



**Dear Parents/Carers**

## **Introducing Our New Allergy-Friendly School Menu**

At Aspens, we are committed to providing safe, nutritious, and inclusive school meals for all children. As part of this commitment, we are introducing a new Top 14 Allergy-Free Menu, designed to significantly reduce the risk of allergen incidents while still offering variety and choice.

With food allergies on the rise, we recognise our responsibility to create meals that are safer, simpler, and more inclusive. Unlike previous allergen menus, which often provided limited choice, this new approach ensures that children with allergies can enjoy the same meals as their peers, fostering a more inclusive dining experience.

We remain committed to medical diet provision, ensuring that children with allergies beyond the 14 key allergens continue to receive meals tailored to their specific needs.

### **Why the Change?**

**Enhanced Safety** – Up to 8% of children have food allergies, with 18% of allergic reactions occurring in schools. Simplifying the menu reduces the risk of cross-contamination and human error.

**Better Nutrition** – The new menu focuses on whole ingredients, increasing the proportion of plant-based foods while reducing reliance on processed alternatives.

**Continued Choice** – Children will still have meat and vegetarian options, though selections may differ slightly from the current menu.

**Greater Inclusivity** – All children with allergies will have access to the same menu, ensuring they are not singled out or excluded.

We are also proud partners of the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation, supporting vital research into food allergies and food safety improvements. Natasha's Law has already transformed allergen labelling, and we continue to further this mission through funding, education, and best practice in school meal provision.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact

Thank you for your support in making school meals safer and more inclusive for all children.