

New BPET Catering Provider – Harrison Catering Services Ltd

We are delighted to announce that Harrison Catering Services Ltd have been appointed as the BPET catering provider across the eight BPET schools from 1 September 2021 for a 3-year contract, with the potential for 5 years to 2026. A first for the Trust as our schools previously selected their own provider, being new schools opening across different years.

BPET are passionate about providing high quality food for all pupils and for this to be a social and enriching experience, with all our schools delivering high quality meal through a family dining experience for our pupils to enjoy. To deliver this, we do ask all parents to purchase a school meal, if they do not qualify for free meals.

We believe that all lunchtime food should be both appetising and nutritious. We recognise the benefits of a well-balanced hot meal for children, in the middle of the day and believe this is best provided through the school meal. We therefore expect all children to take a hot meal provided through the school caterer.

We are unashamedly aspirational with our BPET Food Policy, as all children should benefit from a balanced, healthy and nutritious diet. It is important for the development of a child's physical state, as well as promoting concentration in class. Meals with the proper nutrients helps fuel the mind to be more receptive to learning new knowledge and acquiring new skills.

Family Dining

Food and sharing food are an important part of our make-up as human beings. Wherever school settings permit, BPET wishes to promote and encourage a type of meal service called Family service.

Family service ensures that the children sit together at the same time and share the same meal; children are encouraged to sit with a variety of others from across our school community.

Tendering Process

As an Academy Trust, BPET takes the lead on tendering high spend contracts across our schools and catering is our second highest spend after staffing. We believe it is good practice to regularly test the market for such provision and following a four-year contract with the previous provider, we went out to tender in early 2021.

With the support of our procurement provider, four companies were taken through to the final stages of the process. This resulted in four very strong bids and we are proud that in a competitive market, these organisations were very keen to supply for us.

Harrisons Catering was the unanimous preferred supplier from the tender process, which included bid documentation, presentations and question and answers.

Harrisons impressed the tender team, made up of members of the trust central team and school Headteachers, with their focus on the delivery of high quality meals across all schools, for the benefit of every pupil. They were clear that they would be offering the best ingredients, aspirational menus and a strong team supporting the kitchen staff in the schools. Under the terms of the contract, all current catering staff have the right to transfer to Harrisons as the new provider

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and we believe they will be strongly supported in their role. We know some schools in the Trust will also receive brand new chefs, local to their area who will become a very important member of the school staff community.

The benefit of the group contract, managed by the BPET Central Team, is that we can ensure that all schools receive a high quality offer, utilising the economies of scale across the contract, meeting the needs of every pupil we serve.

Braywick Court

We have excellent kitchen facilities in the school we wish to fully utilise. For Braywick Court, this new provider, we believe, will deliver a step change in the quality of meals provided for the school. Therefore, we are encouraging all families to buy school meals and phase out packed lunches. This is working well already, with the numbers of covers per day increasing from 110 to 151 by week two! Children are telling us that the food is more tasty, better quality and there is more choice.

We have also taken up the challenge from the recently departed Year 6 pupils, who challenged the BPET CEO on the use of single use plastics across all BPET schools. Along with no more single use plastic bottles, they suggested that packed lunches introduced too much waste to the school. We therefore extended our commitment to no more packed lunches and hope you will be able to support us in this commitment. We will be inviting the pupils back later in the academic year to see how we are performing against our commitment!

ENDS

NOTES:

Harrison Catering has been creating enticing, nutritious food since 1994. They provide delectable, balanced meals to schools and businesses. Founder & Chairman, Geoffrey Harrison, believes the best dishes are both delicious and nutritious and all the ingredients should come from trusted sources. Our teams work with clients to make sure everyone who eats their meal isn't just enjoying tasty food, but also getting vital nutrition tailored just for them at great value. For more information visit: www.harrisoncatering.co.uk/school-catering

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