

## Allergy free Menu - Parent Communication

Friday 28th March 2025

Dear Parents,

We're excited to announce that Miquill's expert food team has developed a new allergy-free menu that will be introduced after Easter.

This menu is designed with children's health and safety in mind, ensuring that all pupils can enjoy a safe and delicious meal at lunchtime.

While we have robust systems in place to manage medical diets, allergen-related incidents can sometimes occur due to menu complexity and ingredient handling. By offering an allergy-free menu, we aim to simplify our processes, reduce the risk of cross-contamination in our kitchens, and provide a safer, more inclusive dining experience for all children. This approach helps us ensure meals are easier to prepare and, most importantly, safer to eat.

Through research into food allergies in schools, we discovered some important facts that highlighted the need for action:

- 5%–8% of children have food allergies, and 18% of allergic reactions happen in schools, making them the highest-risk setting for anaphylaxis outside the home.
- Cow's milk allergy is responsible for 26% of food allergy-related deaths in schoolchildren, making it the leading cause of fatal anaphylaxis.
- More complex menus increase the risk of human error and cross-contamination.

The new allergy-free menu will be available for all pupils with allergies within the 14 regulated allergens.

For children with allergies outside of these, our nutrition team can work with you to create a customised menu.

Please contact your child's school to arrange an appointment with the catering manager for more details.

Our allergy-free menu is designed to provide balanced, nutritious meals every day while offering a variety of options. Each day, pupils can choose from three main options, including a main course, pasta, or jacket potato, along with fresh fruit or dessert. If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to your catering manager.

Thank you for helping us make lunchtime safe and enjoyable for all children!