



Thinking Schools Academy Trust

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) is ranked in the top ten multi-academy trusts (MATs) in the country for the GCSE performance of its secondary schools – and the best in Medway and the South East. The core purpose and ambition of TSAT is to transform the life chances of young people through the application of a cognitive approach to education.

TSAT is made up of a family of schools including Primary Schools, Grammar Schools, High Schools and Comprehensive Schools. The schools work together to transform the life chances of all our children and young people. We share a common mission to nurture successful children who are confident and can think and act independently. Our cognitive approach to education defines us but does not create a 'one size fits all'.

All TSAT academies, whether converter or sponsored, are equal partners in the Trust and are automatically part of the New Horizons Teaching School Alliance. Therefore, all schools have access to the same level of support and services that the Trust provides.

Background

In 2014, we managed a catering tender exercise for the five schools TSAT had in the Medway. At the time the schools were being catered for by Chartwells through the LA contract. TSAT also had schools in Portsmouth which were part of the PCC contract.

Chartwells were successful and won the Medway catering tender and we brokered an arrangement where Chartwells would run the TSAT schools through their regional team and were able to exit the LA contract.

We monitored the catering contract at both the Medway and Portsmouth from 2014 onwards.

Our brief

When both the catering contracts came up for renewal in 2019, TSAT asked us to manage another catering tender but this time for all 16 of their schools.

In addition they also wanted to tender the cleaning contract at all schools as well, as each had varied cleaning contractual arrangements in place and they wanted to consolidate these into one overarching cleaning contract and specification.

Approach

When both catering contracts came up for renewal in 2019, we managed another competitive catering tender but this time for all the TSAT schools (16 in total). Eight catering contractors submitted their interest and completed the SQ process and four of those were selected to tender. We issued the tender documents and conducted and hosted site visits for the contractors to view all the catering services in operation. We then analysed the bid responses and produced a report for the TSAT team, who in turn marked the responses against the agreed criteria.

We then went on to host a series of catering presentations where each of the four contractors were invited to present to the TSAT panel and stakeholders.

At the same time, TSAT also turned to us to manage a cleaning tender exercise across all 16 schools and the same approach was applied, where we managed a competitive tender on behalf of TSAT.

Outcomes

Chartwells was successful again and a five year catering contract was agreed and Churchill was successfully placed as the cleaning contractor.

In addition to getting the catering and cleaning contracts in place, TSAT also wanted us to help monitor these on an ongoing basis. We have a four year catering monitoring arrangement in place (contract support +) bringing our working partnership with TSAT to a 10 year association.

►►Consolidating our catering and cleaning service providers across all our schools has been game-changing for us. It has resulted in a much more efficient and streamlined operation, and we can rest assured all our schools have the same level of service in place across the board. Litmus' knowledge and expertise was invaluable throughout the entire process and we're pleased to be continuing our work with them on the monitoring side."◄◄

Lee Miller MBE, Deputy Chief Executive,
TSAT



For more information about Litmus get in touch:

Email us at mailbox@litmuspartnership.co.uk

www.litmuspartnership.co.uk