

Gatehouse Green Learning Trust

Gatehouse Green Multi Academy Trust

Redland Green School joined hands with Ashton Park School, Ashton Vale Primary, Compass Point Primary and Luckwell Primary to become the new Gatehouse Green Learning Trust in 2018. The belief is that belonging to the Trust will create stronger schools and a stronger community spirit in Bristol. Their vision is to help all children and young people in their schools to enjoy learning, be ambitious, raise their attainment and aspire to worthwhile careers and lives.

We were so pleased with the performance of Litmus and our contractor, that an extension to the original term of the contract was re-negotiated for a further two years. Furthermore, we have commissioned the Litmus Partnership to outsource our in-house cleaning service.

Background

The relationship between Litmus and the 'South West Bristol Cooperative Learning Trust' schools started with a competitive catering tender that was initiated in 2014. The Trust subsequently joined with Redland Green School to become the new Gatehouse Green Learning Trust in 2018.

The schools were previously provided a catering service via the Bristol City Council. The Trust determined that they were looking for a more dynamic, cost effective and bespoke catering provision, more tailored to the individual needs of member schools, and with a capital investment plan to further enhance the catering provision.

Brief

Litmus was briefed on the following six objectives:

- ▶ Improve the catering provision for pupils in secondary and primary schools alike;
- ▶ Add value to pupil's educational experience, in particular those in greatest need;
- ▶ Appoint a contractor exhibiting the Trust's Values and Culture;
- ▶ Ensure all catering staff benefited from the voluntary Living Wage Foundation pay rates throughout the life of the contract;
- ▶ Support local businesses and food producers wherever possible; and
- ▶ Ensure 'value for money' was consistently for pupils and the Trust.

Approach

Mike Neales, the Litmus Partnership, said: "Our aim was to initiate an end-to-end, OJEU compliant, competitive tender process, resulting in the catering contract being awarded to the supplier proven to be offering 'best value'.

“Key elements of the project included developing a high level contract advertisement, agreeing a catering specification that ensured delivery of both the relevant regulatory compliance and the achievement of the Trust’s stated objectives and developing a contract that protected the client’s best interests in all eventualities.

“Three contractors were invited in to present to an award panel representing all Trust schools, following which we provided feedback to contractors at each stage of the process. Following the contract being awarded, we worked with the school on termly finance and operations performance reviews to ensure commitments were fully delivered upon.”

Outcomes

Chartwells were awarded the three year catering contract, with a contract extension subsequently negotiated for a further two years, with the ongoing performance management of the contractor by Litmus throughout the five year period.

Plans are now being developed to align the catering service provision across all schools in the newly formed Gatehouse Green Learning Trust.

▶▶ *We have had the pleasure of working with Neil Cook, Associate Consultant at Litmus, since 2014.*

Neil has provided excellent advice and support in relation to our cleaning and catering contracts. Neil has an ongoing brief to help us manage the delivery of high quality catering services in the MAT through a third-party provider, ensuring Value for Money to our academies. Neil’s depth of experience in catering and procurement is greatly valued by the MAT.

He has successfully guided us through OJEU compliant tender processes leading to a very satisfied outcome. Ongoing monitoring of the contractor’s financial and operational performance provides for longer-term continuous improvement in the best interest of our pupils. We have successfully negotiated the best way forward in extending robust Litmus contracts with our provider. Our partnership working with Neil continues to develop our future plans.

I would certainly recommend Neil and the Litmus support team.◀◀

Phil Butt, Physical Resources Manager and School Business Manager



For more information about Litmus get in touch:

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