

In-Room Dining

The Children's Order Standard

Five steps for in-room orders that include a child's meal. Parents judge it on two things: how soon the plate arrives, and how safe the tray is once it is down.

Who

Order takers, runners and the chef at the pass

When

Any in-room dining order that includes a meal for a child

You need

Children's menu, allergies in the profile, child cutlery, a lidded beaker

Measured by Child's age and allergies asked on the call · Child's plate sent first if asked · No hot pot or knife on the child's side

1 Ask the parent

Take the child's order from the parent, even when the child is on the line. Ask the child's age and about any allergy, and write both at the top of the ticket before the first dish.

"May I ask how old your child is, and whether there is anything they can't eat?"

Common mistake Taking the whole order from an excited six-year-old. Chips and ice cream go to the kitchen, and the parent finds out at the door.

2 Adjust the plate

Offer the changes children often need: sauce on the side, food cut into small pieces, no chilli or black pepper, a smaller portion. Ask which ones apply, then write them on the ticket in plain words.

"Would you like the chicken cut into small pieces, with the sauce on the side?"

Common mistake Sending the adult dish at half size. The pepper sauce and the pink centre are still on the plate.

3 Time it first

Ask whether the child should eat first. If so, quote a separate, earlier time for the child's plate (our target is 20 minutes), fire it first, and send it up as soon as it is ready.

"The pasta for your son can be with you at 19:20, and your dinner at 19:35. Shall we do that?"

Common mistake Holding the child's pasta until the steaks are ready. The child is asleep or in tears by the time it arrives.

4 Set up safely

Put the child's plate at the far side of the table from hot pots and knives, with a lidded beaker, child cutlery and extra napkins. Place hot drinks by an adult, with the pot handle turned inward.

"I'll put the teapot on your side, Mrs Haddad, and the juice here for Layla."

Common mistake Leaving the coffee pot on the near edge of a low trolley. The first thing a toddler does is reach.

5 Note it

After delivery, write the child's age, allergy and what they ate to the guest profile. The next order, tomorrow or on the next stay, should not need the same questions asked again.

"Child, 5 · no dairy · plain pasta, cut small · juice in beaker"

Common mistake Asking about the dairy allergy every night of a week's stay. The parents start to wonder what else was forgotten.

The Child's Tray

Twelve checks for any tray that carries a child's meal. Read them at the pass, before the cover goes on and the runner leaves the kitchen.

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| ☐ Child's age and allergies on the ticket | ☐ Lidded beaker for drinks |
| ☐ Allergy dish marked and kept apart | ☐ Child cutlery, no steak knife |
| ☐ No chilli or black pepper unless asked | ☐ Extra napkins and a wet towel |
| ☐ Food cut small if the parent asked | ☐ Hot pots set on the adult's side |
| ☐ Sauce in a separate dish | ☐ Child's plate timed as agreed |
| ☐ Child's plate warm, not hot | ☐ Profile updated after delivery |

How to use this with your team

Read the list at a shift briefing on day one, then two lines a day for a week. The chef checks every child's tray at the pass against it, and the supervisor reviews the child notes in the profiles each Friday.

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