**1. Introduction**

* 1. An increasing number of children/young people are requiring medically prescribed diets for a number of reasons, including allergies/intolerances, diabetes and other medical conditions. The purpose of this service circular is to have robust measures in place to safeguard pupils, parents and caterers when prescribed diets are requested.
  2. Schools, nurseries, parents/carers and catering staff need to work in partnership to ensure:
* school menus will allow, where possible, children/young people with medically prescribed diets to access school meals
* areas where meals are served are suitable for children/young people with medically prescribed diets

1.3 NHS Forth Valley will approach Falkirk Council Catering Services direct in those cases where a child/young person has complex dietary needs.

**2. Principles**

All schools/nurseries should ensure that they are proactive in identifying children/young people who require special diets by referring to information sources or putting in place systems such as:

* School handbook – which provides information on the provision of medically prescribed diets
* Enrolment form - will indicate if a child/young person has a food intolerance
* Discussion at parents evenings/meetings
* Referral Form (Appendix 1)
* Parental Declaration (Appendix 2)
* Marbled coloured bands will be issued to children/young people who have a medically prescribed diet.

**3. Procedures for provision of Medically Prescribed Diets**

3.1 Children/young people being enrolled in school or nursery will complete an enrolment form. The medical conditions section will record if the child/young person has been identified as having a medically prescribed diet. For further information, please refer to the flowchart Appendix 3 – for office use only.

3.2 If the child/young person has a food intolerance the parent/carer **must** be given a copy of the following forms to complete and return to the school/nursery:

* Medically Prescribed Diets Referral Form (Appendix 1)
* Medically Prescribed Declaration Form (Appendix 2)

The Head Teacher/Early Years Manager must ensure that both forms are completed, signed by the parent/carer and returned to the school/nursery.

3.3For children/young people who have completed a medically prescribed diet referral form but are not in receipt of a referral or diagnosis by a medical professional then the school/nursery will issue the standard outcome letter (Appendix 4 – letter 1).

3.4 For children/young people who are in receipt of a referral or diagnosis by a medical professional and want to receive meals provided by Catering Services the following **must** be provided:

* a copy of the Dietician/GP medically prescribed diet sheet
* a completed Medically Prescribed Diet Referral Form (Appendix 1)
* a completed Parental Declaration Form (Appendix 2).

The Head Teacher/Early Years Manager must ensure that completed forms are signed and a copy of the Dietician/GP medically prescribed diet sheet is provided.

If a copy of the Dietician/GP medically prescribed diet sheet is not provided, the Head teacher/Early Years Manager must ask for one (Appendix 4 – letter 2).

On receipt of these forms/diet sheet the school/nursery will scan and email securely to the relevant Catering Building Services Officer. A minimum of **10 working days** should be allowed for the kitchen to make the necessary arrangements before the specific prescribed diet starts.

The referral/declaration forms will be reviewed when a parent/carer notifies school/nursery of a change to their child/young person’s medically prescribed diet. Only the current referral/declaration forms should be retained.

The Head Teacher/Early Years Manager will issue reminders to parents/carers of children/young people with medically prescribed diets to complete/update the corresponding forms (Appendix 1&2).

3.4 Where there is a significant threat to the child’s safety or health, all schools/nurseries must record the arrangements made for the child using the Integrated Assessment Framework profiling, planning and review system.

3.5 There may be occasions where we will be unable to provide lunch 5 days a week due to the complexity of the dietary requirements of a child/young person. In these cases we will meet with the parents to discuss and agree what meal options will best support these children/young people. The Catering Building Services Officer will confirm the agreed menu options with the parent/carer by issuing the standard outcome letter (Appendix 4 – letter 3).

**4. Additional guidance for other diets**

4.1 **Nut Allergy**

Parents/carers should be advised that while the ingredients of meals identified as nut –free do not contain nuts, however where manufacturer products are used Falkirk Council relies on the information provided regarding food allergens as they may not necessarily been prepared in a nut free environment and may contain traces of nuts.

4.2 **Diabetic diets**

The carbohydrate count for the standard menu cycle can be provided on request to parents/carers/school support staff

4.3 **Other Dietary Requirements**

The standard school meals service menus are likely to meet most needs in relation to dietary requirements. Where the standard menus do not meet such needs, parents/carers of pupils may request additional information and support in deciding whether or not to access school meals.

**All requests should be made using the relevant paperwork (Appendix 1 and 2)**