

Medical Diets: Our Policy in Secondary Schools

For young people affected by an allergy, intolerance or other medical dietary requirement, it is vitally important that they develop the skills they need to make safe food choices in all environments, whether at home, in school or other out-of-home settings.

At Chartwells, we believe it is important that young people recognise their responsibility to manage their dietary requirements as soon as they are able to. For many pupils, the progression into secondary education provides a welcome opportunity for this development, as they can take greater control of their diet and make their own informed choices about what, when and where to eat.

As such, Chartwells do not prepare managed medical diet menus for secondary age pupils. Instead, our focus is on providing a broad mix of balanced meal options that will enable all pupils to choose a nutritious school lunch, regardless of their dietary requirements or preferences.

To support pupils with medical dietary needs, so that they can make safe choices:

- We adhere to strict food safety regulations. This includes the provision of information about the presence of the 14 legal allergens in every dish on our menus
- We encourage pupils to ask about allergens; our teams will be happy to support
- We can provide nutrient counts for every dish on our menu to pupils who need to monitor nutritional intake for medical reasons (for example, carbohydrate counts for pupils with diabetes).
- We offer allergen-focused education and training.

For pupils with very specific, complex requirements or for those who are not reasonably able to take responsibility for managing their diet themselves, we recommend that parents contact the Chartwells Dietitian, who will be happy to advise.

Please refer to the full Chartwells Medical Diet Policy for more details.

Regarding Secondary schools, Chartwells Medical Diet Policy states (point 3.9):

'Medical diet menus will not be prepared by the central Chartwells nutrition team for customers in Secondary or Higher and Further education settings. We believe that our menus in Secondary, Higher and Further education provide sufficient choice to allow customers to manage their own medical diets. Chartwells will ensure that allergy reports are always available to customers which will allow them to make informed menu choices. This is in line with other out of home catering settings'.

For further information please contact your local Compass Cymru (Chartwells) Dietitian Rachel Margetts rachel.margetts@compass-group.co.uk