

SCHOOL PACK

Welcome

Welcome to your coeliac disease in school information pack. The aim of this pack is to provide you with the information to effectively manage the needs of pupils in your care with coeliac disease.

It is mainly aimed at primary school children in the state and independent sectors but it can also be used for children with coeliac disease in a secondary school setting.

Children's health can have a significant impact on their attainment and/or wellbeing but with the right arrangements in place, there's no reason why schools cannot provide a positive experience for pupils with coeliac disease.

The pack includes information which should be read by teachers, catering staff and school nurses that will help them make arrangements to support pupils with coeliac disease in school.

The pack contains information about:

- Coeliac disease
- The gluten free diet
- How your school should approach managing pupils with coeliac disease

- How to incorporate the gluten free diet into school activities
- Further information, resources and links

The Scottish Government recently produced guidance for schools and education authorities called Supporting children and young people with healthcare needs in schools. In this pack, we draw attention to the parts of the Guidance that are relevant for pupils with coeliac disease. The full guidance can be found here:

www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/12/3694/2

About Coeliac UK

Coeliac UK is the charity for people with coeliac disease and for anyone living without gluten. We carry out research, we campaign for a fairer deal, and we provide independent, trustworthy advice and support. And we do it all so that one day, no one's life will be limited by gluten.

For more information about the charity and how we can help you, visit www.coeliac.org.uk or give us a call on 0333 332 2033.

About coeliac disease

Coeliac disease (pronounced 'see-liac') is a serious illness where the body's immune system attacks its own tissues when food containing gluten is eaten. Gluten is a protein found in the grains wheat, barley and rye. Some people with coeliac disease may also be sensitive to oats. When gluten is consumed, it causes damage to the lining of the gut and means that the body cannot properly absorb nutrients from food. Coeliac disease is not an allergy or a food intolerance, it is an auto-immune condition.

Around 1 in every 100 children has coeliac disease and classic symptoms of coeliac disease in children are diarrhoea, vomiting, constipation, abdominal distension, prolonged fatigue and faltering growth.

A strict lifelong gluten free diet is the medical treatment for anyone diagnosed with coeliac disease.

The gluten free diet

Gluten is commonly found in foods such as bread, breakfast cereals, pasta, biscuits and cakes but it is also found in foods that you may not expect such as some sauces, ready meals and sausages. Coeliac UK's Gluten free Checklist, available on the Coeliac UK website, is a guide to the types of foods that can be eaten, those that can't and those that need to be checked.

There are many naturally gluten free foods such as meat, poultry, fish, cheese, milk, fruit, potatoes, vegetables, pulses, rice and corn. Gluten free substitute foods including bread, breakfast cereals, pasta and biscuits are also available from most catering suppliers and in the Free From range in supermarkets.

Information on reading food labels, tips for caterers, cross contamination with gluten (very important) and Coeliac UK's catering training can be found at the end of this pack.

What your school should do

Schools should take steps to ensure pupils with coeliac disease do not consume gluten while under its care while not excluding them from any activity at school, including school meals with their peers.

Schools and caterers should work closely with parents to support pupils with medical conditions including food allergies and coeliac disease (which is an autoimmune disease triggered by eating gluten).

Head teachers, working with parents, are best placed to make decisions in the case of pupils who have special dietary requirements, taking into account local circumstances.

Scottish Government Guidance states:

"Wherever possible, there should be forward planning and resourcing agreed between all partners - including parents - to meet the healthcare needs of their child, particularly in relation to reasonable adjustments that the child might need and require."

Meeting with parents/carers

When it is flagged that a pupil in your school has coeliac disease, arranging a meeting with the parents/carers will allow everyone involved in the care of the child to understand the condition and importance of a gluten free diet.

The meeting should involve attendance from a senior member of staff and the class teacher (and also the school nurse if there is one available).

The Scottish Government Guidance states:

"Parents/carers should be allowed to work in partnership with their child, the school health team and school staff to reach an agreement about how their child's needs will be met and the school should inform parents/carers of their right to participate in the decision-making process."

Individual healthcare plan

At the meeting with parents, an Individual Healthcare Plan for the pupil's coeliac disease should be discussed and completed. This Plan puts in writing information about the condition, symptoms and the role the school should play in managing the condition.

At this meeting, not only should the healthcare needs of the pupil be discussed but also the importance of ensuring the pupil is socially and educationally included in class/school activities involving food and how this will be managed.

The discussion on healthcare should cover:

- What coeliac disease is and that as long as a pupil with coeliac disease follows a strict gluten free diet they should not suffer any symptoms (your school may have or have had pupil(s) with coeliac disease).
- What will happen to the pupil where gluten is eaten by mistake so the school is aware of the symptoms that develop. The most common symptoms include diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, tummy ache and wind. Parents will advise on symptoms to expect from their child and when the symptoms will likely develop after eating gluten.
- The parents and school agreeing what steps should





be taken where a child is showing symptoms of a gluten reaction. This could be the school offering some treatment such as water to prevent dehydration or paracetamol for pain relief and/or contacting the parents to take the child home.

- Which foods can be eaten and which foods need to be avoided along with the risks of cross contamination of gluten free food with food containing gluten.

For the discussion on inclusion, it is also important to make sure the Individual Healthcare Plan outlines how it will deal with the social and educational element of the pupil on a gluten free diet in a school setting so that the pupil is not excluded from any classroom or wider school based activity involving food. For example class bake sales, school summer BBQ, class birthday celebrations, class/school parties.

This is a very important point. Parents look to the school to make sure their child is not exposed to gluten for health and medical reasons but also for the school to ensure their child is not socially or educationally affected by being left out or made to feel different because of their diet. Coeliac UK urges schools to take every step to prevent any kind of exclusion based on a pupil's gluten free diet. This can easily be achieved through careful planning of food based activities and timely involvement with parents to utilise their expertise and advice.

To this end, the Individual Healthcare Plan should reflect that the school, in advance of food based activity, will discuss with parents:

- What gluten free options are required so the pupil can take part?
- How to factor in the gluten free food safely to the activity so there is no risk of cross-contamination with food containing gluten.
- How to blend the gluten free food into the activity so the pupil is not made to feel different.
- Where to source gluten free food (sometimes the parents can supply the food).

The Individual Healthcare Plan should be reviewed annually to allow for any information to be updated. Every new teacher the pupil has should also be made aware of how the condition and gluten free diet is managed in school. Parents would welcome a meeting with the new teacher to discuss the Plan face to face.

It is important the school views parents as partners in the care of the child at school, working together to manage the condition. This is backed by Scottish Government Guidance.

“The main purpose of the individual healthcare plan is to identify the level and type of support that is required to meet a child or young person’s healthcare needs at school. Where it is identified that an individual healthcare plan is required, the school health team should work with the school management team, parents/carers and the individual child or young people to draw it up.”

School Meals

While a packed lunch is always an option, pupils with coeliac disease should not be excluded from having cooked school meals due to their diet and this especially applies to those in P1 to P3 who are entitled to a free school meal. Eating with friends is an important aspect of social development.

Coeliac UK encourages schools to meet and discuss with parents the possibilities for providing gluten free schools meals for pupils with coeliac disease. This discussion would require input from the school cook and one of the local authority catering service officials. Parents will be looking for gluten free options to be available and reassurance the options are prepared in a safe manner to minimise the risk of cross contamination with gluten. Ultimately it will be for the parent/carer to decide, after hearing how the school proposes catering for a gluten free diet, whether to send their coeliac child for school meals.

Coeliac UK offers the following resources for catering for a GF diet:

- Coeliac UK’s Gluten free Checklist, Guide to Common Grains and information available on the Coeliac UK website: www.coeliac.org.uk/gfdiet
- The Food Industry Professionals section of Coeliac UK’s website is designed to help people to cater for those with coeliac disease and includes links to a catering training module. Ask the school catering team to take a look at www.coeliac.org.uk/food
- Coeliac UK can provide online training to schools cooks about how to cater safely a pupil with coeliac disease and on a gluten free diet. More info at www.coeliac.org.uk/courses

School activities and the gluten free diet

School trips

Pupils should not be excluded from school trips because they have coeliac disease.

If the school is providing the catering, speak to the child's parents about how the school will provide gluten free options in a safe and inclusive way.

If the trip involves external caterers, liaise with the caterer and ask for details of how the caterer will provide safe, inclusive gluten free food for the pupil with coeliac disease. This should be followed by a conversation with the parents to relay the information so they can be reassured about how the external caterer will provide safe gluten free meals for their child (it may be helpful to suggest the parents also speak to the caterer direct if further reassurance is required).

Scottish Government Guidance states:

"Plans for school trips and other outdoor learning should take the healthcare needs of all children and young people into account from the outset. School staff may wish to work with children and young people with healthcare needs and their parents, who will have experience of taking their children on trips and outings."

Social/fundraising activities

If your school policy allows pupils to bring in sweets or snacks for their birthdays and other celebrations and/or



allows teachers to give out sweets or snacks, it is worth speaking to parents of pupils with coeliac disease how to manage such moments to make sure the pupil is included. For example, the teacher could have some gluten free alternatives to hand.

For other occasions, such as bake sales, school BBQ, and class/school parties, the Individual Healthcare Plan should outline the process for including pupils with coeliac disease e.g. the school will give parents advance notice and discuss how best to make sure the pupil is included.

Scottish Government Guidance states:

"Children and young people with healthcare needs should be encouraged to fully participate in class social and fundraising activities. Some of the activities are likely to involve food, such as charity bakes sales, which can bring potential risks to children with food allergies. Teachers should be aware of these allergies with the aim of eliminating the risk of children coming into contact with food they are allergic to when purchasing food for a special event such as a class Christmas party. School staff should also consider those healthcare needs when inviting pupils and/or parents to bring in home baking for class bake sales."

Cookery classes

Primary school children often make small cakes, cookies or other food dishes as part of the curriculum and with some forward planning there is no reason why pupils with coeliac disease cannot take part.

The Individual Healthcare Plan should ensure that the school speaks to parents in advance of when a cookery session is being planned. The teacher should discuss with the parents what food is being planned, what adjustments can be made to accommodate gluten free including the steps required to avoid cross-contamination and how the class can be delivered in a way which is inclusive of the needs of the pupil with coeliac disease/gluten free diet.

Top tips to avoid cross contamination:

- keep utensils separate during preparation and cooking of gluten free food
- don't fry gluten free food in the same oil as foods that contain gluten
- use a clean grill pan
- separate toaster or toaster bags when making gluten free toast
- separate the preparation of gluten free foods from gluten containing foods
- use separate butter for gluten free use only.

Playtime

Some paints, crayons and glues can contain gluten but as gluten needs to be eaten to cause symptoms this should not be a problem for pupils with coeliac disease unless such items are accidentally eaten. As young children will often put things in their mouth, using materials made without gluten is a sensible option.

Preschool children will often make art and instruments

with dried pasta (which contains gluten). As this may be tempting for small children, it is advisable to use gluten free pasta or supervise the child.

Play Doh™ is not always gluten free. However, it is easy to make play dough without using gluten. A gluten free recipe is available on the Coeliac UK website at www.coeliac.org.uk/playdough.

Young Champions: raising awareness at school

It is important that children are able to talk about their coeliac disease so that their peers and teachers can gain a better understanding of the condition and become more aware of what life is like on a gluten free diet.

To that end, Coeliac UK has created a Young Champions pack which aims to give children the confidence to raise awareness at school and in their extracurricular activities. For example, giving a class talk about their experience of coeliac disease and the gluten free diet. The pack has lots of activities for children to do with their class, school, friends, family or community group, with supporting materials. As this is aimed at children aged 5 to 11, there is a mix of activities so there is something for all ages.

www.coeliac.org.uk/get-involved/youngchampions

Further information, resources and useful links

You can find more information on a wealth of topics on the Coeliac UK website:

- About coeliac disease: www.coeliac.org.uk/coeliac-disease/
- The gluten free diet: www.coeliac.org.uk/gluten-free-diet-and-lifestyle/
- Gluten free checklist: www.coeliac.org.uk/gfchecklist
- Caring for children with coeliac disease: www.coeliac.org.uk/children
- Catering gluten free: www.coeliac.org.uk/catering
- Coeliac UK training: www.coeliac.org.uk/courses

Reading labels

If you see any of the following on a food label you know that the food can be included in a gluten free diet:

- Gluten free
- Suitable for coeliacs
- The Crossed Grain symbol

Cereals that contain gluten must, by law, always be listed on the ingredients list of a pre-packaged product. If there is no mention of any grains that contain gluten, such as wheat, barley or rye in the ingredients list then this means that gluten has not been used in the recipe.

Understanding 'may contain' statements

You may see the following statements on some foods:

- May contain traces of gluten
- Made on a line handling wheat
- Made in a factory also handling wheat
-

Manufacturers use these statements to highlight that there is a risk of cross contamination with gluten in the making or packaging of a food. Use of the may contain statement

is voluntary and varies. Coeliac UK does not recommend caterers use foods with these warning statements.

Tips for caterers

Use a variety of naturally gluten free foods and plan meals around them such as:

- Meat, poultry, fish and eggs
- Fresh, frozen, canned or juiced fruit and vegetables
- Dried or canned pulses
- Dairy products
- Rice or potatoes
- Ingredients that contain gluten can usually be exchanged for gluten free alternatives. Use gluten free flours such as:
 - Rice
 - Corn (maize)
 - Tapioca (cassava)
 - Chickpea (besan, channa, gram flour)
 - Buckwheat
 - Potato
 - Soya
 - Millet
 - Gluten free flour mixes

Catering training

Coeliac UK provides a range of training options for caterers covering the following information:

- Choosing and using the right ingredients
- Storage, goods inwards and ingredients management
- How to cater within the law on gluten free
- Training your staff
- Communicating so those with coeliac disease feel confident you understand their needs

Visit www.coeliac.org.uk/courses for more information.

Contact details for parent/carer

Fill out this section to retain for reference

Child's name:

Parent/carer name:

Relationship:

Telephone number:

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