

Appendix B – Catering

1. Catering service - overview

The provision of school meals meets the national School Meals Standards, placing the child's health at the forefront of the service. Menu's are consulted upon with the school, are culturally reflective, meeting the needs of all pupils and are the delivered by trained and qualified staff. Health and Safety is also at the forefront with staff being CRB checked and trained in Basic Food Hygiene and Health and Safety. Strategies are in place to increase the number of pupils taking meals with particular reference to free schools meals uptake.

2. Response rate

The total number of schools responding to this question is shown below in Table 1 from 2004/05 to 2009/10. It also shows how this figure equates to the total survey population.

Year	Number of responses	% of Leeds Schools
2004/05	148	54.41%
2005/06	88	32.47%
2006/07	108	39.71%
2007/08	94	34.80%
2008/09	113	41.85%
2009/10	111	41.11%

Table 1 : Total number of responses by year.

3. Service providers

Those service providers recording five or more responses are shown below in Table 2. The table lists the total responses for 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 and further breaks down the responses into primary, secondary and other phases for 2009/10.

Service Provider	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10			
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Primary	Secondary	Other	Total
Catering Services, Leeds City Council	81	97	71	92	84	4	1	89
School Delivery, in house provision	3	7	6	9	5	5	-	10
Carillion PLC	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-

Table 2 : Total number of responses by service provider.

Leeds City Council holds the critical mass for this service; however, there exists a growing number of in-house provisions.

4. Performance level

The key performance level review is measurable on a scale of 1 = very good, 2 = good, 3 = highly satisfactory, 4 = satisfactory, 5 = unsatisfactory, 6 = poor and 7 = very poor. The mean performance level is shown in Table 3 below. The full list of unedited comments is listed in [Annex B](#)

Service Provider	2007/08		2008/09		Avg.	Performance Level	Change
	Avg.	Performance Level	Avg.	Performance Level			
Catering Services, Leeds City Council	3.02	Highly satisfactory	2.72	Highly satisfactory	3.06	Highly satisfactory	Better

School Delivery, in house provision	1.50	Good	1.89	Good	1.60	Good	Better
-------------------------------------	------	------	------	------	------	------	--------

Table 3: Performance level by catering service providers

The catering service provided by Leeds City Council recorded a score of highly satisfactory in both of the previous two surveys. This year has seen a decrease in score from 2.72 to 3.06 with 1 being the highest attainable score. The service is comfortably in the highly satisfactory category. Both positive and negative comments were received about the service which are detailed in Annex B. Elsewhere, the number of schools providing their own catering service continues to increase. Schools rated their In-house provision as 1.60 which is an increase from last year's survey and continuing in the good category.

5. Service providers – value for money

Respondents were asked to record whether or not the service provider was delivering value for money. The responses are listed below in Table 4. The table sub-divides the responses into primary and secondary phases.

Service Provider	Primary			Secondary			Total		
	Yes	No	No comment	Yes	No	No comment	Yes	No	No comment
Catering Services, Leeds City Council	50	18	16	0	2	2	50	21	18
School Delivery, in house provision	5	0	0	3	0	2	8	0	2

Table 4: Value for money by service providers

In general service providers scored favourable results for this question.

6. Service providers – improvement

Schools were asked to record how the service provider could improve their service delivery and what steps they were taking to ensure that this was taking place. Table 5 lists the response to this question.

Service Provider	Primary			Secondary			Total		
	Yes	No	No comment	Yes	No	No comment	Yes	No	No comment
Catering Services, Leeds City Council	59	7	18	3	0	1	62	7	20
School Delivery, in house provision	4	0	1	3	1	1	7	1	2

Table 5: Expected improvement by service providers

Service providers were expected to improve. Those with Leeds City Council noted the need for improvements in the use of fresh produce and the size of the portions. The full list of unedited comments is listed in [Annex B](#)

Annex B – Catering

Catering Services, provided by Leeds City Council

1. Please explain why you rate the service provider this way?

Positive responses

- Excellent cook basically.
- Service very good. recently went out of her way to deliver some packed lunches for our FSM children and make sure they had them before they left on a trip.
- Well balanced meals. Plenty of choice. Flexible in providing 'one off' special meals for particular occasions.
- From my dealings with the Catering Agency staff they have been helpful and approachable. No one has referred any problems or concerns about the service to me.
- The meals are just average there is nothing special about them. I am sure they meet all the standards but that's about it.
- The service is good as the children receive a balanced meal throughout the week. There are a range of hot cold foods for the children to choose.
- Whilst the catering provision is generally good and uptake of meals has improved we still need to get more pupils to have a school lunch. More variety of meals would be useful. We are also making a loss financially so possible investigation of the way in which the service is funded / charged would be a good way to proceed.
- Sometimes the food is excellent, sometimes not. They need to pay more attention the food that is always wasted. We have had a bad year since Sept 09 as on no chef-in-charge.
- Very dependant on the presentation of the meal, it varies depending on the staff members. Menus are good , food hygiene very good.
- Have discussed need for Halal provision. Agency have agreed to this.
- Menu has improved slightly over the past few years. The meals cooked well. However, I feel the portions are too small.
- Sometimes ordering is very complicated staff and menus not very adventurous for vegetarian pupils (cheese rolls twice in a week).
- Improving - now allowing a little flexibility for the needs and tastes of our pupils. Still concerned about the portion size especially for year 5 and 6.
- The menu is varied and nutritious with a good selection of fresh fruit and salad. The staff are friendly and good with our pupils and the kitchen supervisor, staff and LCC catering have a strong well established relationship.
- Moving to highly satisfactory if food for life plans go ahead.
- Responsive to requests. Balanced menus. Wide choice. Good range of vegetarian options. Fresh veg, fruit and healthy menus.
- Very personalised to the needs of ie taking total account of Jewish Kosher requirement.
- Excellent catering manager sets high standards in school.
- We have a new cook who provides good wholesome food which children enjoy.
- Food is of a reasonably good quality but we do receive complaints about cost/value for money. It does appear to meet nutritional guidelines. Would like to see more variety. Would like to see more strategies to improve uptake and more healthy choices.
- We have no complaints at all regarding the meals and service. Improvements are in place all the time to keep our customers happy at all times.
- The quality of the food and service depends heavily on the staff working in the school kitchen. Closer monitoring from managers would help give a more consistent service. It would also be nice to have more home made meals. I must admit that communication has improved over the past year and so I feel the school's needs are being considered.
- In house staff good. Head office support good.
- Good liaison with agency. Meals of high standard. Good staff in school – flexible.

- The service is increasingly responsive to 'Healthy Schools' and the curriculum. The food is fresh, tasty and well prepared. We would still like a wider choice of breads and sauces on the menu.
- Although Catering Services have fully explained the reasons behind changes to contract re Heavy Equipment it still only a satisfactory situation. Meals have not improved and portions are smaller. Is this a training issue for your cooks?
- The persons who work in school are excellent. They go over and above their job descriptions and really join in school life.
- Quality is linked in many ways to quality of kitchen staff employed - when kitchen supervisor is good, quality is good! Kitchen supervisor at times hindered by costings.
- Food always well presented - healthy options available - salad / veg / fresh fruit.
- They listen to need and add it.
- Meet regularly with cook and myself. Would appreciate some monitoring visits during lunchtimes to see children's response to food provided and menu choices.
- Ok working within financial constraints.
- Catering Staff in school provide an excellent service, however the quality of some of the food they receive is not always good.
- My staff are excellent but think there's too many recipes which depend on packets of sauces etc. Would like to see much more fresh produce.
- The service is very good - anything we ask they try to help us with.
- We have been very fortunate in that the supervisor has been with us for a year now. We did go through a period of turbulence when there were several supervisors - this didn't help us establish effective working relations.
- Lunches have improved in the main but still inconsistent at times.
- Staff are enthusiastic to work with staff and pupils to make healthy and attractive meals. Create a pleasant environment. Use initiative and cook is creative.
- This service has improved during this year in terms of member of staff being constant rather than replacements.
- A lot of change over of staff this year. Settling down now.
- We have developed good relationship with Catering Services and their staff - our service is enhanced by our cook in charge.
- Good food. Excellent staff. Meets pupils needs well.
- We did have a problem with meal portions at the beginning of term. All issues have been resolved. Catering Services have provided good information and talked to school council. Moving towards highly satisfactory.
- Get quite good choice but a lot of children are still put off by overcooked veg and a lot of the food is still quite processed.

Negative responses

- Lack of consistency with staff assigned to school. Poor quality food. Lots of issues relating to personnel. Complaints from parents and falling uptake of meals.
- We have had an issue overcoming staff absence, where a peripatetic staff member employed by Catering Services was replaced by agency staff without informing anyone at the school. Covering absence or a vacancy is always difficult, but it would seem to be common courtesy that the school is kept informed as to how the vacancy is to be covered.
- There are still occasional issues with deliveries not matching the pre set menu's hence changes have to be made at the last minute which can lead to the nutritionally balance menu not being met.
- More locally sourced produce would be good and more actual cooking on site. Not happy at being asked to pick up bill now for heavy equipment.
- Menus could include more Halal options for Muslim children. Menus could be displayed to children and handed out to parents. Choices could then be made in advance (banding system) to ensure everyone gets their choice.
- A better choice of meals needed.

- Choice available to pupils isn't always great. Those at the end of the queue sometimes have no choice. Kitchen assistants varied over time. Is there any sort of pre order facility / involve parents?
- Not always a great choice available, so could only class service as satisfactory.
- Catering Services now passing on the costs of replacement items in the kitchen - seems unfair to the school as well as costly.
- Quality of food could be improved - portion size small for some children.
- Poor staff attendance.
- No cooking facilities on site. Meals delivered in old insulated containers. Generally of poor quality and variety.
- The cook that started here recently is very willing but does not get the support she deserves. Cuts that are being made to save money reduce the opportunities for healthy eating eg salad available on less days. The service is expensive but still seems to be unable to cover its costs. There is no advantage to kitchen staff when they increase the number of dinners they provide. However, recent initiatives such as special one-off lunches and free trial lunches for reception parents have been well-received.
- Could be more variety and with the children in our school could cater for Halal which they don't at present
- Quality of the food served. Quantity of food given to children and adults. Reducing number of pupils taking school meals. Financial implications of all of above on budget - we are running at a loss.
- The SLA was very late to be received in school this year - asked for it several times. Schools have been given responsibility for more and more equipment, maintenance etc yet the cost continues to increase. Some agency staff during absences can not communicate well.
- Everyday there are massive amounts of wastage. The children do not eat the school meals and therefore are not value for money.
- Staff professional attitudes very poor, range of quality meals not good. However, very good support when transferring to in-house catering.
- Strange combinations eg 2 vegi carrots and swede and carrots. Need to be quicker to remove unhealthy ingredients and clearer that such ingredients have been removed. Eg hydrogenated fats - far too long to remove and only confirmed its removal once asked.
- Standard of cooking needs to be better. Portion control is still an issue. Menu choices are very repetitive. There is an issue some days of not enough little bowls. We constantly run out of salad
- I rate this service satisfactory because it serves a purpose but does not represent the service I really want for the children in my school. Whilst following national standards there is too much scrimping and saving with both time and money and not enough attention to freshly prepared food in sufficient quantities.
- Poor working conditions for staff (no relief, no evaluation of working hours, more flexibility of menu)
- Portion sizes for children appears too small. Children being allowed to make unhealthy choices. All carbs and no protein.
- School meals have deteriorated recently - we have had discussions with agency and hope that things will improve.
- More fresh vegetables and less tinned food eg tinned potatoes
- Disappointing response to CRB checks. Quality of staff has been variable and has needed action taken by school.
- Have already had a meeting with the provider to improve this service. Food undercooked - not enough variety as outlined on the menu.
- Improve by use of fresh local products.

School Delivery – In House Provision

1. Please explain why you rate the service provider this way?

Positive responses

- have met the nutritional standards which were compulsory for secondary schools from Sept 09. We were recently given a score of 3 for Scores on the Doors, Environmental Health which is good. Improvements are on going to ensure a score of 5 on the next visit.
- Changing to a cashless system in the near future which should improve the service and reduce queuing time.
- We can closely monitor and ensure a healthy diet. We are able to cater for other school events easily. It enables a whole school team approach
- I manage the service and ensure staff are well supported. Meal up take has gone from 100 to 325 per day
- We have a very high uptake 125/205. Our schools meals provision is considered to be excellent

Negative responses

- In house catering hindered by no dedicated dinning room