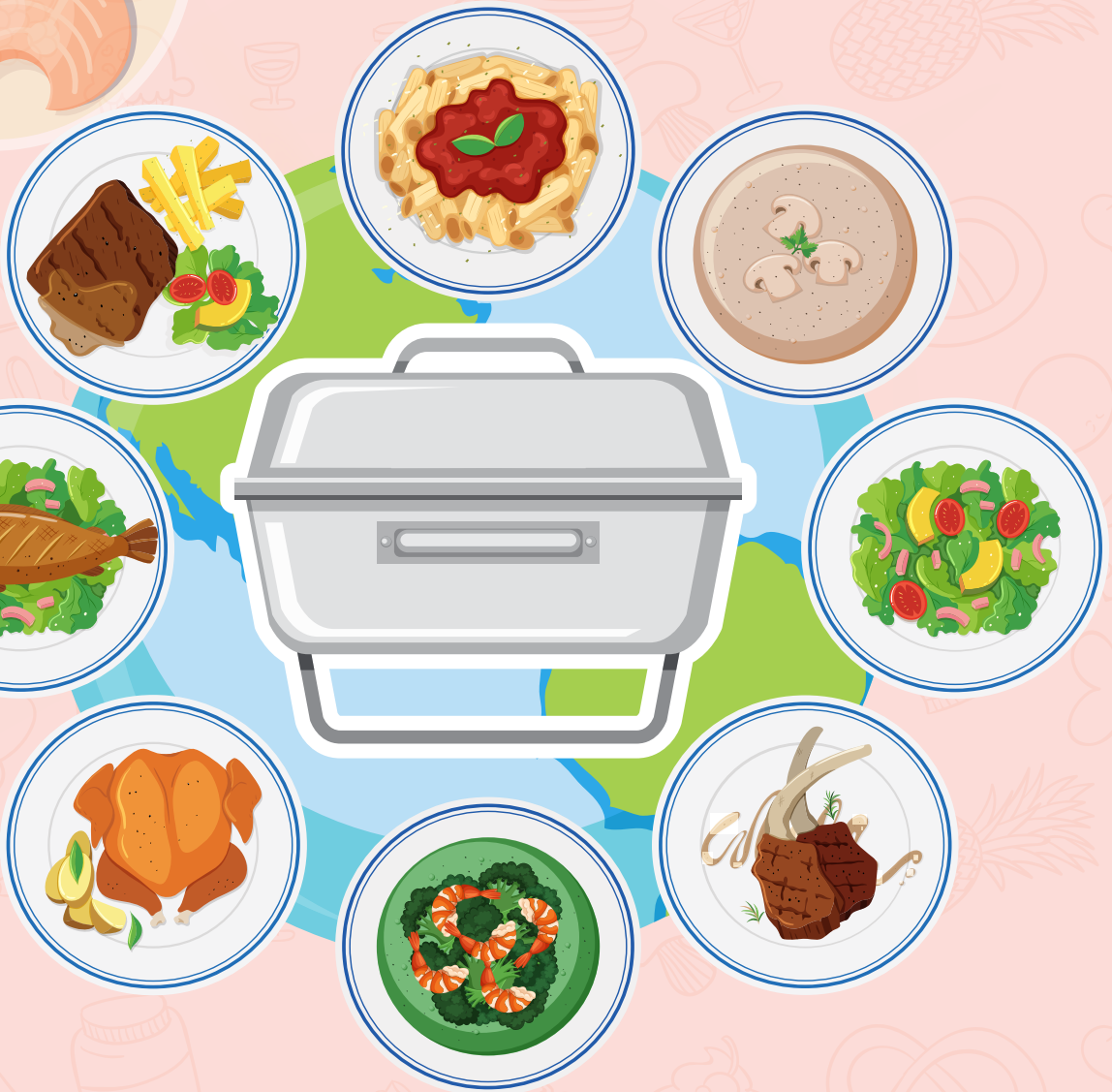




**Special Education
Needs Authority**



HOT MEALS FOR LEARNERS

WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (LSEN).



HOT MEALS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (LSEN).

FOREWARD

As Director of the Special Education Needs Authority (SENA), it gives me great pleasure to introduce this comprehensive Hot Meal Plan for Learners with Special Education Needs. This plan has been meticulously developed by our team of experts to cater to the unique nutritional requirements of children with special needs and disabilities.

Proper nutrition is fundamental for the overall growth, health and development of all children. For children with special needs, this holds an even greater significance given the additional challenges they face. An optimal diet can significantly impact their physical, cognitive and behavioural outcomes. This Hot Meal Plan accounts for the complexities of various disabilities and accommodates individual dietary restrictions. The menu provides nutrient dense, balanced meals that support the child's wellbeing holistically.

The Hot Meal Plan aligns with the SENAs commitment in ensuring inclusive, equitable and quality education for learners with special education needs. By meeting their nutritional needs, we empower these children to thrive and fulfill their potential. This initiative will have a far-reaching positive impact on their health, attendance, participation and academic performance.

I congratulate the SENAs Nutrition Team for their diligent efforts in designing this plan. I have full confidence that the implementation of this Hot Meal Plan will advance the mission and vision of the SENAs and support the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This plan has been formulated in close consultation with dietary experts. I encourage open collaboration between schools, families and relevant professionals to ensure its effective application and to continue enhancing it over time. Providing wholesome, nutritious meals to learners with special needs is an investment in our children and in building an inclusive society.

D. Authelsingh

Director Special Education Needs Authority

HOT MEALS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (LSEN).

Introduction

The Special Education Needs Authority (SENA), operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology is the sole institution regulating all Special Education Needs (SEN) institutions in the Republic of Mauritius. The SENA, with its mission to ensure that every child with special educational needs has access to quality education and its vision to be a model of excellence in the provision of special education services, recognizes the importance of providing comprehensive support to children with disabilities. These include not only providing educational assistance but also ensuring that proper nutritious meal is made available for the healthy growth and development of LSEN.

SENA is now coming forward with the implementation of the Hot Meal programme for children with special education needs in Mauritius. This initiative is embedded in the understanding that proper nutrition is a fundamental feature of children's overall well-being and can significantly impact on their educational outcomes as well as their physical, mental and social health.

Context

In Mauritius, there are seventy-one SEN schools/institutions registered under the SENA. A significant number of children with disabilities attend these schools/institutions. The Hot Meal Plan will not only cater for the nutritional needs of these children but will also contribute to their overall development and wellness.

In the broader context, this initiative aligns with global efforts to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all, as outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also contributes to the realization of the rights of children with disabilities, as stipulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD).

HOT MEALS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (LSEN).

Rationale:

Children with special education needs often face unique nutritional challenges due to various health issues, disabilities, and dietary restrictions. These challenges can impact their overall health, growth, and cognitive development. Therefore, it is crucial to provide these children with a balanced meal that caters to their needs. The Hot Meal Plan is designed to ensure optimal nutrient intake for a healthy growth and development and also promotes healthy eating habits.

Aim:

The aim of the Hot Meal Plan is to provide children with special education needs with balanced meals which will cater for their physical, social and mental wellbeing.

Objectives:

1. To provide a variety of meal options.
2. To ensure that all meals are rich in essential nutrients including proteins, carbohydrates, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals which will support children's growth, development, and overall health.
3. To accommodate dietary restrictions and modifications for children with disabilities.
4. To promote healthy eating habits and encourage children to enjoy a variety of foods from the 'Three Food Groups' namely, 'Food for Health', 'Food for Growth' and 'Food for Energy'.
5. To provide a guide to parents and to school managers about the types of meals to be served to children with special needs.
6. To ensure that meals are accessible to all children without any cost.

Meal Plan for LSEN

Given the complexity of the various special needs and the individual dietary requirements, it is not feasible to provide a specific meal plan for each category of special educational needs students.

However, meals have been planned bearing in mind the following:

- The dishes proposed (have) been carefully selected and consist of nutrient dense ingredients.
- The dishes proposed in the Hot Meal Plan take into consideration common food intolerances and allergies.
- The prescribed meals provide alternative foods to replace foods suspected of causing allergic reactions or intolerances.
- The plan provides a list of the main ingredients together with alternative foods for vegetarians as well as for those suffering from food allergies/intolerances.
- Sensory Considerations - each child has his/her own preference; the plan offers a variety of options for each meal to accommodate sensory preferences.

MEAL PREPARATION GUIDELINES

- Children may require a diet with modified textures. Pureed, mashed, chopped, liquidized or softer version of the meal must be provided .
- Gluten free bread/’roti’ and ‘crepe’ can be made from bread fruit flour, cassava flour, ‘besan’ flour and corn flour.
- To avoid monotony, rice can/may be substituted by corn meal, ground rice, oatmeal, potato, cassava and sweet potato .
- Fish and chicken should be off the bone and cut into small pieces or minced.
- Use herbs and small amount of spices to flavour food.
- Use salt and sugar sparingly.
- Commercial sauces, flavour enhancers and packet foods (e.g. soups) are prohibited.
- Eggs can be used instead of meat, fish and chicken for those who are not allergic to eggs.
- The fish which is recommended in the meal plan is either fresh or canned tuna. It should be ensured beforehand that children are not allergic to fish.
- Cheese and milk can be used for children who are not lactose intolerant. It should be noted that the Hot Meal Plan does not include milk and dairy products.
- Bread and other wheat products (pasta) made from flour can be substituted with rice for those children who consume wheat products.
- The meal plan makes minimal use of processed foods.
- The use of artificial additives is strictly prohibited.
- Beef and pork and their by -products are strictly prohibited.
- Teokon /tofu/soya, beans, bean sprouts and peas are good substitutes for chicken and eggs
- Recommended fruits: One fruit is recommended per meal. For example, a banana, a slice of pawpaw, a pear, an apple, a (mandarin) or any other seasonal fruit.
- Fruits should be seedless and cut into small pieces.
- Water: encourage children to drink plain water.

Hygiene Plan for Meal Distribution

1. It is essential for all staff members involved in meal preparations and distribution to practise proper hand hygiene.
2. Children should be encouraged to wash their hands before and after meals.
3. The area designated for meal preparation must be kept immaculate and sanitized. Regular cleaning schedules should be implemented and surfaces should be cleaned both before and after meals.
4. Proper food storage is a critical aspect of food safety. It should be ensured that all food items are stored appropriately to avoid contamination. Refrigerated items should be stored at the correct temperature.
5. All utensils and equipment, including cutting boards, knives, spoons, and serving trays, used during meal serving time should be cleaned/sanitized before and after use.
6. Staff involved in meal distribution should wear appropriate gloves, masks and aprons.
7. The area where children eat should be cleaned and sanitized before and after each meal.
8. Proper disposal of food waste is crucial. All food waste should be disposed in designated bins which should be emptied regularly to prevent waste build-up.
9. All staff should receive training in food safety and hygiene practices. These should include understanding the importance of hygiene, knowing how to clean and sanitize effectively and recognizing the signs of food contamination and spoilage.
10. Regular checks should be conducted to ensure complete adherence to all hygiene practices.

Food Service

It is recommended to:

- maintain a consistent meal schedule and offer familiar foods to provide a sense of comfort.
- provide a supportive mealtime environment and allow sufficient time for eating.
- offer assistance to those children who need to be fed.
- monitor portion sizes to avoid overeating and maintain a healthy weight. Adjust portion sizes based on the child's age, activity level and growth patterns.
- pay attention to dental health. Encourage regular tooth brushing or mouth rinsing after each meal.

HOT MEALS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (LSEN).

Disclaimer:

It is important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. It is imperative to work together with the family, the school and the paediatrician for those children who have to follow strict dietary requirements and/or are on medication.

Roles and Responsibilities of Special Education Needs (SEN) School Managers in connection with the Hot Meal Plan

This document serves as a comprehensive guide, but the onus rests upon school managers to ensure its effective application in their respective institutions.

The role of the SEN school managers in understanding, implementing and monitoring this meal plan effectively is crucial. Hence their total support should be enlisted to make this Hot Meal Plan a success.

1. SEN school managers must have a thorough understanding of the Hot Meal Plan.
 - This includes the nutritional needs it addresses, the dietary restrictions it accommodates and the overall objectives it aims to achieve.
 - Managers should familiarize themselves with the meal options, the preparation guidelines and the rationale behind each choice.
2. SEN school managers are responsible for the practical implementation of the meal plan.
 - This includes coordinating with caterers, ensuring meals are prepared according to the Hot Meal Plan and that dietary restrictions of individual students are taken care of.
 - Managers should also ensure that meals are served in a supportive and inclusive environment.
3. SEN school managers should ensure that their staff members are adequately trained and educated about the Hot Meal Plan.
 - This includes understanding the importance of nutrition for children with special needs, recognizing dietary restrictions and knowing how to prepare meals according to the plan.
4. Effective communication with parents and caregivers is crucial.
 - SEN school managers should ensure that parents are aware of the Hot Meal Plan, understand its benefits and know how it caters for their child's specific needs.
 - Any concerns, queries or suggestions from parents should be addressed promptly and professionally.
5. SEN school managers should regularly monitor the implementation of the Hot Meal Plan and evaluate its effectiveness.
6. SEN school managers must ensure that their school's implementation of the Hot Meal Plan complies with all relevant regulations and guidelines set by the Special Education Needs Authority (SENA).

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HOT MEAL PLAN FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

No	MEAL	DESCRIPTION/ MAIN INGREDIENTS
1	Boiled plain rice with chicken daube and fresh raw vegetable salad + 1 fruit	Rice - soft Chicken daube- chicken should be cut into small pieces. Fresh raw vegetables salad - make use of seasonal vegetables - salad can consist of one , two or more vegetables. Salad should be cut into small pieces (can also be chopped or grated finely)
2	Mashed potatoes with minced soya/chicken daube and raw fresh vegetable salad + 1 fruit	Mashed potatoes - boiled potatoes , salt , pepper and herbs . Chicken rougaille - Chicken mince, tomatoes, onion,garlic,ginger, daube spices and herbs . Chicken can be replaced by soya .
3	Rice + bouillon (any brede) + egg rougaille+ pumpkin fricassee. 1 fruit	Egg can be replaced by teokon Pumpkin should be cooked with very little oil with onion and thyme.
4	Kitchree (rice + dholl) , sauteed chicken/soya and tomato and coriander chutney 1 fruit	For kitchree -Rice , dholl , onion , turmeric powder, cinnamon and cardamon Chicken sauteed with onion.
5	Bouillon Meefoon - cabbage, carrot, bok choy, eggs /chicken/teokon 1 fruit	All vegetables should be cut into small pieces. Meefoon cut to reduce the length.
6	Rice with dholl (lentille rouge) , sauté chicken/ teokon with a side of chou chou fricasser 1 fruit	Chou chou fricasser - thym , cho chou and onion For sauté chicken - chicken cut into small pieces and sauteed with onion , carrot ,salt /pepper
7	Potato, beetroot, carrot and tuna salad 1 fruit	The vegetables should be cut into small pieces and be sauteed with herbs and onion. Instead of tuna , chick peas / teokon/ haricot blanc fricassee can be used in the salad Eggs and chicken version also can be made.
8	Grilled chicken tenders with potato chips and grilled vegetable (broccoli, courgette, carrot, aubergine) served with home-made tomato sauce 1 fruit	Chicken off the bone marinated in ginger, onion and garlic paste , salt and pepper Mayonnaise can be used for those who can consume eggs. Home-made tomato sauce- tomatoes - pureed , onion ,garlic, sugar,salt and pepper For vegetarian - use grilled teokon

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9	Presented as Bol Renserser - Boiled rice + layer of chicken/teokon , carrot , brede 'tom pouce', and cabbage sauteed in tomatoes and garlic sauce 1 fruit	Tomato and garlic sauce - tomatoes, onions, arrowroot, garlic and water. (DO NOT USE SOYA SAUCE)
10	Boiled Meefoon/noodles served with sauteed bok choy, cabbage, carrot , chicken/soya/ teokon) 1 fruit	Mine bouille / meefoon . No soya sauce. The vegs and chicken/ teokon sauteed in small amount of turmeric and garlic sauce.
11	Bread with roast chicken pieces with courgette and patisson fricassee 1 fruit	Use chicken breast / chicken off the bone . Instead of bread - Corn meal puree/ground rice can be used or rice fricassee with grated carrot.
12	Farata/ rice /bread with soya and vegetable curry and tomato and coriander chutney 1 fruit	Bread and farata options are for those who can tolerate gluten. Vegetable curry - use 'without chili' curry powder
13	Chicken and vegetable pulao with a side of tomato salad. 1 fruit	Pulao- chicken pieces, courgette, haricot vert ,carrot . Add beans and peas for vegetarian.
14	Rice with tuna (fresh) fish curry with chou chou fricasser + cucumber salad 1 fruit	Fish can be replaced by egg , soya or chicken .
15	Boiled Fruit a pain with beans and carrots (white kidney beans, red beans) - stir fry With mint and tomatoes chutney . 1 fruit	Cut fruit a pain in cubes and sauteed with beans and diced carrot.
16	Rice salad - (boiled egg/tofu /soya /chicken/ peas/ beans/ carrot / maize with vinaigrette) 1 fruit	Vegetables in season can be used to make a colourful rice salad.
17	Rice with scrambled egg in rougaille (keema oeuf) with dholl lentille and fresh raw vegetables salad 1 fruit	Instead of eggs, use minced chicken /minced soya. Instead of vegetable salad - any vegetable fricassee can be prepared (callebase, patisson , patol ..)

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<p>18</p>	<p>Roast chicken pieces served with its gravy with sauteed boiled potato and carrot + cucumber salad 1 fruit</p>	<p>Chicken can be roasted whole then cut into small pieces. Remove all bones. For the salad - use vegetable in season.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>Omellete rougaille with cabbage and carrot served with farata - wrap style 1 fruit</p>	<p>Replace egg by chicken pieces / teokon . Rougaille can also be served with pasta . Rice is another option.</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>Fried rice - chicken, cabbage, carrot , spring onion and tomato and mint chutney 1 fruit</p>	<p>Replace chicken by teokon</p>
<p>21</p>	<p>Rice porridge with chicken and petsaye /tom pouce 1 fruit</p>	<p>'Du riz cange'. Chicken can be replaced by teokon, eggs or fish .</p>
<p>22</p>	<p>Spaghetti Bolognese (chicken) with fresh raw vegetables salad 1 fruit</p>	<p>Instead of spaghetti, any other pasta can be used. Those who are on a gluten free diet , replace spaghetti with rice . Bolognese here means - chicken cooked in tomatoes. Do not use cheese. Mince soya can be used as a vegetarian option.</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>Rice, lentil soup, teokon / chicken and vegetable sauté +chou chou fricasser 1 fruit</p>	<p>Saute chicken pieces/Teokon with grated carrot and shredded cabbage.</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>Rice, bouillon brede, fish vindaye (can be fresh tuna or canned tuna) with ,callebasse fricasser and tomato chutney 1 fruit</p>	<p>For those allergic to fish use soya chunks for the vindaye . Bouillon - any ' brede' .</p>
<p>25</p>	<p>Layered mashed potatoes with mince chicken/soya rougaille topped with pureed pumpkin 1 fruit</p>	<p>This dish has three layers - mashed potatoes, chicken/soya mince rougaille and mashed pumpkin .</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>Rice, fish daube with cucumber salad 1 fruit</p>	<p>Instead of fish, boiled egg curry /chicken curry can be made .</p>

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27	Riz safraner with chicken kalia and fresh raw vegetable salad 1 fruit	Kalia - lighter version of kalia in terms of spices and make no use of ghee and avoid frying .
28	Rice with rajma (red kidney beans) curry and tomato and mint chutney 1 fruit	Rajma- beans stew (cooked in spices and tomatoes)
29	Chicken Sawarma with bread/farata, tomato , cabbage and carrot salad 1 fruit	Sawarma can be served with rice/ chips for those who cannot eat bread or farata.
30	Briyani (egg/fish/chicken/vegetables) - with cucumber and carrot salad 1 fruit	Avoid frying the ingredients. Avoid ghee. Use spices sparingly
31	Lentil + carrot + callebasse + potato soup (halim style) with side of fresh green salad 1 fruit	Add oatmeal to thicken the halim
32	Boiled egg (teokon) pulao with tomato and coriander chutney 1 fruit	Ingredients for the pulao carrot+boiled egg or teokon + French beans+Courgette .
33	Chicken and mixed vegetables soup with quinoa/oatmeal - halim style 1 fruit	Any vegetables in season can be used .
34	Idli with sambar + Chutney 1 fruit	(Idli Sambar is a soft fluffy steamed cakes made of rice known as idli served with sambar, a vegetable lentil stew
35	Minced chicken tandoori rice with fresh mixed vegetables salad. 1 fruit	Avoid ghee. Use tandoori spice sparingly .
36	Boulette chou chou,and bok choy soup-mixedboulette (veg/chicken) 1 fruit	La soup boulette . Boulette can be chicken or vegetables. Avoid those which have shrimps.

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ANNEX 1 - SAMPLE - FOOD CARD

If the child does not require special meals, the parent can sign at the bottom and return the form to the school.

<p>Student FOOD CARD</p>	
<p>Name of school name Age Grade</p>	
<p>Does the child have a disability? If Yes, describe the major life activities affected by the disability.</p>	
<p>Does the child have special nutritional or feeding needs?</p>	
<p>List any dietary restrictions / special diet.</p>	
<p>List any allergies - food intolerances.</p>	
<p>List foods to be substituted.</p>	
<p>List foods that need the following change in texture. If all foods need to be prepared in this manner, indicate "All." Cut up or chopped into bite size pieces: Finely ground: Pureed: Food needs to be soft Food needs to be liquid</p>	
<p>List any special equipment or utensil that is needed for feeding . Indicate any other comments about the child's eating or feeding patterns Parent's sig</p>	

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