

# Low Carb Dietary Intervention with Autism at Woodside Lodge School.

Justin Vee Liu <sup>1</sup>, Claire McDonnell Liu <sup>1</sup>

**Duration: 5 days (all meals including snacks and drinks)**

**Participants: 4 (ageing from 13 to 17)**

**Diagnosis: Autistic Spectrum Disorder**

This observational nutrition pilot was commissioned by Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre, Leicestershire UK. The purpose of the pilot was to assess if changing pupil's daily food intake for 5 school days would have a positive impact on any of the student's behaviours, mood, energy, actions or any other observational benefits.

Pupils were provided with Low Carb High Fat (LCHF), freshly prepared, whole, real, high quality, organic (where possible) foods

Plan plans<sup>2</sup> were tailored to the pupils food preferences to increase the likelihood of compliance, the menu plan were reviewed daily based on feedback.

The school and parents completed monitoring forms before and during the trial, whilst the pupils gave feedback on how they felt.

## Results

Pupil A and Pupil B both presented as pleasant, chatty and upbeat during the week and the monitoring sheet results showed a marked improvement in all areas.

Pupils C and D, expressed interest and tried some meals during the week. This represented a significant breakthrough for both pupils who experience different difficult food and trust issues and are extremely limited in food intake.

Excellent compliance achieved by 2 of the participants. Parents, carers and school staff supported the pupils taking part very positively.

## Conclusions

The food programme was not intended as a rigorous scientific study but did produce tangible benefits as best nutritional practice, including observed benefits to pupil's behaviours and mood.

Meeting with parents and carers to explain the principles and objectives is essential.

Adapting the menus to preferences as expressed maintains compliance.

A one-to-one nutritional therapy may be preferable for pupils with ASD as individual needs are so specific and trust is a major factor.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Leafie Health <https://leafie.org>

<sup>2</sup> [leafie.org/school/executive-report.pdf](https://leafie.org/school/executive-report.pdf)