

THE BLANDFORD SCHOOL

The Blandford School

The Blandford School is a coeducational secondary school, located in Blandford Forum, Dorset.

Background

This contract was part of a group framework LEA awarded contract and the school wanted to move to a more bespoke service in line with their values. They felt they were not getting this from their current provider so appointed Litmus to tender the catering contract. In total, Litmus has successfully tendered this contract twice – once in 2013/14 and again in 2018.

Brief

For both times that the catering service was tendered, the objectives Litmus was briefed on were:

- ▶ To find a contractor who could provide high quality and variety of food choice;
- ▶ A contractor who retained the Silver Food for Life accreditation;
- ▶ To increase sales, with a particular focus on FSM, sixth form and staff;
- ▶ Achieve capital investment;
- ▶ Improve the cashless service, which is likely to include a requirement for new tills; and
- ▶ To create an additional service area to accommodate increased student numbers and possible reduction in the length of the lunch break

Approach

Ruth Lille, the Litmus Partnership, said: “We took a lot of time to truly understand the culture and requirements of the school, so we were able to ensure that the provider found was absolutely the right fit.

“Both times the catering contract was tendered, we followed OJEU requirements. The contractors were then invited to present to both us and the school. This gave an opportunity for many questions to be asked and helped the school feel reassured they were choosing a contractor that truly understood them.”

Outcomes

Following the tender being awarded, Litmus was kept on to monitor the initial period and help iron out any teething problems. The school were so happy with Litmus they have continued to use the monthly monitoring service. As a result, there has been increased cost savings. The school also recommended Litmus to three other schools to manage the tender process on their behalf too.

▶▶ *Litmus has managed the tender process for two catering contracts now and both times we felt we received excellent support and guidance not only during the process, but also before and afterwards.*

"The attention to detail in terms of information collation, ease of understanding and consistent presentation made it very easy to shortlist from interested parties, and analyse information and performance data at the presentation stage of the process.

"As part of the agreement, there is an initial monitoring period which provided reassurance that the contract mobilisation was successful and that if there were any teething problems, these were quickly resolved. As a result of the excellent service, we have continued with the monthly monitoring service offered by Litmus. This has proved to be a wise investment, as again the attention to detail in drilling into operational costs and margins requires a degree of expertise which is not held in-house.

"Overall, we cannot commend Litmus highly enough for the work they have performed in helping us to negotiate two excellent catering contracts, and we very much look forward to continuing our work with them.◀◀

Liz Bishopp, Business Manager, The Blandford School



For more information about Litmus get in touch:

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