requirements however where they do not meet such needs, a Parent/Guardian may contact the school to request special meals.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this guidance is to outline best practice for schools and caterers when providing food and drinks for pupils with special dietary requirements including allergies. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of school staff, catering staff, and parents to ensure the safeguarding of any pupils with special dietary requirements and provides a useful checklist and forms to ensure a standard approach.

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## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The provision of special diets is a shared responsibility and requires a joint approach and close communication between the School Principal, Parent/Guardian and School Catering Service to minimise risk and provide a safe educational environment for pupils with special dietary requirements.

### **2.1 School**

The School Principal/Board of Governors have overall responsibility for a pupil's health and wellbeing whilst under their care and are the pivotal figures in coordinating the communication between all parties and setting up arrangements to make sure that all relevant parties are informed.

### **2.2 Parent/Guardian**

The Pupil's Parent/Guardian is instrumental in notifying the School and is responsible for informing the School Principal of their child's requirements for a special diet, prior to admission or during the academic year. If specialist dietary preparations and prescription foods are to be provided to the school catering service, only ambient goods can be stored and used and the price of a school meal will remain the same.

### **2.3 School Catering Service**

The Catering Service has a significant role in the day to day provision of special diets. To allow the service to cater for special dietary requirements effectively and safely, the Catering Supervisor and management team will work in partnership, sharing joint responsibility between Pupil, Parent/Guardian and the school to provide as far as possible a nutritionally balanced meal that meets the special dietary requirements of the child.

The Catering Service is in compliance with HACCP<sup>1</sup> (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) and the Food Information Regulations legislation (Food Information for Consumers Regulation No. 1169/2011)<sup>2</sup>; therefore all controls and monitoring procedures are in place.

All catering staff should be trained commensurate to their duties.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/food-hygiene/haccp>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.food.gov.uk/document/food-allergen-labelling-and-information-technical-guidance>

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### **3. Procedure for supplying meals to meet special dietary requirements.**

- Parent/Guardian to inform school that their child has a special dietary requirement.
- School to provide **Special Diet Application form** and **Special Diet Medical form** to Parent/Guardian.
- Parent/Guardian to complete **Special Diet Application form** and **Special Diet Medical form (if required)** and return to school.
- Meeting to be arranged with School, Parent/Guardian and School Catering Service to outline roles and responsibilities. A meeting may not be required for all special diet applications but it is advised for all pupils requiring a medically prescribed diet.
- Outcome of meeting to be recorded using the **Special Diets Meeting Outcomes form**.
- School to carry out a **risk assessment**. (Example attached)
- Perform regular review of special diet and all parties to communicate any changes to requirements or provision.

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