

4.4.1 Introduction

Childbase endeavours to cater for all children at the nursery, and that would extend to those who have additional requirements due to their health, religion, or personal preferences. To that end we operate a colour coded plate system to ensure that the correct meal is served to the correct child.

Details of a given child's dietary requirements are obtained during the registration process in close consultation with the parent and/or carer along with any medical specialists or general practitioners as required. These are then reviewed every 6 months or sooner if required.

The following policy and procedure document outlines how we intend to manage this process throughout Childbase.

4.4.2 Special Dietary Requirements

Specific requirements and policies relate to children with special dietary requirements.

This may apply to:

- Food allergies
- Intolerances
- Cultural and Religious preferences
- Children in weaning stages

There is, therefore, a process to identify any special dietary requirements and to manage this within the nursery, to ensure each child consumes the appropriate food and drink. Childbase will work closely with parents/carers to ensure their child receives a nutritionally balanced diet whilst in our care regardless of any dietary requirements where possible.

4.4.3 Specialist Diets

Childbase caters for a range of specialist diets, where possible. To ensure the correct meal is served to the correct child where the parent and/or carer have informed of a specialist dietary requirement Childbase operate a colour plated system.

Red Plated Meals

Red plated meals will be for children with severe allergies, those where symptoms can directly endanger the life of the child if the allergen is consumed, touched, or inhaled. For example, a nut allergy that would prompt an anaphylactic episode. Children with severe allergies, or medical conditions that are linked to diet, will have a unique meal made for them that is labelled and covered on a **red** plate, every single time a meal is served. The dietary information will also be mirrored on a **red** placemat that is unique to that child.

Green Plate Meals

Green plate meals are for children that have a Special Dietary Requirement that is not related to a severe allergy, for example mild allergies (those that result in mild symptoms only), intolerances, Cultural and Religious preferences, vegetarian, vegan, pescatarian, and children who are weaning or have their food blended. All children meeting requirements for a green plated meal will have meals on a **green** plate, every single meal. The dietary information will also be mirrored on a **green** placemat that is unique to that child. On a day that a meal does not contain any products the child cannot eat then the child can self-serve on to a **green** plate out of the main dish, this will be recorded on HS62 as a tick in the box.

White Plate Meals

White plate meals are for children who can have the standard menu. Children who can have a standard meal will have them plated on a **white** plate, every single meal. The dietary information will also be mirrored on a **white** placemat that is unique to that child.

NB: All crockery, cups, will match the colour of the plate the child must eat from. Where you are unable to purchase lidded cups in matching colours, they must clearly identify the special dietary requirements of the child.

4.4.4 Communicating the Requirements

To effectively communicate the information to all those within the nursery that require it we have several forms that are detailed below. This process links closely to the registration process when a child first enrolls with Childbase.

When recording a child's name on the associated appendices, placemats and labels please ensure that you record both the first and second names. If the child has an alias this can be used provided it is used on all associated locations as above.

For Example: Isabella (Bella) Smith on the register can be written as Bella Smith.

4.4.5 Meal Serving in the Kitchen and Rooms

A mealtime includes all times food is served to the children, when reference is made to a mealtime this will include main meals, milk feeds and snacks.

To further reduce the risk of accidental cross contamination certain meals must be prepared and served before others. The following guidance outlines this process.

Preparation in Kitchen:

Meals will be prepared so far as is practicable in the following order:

1. Red plate
2. Green plate
3. White plate

Priority of serving in Rooms:

Meals must be served in the following order, unless there are extenuating circumstances:

1. Red Plated meals.
2. Green Plated meals.
3. Green plate meals that can have standard menu.
4. White plate meals.

Checking & Serving Process

Management is to check meals are correctly plated, covered, labelled, signed and that the contents are suitable based on the child's paperwork. The primary responsibility for the accuracy of the food provision remains with the kitchen team with the management and practitioner checking stages intended to check there are no errors prior to serving. The check with the practitioner must be done as close to the serving area as possible.

The checking process will need to include the following as a minimum:

- The Cook must check ingredients and allergy advice on all packaging prior to preparing meals.
- Colleagues can only check and serve meals when they have completed Special Diets training and are included in ratio.
- Agency and student colleagues must not sign for dietary needs or serve the meal, although may assist supervising mealtimes. In extenuating circumstances and with Area Manager approval Agency colleagues can check and serve meals if they are documented as having received Childbase Special Diets training
- The Management/Practitioner must confirm with the Cook the meal plated is suitable for the intended child and does not include ingredients the child cannot have for each Special Dietary Requirement.
- The Management/Practitioner will visually inspect all plated meals, lifting covers where required, to ensure information about the meal given is correct.
- The Management/Practitioner must confirm with the Cook any other meal amendments that have been made.
- The Practitioner that conducts the check and signs off the 'HS62 Daily Meal Numbers' & 'HS63 Red Plate Dietary Requirements' must be present for the whole of the mealtime and serve all meals they have signed for.
- A member of staff **MUST** be sat with the children, directly supervising whilst they are eating, throughout the mealtime.
- Practitioners must follow PPE guidelines and practice good hygiene, washing hands thoroughly before meals and snacks begin.
- Before serving **Red or Green** plated meals, the Practitioner who has signed for the meal must have another member of staff witness the meal is the correct one for that child, this must follow these steps:
 - Check the placemat is correct for the child seated.
 - The food contents on the plate match the information on the placemat.
 - They must witness the plate being given to the child and agree that it has been given to the right child.
 - Where a child on a plated meal requests more food this must come from the kitchen following the steps above.
- Before children on **Green** plates that are having the standard menu, the Practitioner who has signed for the meal must have another member of staff witness the meal is the correct for the children allowed to self-serve, this must follow these steps:
 - Check the placemat is correct for the child seated.
 - The food contents of the meal match the information on the placemat.
 - Where a child on **Green** plates that can self-serve requests more food the steps above must be followed.

Placemats:

Placemats must display a clear current image of the child (photograph), child's full name, and any specific dietary requirements. Placemats must be typed and must be completed ahead of any meal being served to the child by the setting, this includes settling sessions. The placemat must match the colour of the plate the child will eat from, and only be consistent with a block colour. Placemats must be visible to staff throughout the mealtime. The information on the placemat must match the details on 'HS61 Specialist Dietary Requirements'. A sample template for placemats is available here.

Meal Labelling:

The Nursery Management System can produce labels regarding the specialist dietary requirements at the nursery. Where the Nursery Management System is not used for labels, the labels must still be typed. These labels are then to be provided to the kitchen team for affixing to meals. Information that should appear on the labels as a minimum is as follows:

- Child's full name
- Their specialist dietary requirement – which must match the details on 'HS61 Specialist Dietary Requirements'.

4.4.6 Breakfast Serving

- Children must eat off the coloured plate that aligns to their Dietary Requirement.
- Children on **Red or Green** plates will only need to be plated if their Dietary Requirement is present in the breakfast provision, e.g., a child that requires gluten free cereal.
- Placemats must be used at breakfast and used in the check and serve process as follows:
 - Check the placemat is correct for the child seated.
 - The food contents on the plate match the information on the placemat.
 - They must witness the plate being given to the child and agree that it has been given to the right child.
 - Where a child on a plated meal requests more food this must come from the kitchen following the steps above.
- Children on **Red or Green** plates, that have specialist dietary requirements present at breakfast, e.g., no milk or gluten, must be prepared, signed for and plated individually.
- Children on **Red or Green** plates must still be recorded on the 'HS62 Daily Meal Numbers' and 'HS63 Red Plate Dietary Requirements' as applicable with "as per menu" noted against the meal provided.
- All crockery must be of the same colour the child will eat off, e.g., a child on a red plate meal must have a red cup.

4.4.7 Rolling Mealtime Guidance

There are various approaches to implement at mealtimes within your setting, these are '**All Together**', '**Rolling Mealtime**', '**More Than One Sitting**', and '**Staggered Approach**'. Ensure that you choose the right approach according to age group, numbers of children, needs of children, spacing (room layout) and how the kitchen operates. All approaches will need to follow Meal Serving in the Kitchen and Rooms as detailed in section 4.4.5 of this policy document.

Always consult with the kitchen team when choosing an approach as it is essential that room-based staff and kitchen staff work together to ensure every child receives food that is correct for them and is at the right temperature.

All approaches must ensure food is served in line with basic food hygiene standards, Childbase refer to this as the 90-minute window. Therefore, all food must be served within 90 minutes of being prepared by the kitchen staff.

All Together

- All children enjoy the mealtime experience together, and serving must follow guidance as detailed in section 4.4.5 of this document.

Rolling Mealtimes

- Childbase does not recommend rolling mealtimes for children under 2 years old.
- In line with guidance at 4.4.5 of this document children with Special Dietary Requirements must be served first except in extenuating circumstances.

- Children have a 90-minute window of opportunity to choose when they would like to eat, having the autonomy to be responsible knowing when they are hungry and would like to eat.
- Consideration must be given to how many spaces are available for children to eat due to the 90-minute rule. For example, if you have 24 children on a day, ideally 10 - 12 spaces should be made available.
- Each area that operates a Rolling Mealtime must have a system in place to ensure every child eats and no child is missed.
- Each area that operates a Rolling Mealtime must have a system in place to help children to understand that their needs will be met if no space is currently available when they decide to visit the table. E.G., children put their placemat in a basket to indicate that they would like to eat next – this means they are now waiting. However, all routines and approaches need to be flexible to meet the individual needs of children.

More Than One Sitting

- This mealtime experience is delivered in different sittings where one group eat together, clear away ready for the next group, with serving for each sitting following the guidance as detailed in section 4.4.5. of this document.

Staggered Approach

- The 'Staggered Approach' is like the 'One Sitting' mealtime, however, the transition into mealtimes is staggered where all children may be together for a brief period and a staggered approach back into play.
- A planned approach into how children are staggered must be in operation, ensuring that good hand hygiene and guidance from section 4.4.5 of this document are followed.

4.4.8 Associated Documents and Guidance

HS52 – Allergy/Intolerance Care Plan

The purpose of this form is to ensure the nursery is equipped with any allergy/intolerance information for the child. This form must be completed by the parent/carer before the child can be left unaccompanied by parents at the nursery.

The completion of the form may prompt the need to request medical information from the child's general practitioner on the food allergy and type, in line with ***HS4.5 Health, Medication, and Infectious Diseases Policy***. Where a child has a severe allergy (Red Plated Meals) a risk assessment and Health Care Plan must be completed.

Details:

- Kept in the relevant Child's File,
- Keep old copies for 7 years from the point the child leaves Nursery,
- Requires signatures from: Parent, Key Person, Cook, Management,
- Reviewed at least every 6 months, or when required,
- The review is to be conducted by Management alongside the parents.
- Management to make Cooks and the Key Person aware of review outcome,

HS61 - Specialist Dietary Requirements

The purpose of this form is to record all the dietary requirements for those children with any specialist diets as outlined above (4.4.3). A copy of this form will be kept within each room with that room's specialist diet children listed. The form must be visible to all employees so that all employees who work in the area are aware of the dietary requirements within a given room.

To ensure the clear communication between the room and kitchen, a copy must be provided to the kitchen. Any changes or updates to the form must be passed to the kitchen as and when applicable. The form must

be reviewed whenever a child joins or leaves the room, such as during transitions or room visits, or if there are any changes to a child's dietary requirement, or at least every six months.

The information necessary to complete this form can be found on the child's Registration Documents and the Allergy/Intolerance Care Plan (HS52). Please note that children's learning opportunities must be checked against the form should there be any allergies, for example cooking activities or handling eggs while observing chicks hatching.

Details:

- Displayed in the room, and kitchen,
- Only for children with a specialist diet as defined above in section 4.4.3,
- Old versions to be destroyed,
- Reviewed at least every 6 months, or when required,

HS62 - Daily Meal Numbers

The purpose of this form is to ensure the cook has the information required to prepare the meals for the number of children that are due to be in per meal, per room. The secondary purpose of the form is to ensure that the meals are checked and signed by all required persons to ensure the right meal reaches the right child as per their requirements.

- The Practitioner completes details for children on **Green** plate meals and total number of White plate meals on the form.
- The form is compared against the menu for the day by the Cook.
- The Cook has the responsibility to inform the management team of any changes to the agreed menu.
- The form must be completed by the Practitioner and the Cook prior to meals being prepared, exception is breakfast where the Cook is not present, in these instances a secondary person in the room will act as Cook for checking purposes.
- Severe allergies (see section 4.4.3) are to be recorded on the HS63 Red Plate Dietary Requirements,
- Actual meal provided should be recorded or "as per menu".
- If the child can have the meal provided for the day (contains NO allergies or preferences), they do not need to be plated up, but must still eat from a **Green** plate.

Once the meals have been checked for suitability and accuracy they will be signed by the cook/preparer, the management team and finally the practitioner. Any meal found to be incorrect or lacking a signature will be refused until rectified.

Details:

- Kept in the kitchen,
- Completed daily,
- Once complete this is to be kept in the B file for 3 months and then destroyed,
- Signatures required from: Cook/preparer, management team and practitioner.

HS63 – Red Plated Dietary Requirements

Form HS63 must be completed for any child who has a severe allergy and requires to be on a Red Plated Meal.

- The Practitioner completes details for children on Red plated meals on the form.
- The form is compared against the menu for the day by the Cook.
- The Cook has the responsibility to inform the management team of any changes to the agreed menu.

- The form must be completed by the Practitioner and the Cook prior to meals being prepared, exception is breakfast where the Cook is not present, in these instances a secondary person in the room will act as Cook for checking purposes.

Details:

- Kept in the kitchen.
- Completed daily.
- Once complete this is to be kept in the B file for 3 months and then destroyed.
- Signatures required from cook, management team and practitioner.

HS64 - Approval Form for Parental Food Supply

The purpose of this form is to allow for parents and/or carers to bring their own food to the nursery for their child. This is only to be used in extenuating circumstances, for example severe food related medical conditions. The food products will be pre-packaged and manufactured by a recognised brand with detailed ingredients on the label in English and clearly legible. Home-made meals will only be accepted if required for medical reasons and instructed by a medical professional, this must be risk assessed and a **full list** of ingredients must be provided for each meal.

Any food products brought by the parents and/or carers are required to be stored as per the packaged guidance. Childbase cannot accept responsibility for the safety of the food products before it arrives at the nursery.

Any food supplement that is to be added to meals provided by the parent would be managed via the HS64. This includes prescription milks, dietary powders, bulking agents and similar.

Where a child requires parental supplied food, the child's individual requirements must be assessed and appropriate control measures implemented, this includes whether they would be on a green or red plate.

Details:

- Kept in the specific Child's file.
- Authorisation for parental food supply must be sought from the Area Manager.
- Once child has left, or need for parental food is complete, keep for 3 months, then destroy.

Reviewed by the management team every 3 months or following any changes.

HS65 – Milk Chart

The HS65 is split into two sections as per below:

- Page 1: Completed at the point of registration and details the required milk type (including breast milk, formula, etc.), frequency of feeds, bottle, and teat type. This is signed and dated by the parent and is displayed in the milk kitchen.
- Page 2: Completed daily based on the occupancy of the room and links to page 1. For each feed the person preparing must put the time and initial to say they have prepared the milk as per the instructions. Then, the person giving the milk must put the time and initial to say they have given as per the instructions.
- In all cases milk is to be given within an hour of being prepared.
- Breast milk should only be provided to the nursery chilled, or frozen but de-frosting. Reheating breast milk instructions can be found in the Managing Food & Kitchen Safety Manual under HACCP 9.
- If no specific feeding times "as required" can be written across the boxes on page 1. Page 2 must still note the prepared and given times.

Details:

- Displayed in the milk kitchen.
- Page 1 reviewed at least every 1 month or when required, page 2 reviewed daily,

- Keep old copies for 3 months in the B File then destroy,
- Parents to sign page 1, relevant practitioners to initial page 2.

HS66 – Omitted Food Notification:

Nurseries that have several children who are on specialist diets may request to omit a food product from their menu with agreement from their Area Manager. Requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis with advice available from the Health & Safety Team if required.

The HS66 will be kept in the front of menu plans and displayed on notice boards. The HS66 will need to be completed before this commences. These preference diets would then become a **White** plate meal, but the child's dietary needs recorded on the Registration Information.

The Nursery Manager will review this with their Area Manager on a yearly basis with a decision to continue or not dependent on the number of children with a given specialist diet at that time.

Details:

- Visible for parents to see.
- Reviewed annually, or more frequent depending on changes.
- Signatures required from Cook and Management.

Old copies to be kept for 6 months and then destroyed.

Version Control

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