



**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, TRANSPORT, PROPERTY &
ENVIRONMENT**

**SCHOOL CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS – CATERING & FACILITIES
MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides the results of a recent survey to schools and pupils to provide the service with both quantitative and qualitative data on current levels of service performance measured against levels of importance.

Information and Advice

2. The Environment & Resources Department provides a range of Catering & Facilities related services to schools and other customers across the County largely on a self-financing bought back basis.

Survey Overview and Methodology

3. This survey was completed online by staff of all Nottinghamshire Schools some 350 contacts were invited by email to participate and 193 responded. Representing a 55% response rate, this is considered both successful and significantly representative. Of the 193 questionnaire responses, 160 were full and complete and 33 questionnaires gave partial replies. Schools were incentivised to respond with the chance to enter a free prize draw, Huthwaite All Saints C of E Infant School was the winner.
4. In an effort to gather pupils' opinions of the service and enhance the findings, 6 iPads were deployed across a number of school sites during the lunchtime period over 18 days with data being collected from 920 participants.
5. The online survey consisted of 26 questions in total, covering the areas of Catering, Cleaning and Grounds maintenance. Questions sought to understand the importance to users of a service aspect, together with current performance. A 6-point scale has been used on the survey, grading both importance and satisfaction ratings from 1 to 6. (1= not at all important to 6 = extremely important) and (1= totally dissatisfied to 6= totally satisfied). The gap is the average satisfaction score subtracted from the average score for importance.
6. In addition to information about perceptions of satisfaction, the survey also provides insights into customer awareness of NCC's services and standards, together with some valuable narrative comments which are being enacted upon.

Key Findings - Catering

7. With an overall satisfaction rating in all areas above 80%, School & Academy staff continue to rate the service provided relatively highly. Singled out for high performance is the meeting of legislative requirements (98.9%), awareness of menus (91.5%), helpfulness and co-operation of on-site school catering staff (88.2%). Lower scorers suggest value for money (83.0%) and the variety and menu offering (80.5%).
8. Pupils themselves rate helpfulness of onsite catering staff higher (94%). Presentation and quality of food (88%), the lowest score for length of time queuing (80%). However the latter did score the lowest in level of importance suggesting expectations are realistic.
9. Schools Catering is perceived as better value for money than Starbucks, KFC and Greggs however slightly behind Subway and well behind McDonalds. Advertising spend and marketing for these national companies clearly has a major impact.
10. Of the 600 Catering comments received suggestions ranged from a wider choice of food, greater vegetarian choices, to bring back confectionary sales and improving dining room facilities.
11. Actions required include the ongoing communication to schools of the menu development which includes testing and engagement by pupils prior to a roll out. Further promotional work on marketing the Gold Food for Life standard and addressing localised issues.

Key Findings – Building Cleaning

12. The online survey to Schools and Academies rated the service highly for the quality of cleaning chemicals and products in use (90.3%) The helpfulness and co-operation of staff was the second highest scorer (86.9%). Lowest score was given to overall value for money to the school. (77.1%).
13. Pupils themselves viewed the classrooms as the cleanest (85% considered them ok, good or excellent). The lowest score given to toilet areas (61% not good or poor).
14. Asked what in your opinion is the main thing that can be done to improve the cleaning service? 759 comments were received and commented on the frequency and quality of cleaning, as well as behavioural considerations by other pupils including littering, chewing gum and the need for increased ongoing checking and cleaning of facilities during the daytime.

Key Findings – Grounds Maintenance

15. Out of the three service areas covered in the online survey the Grounds and Landscapes teams have scored highest overall. Satisfaction levels are high for the quality of equipment (96.5%) which recognises the investment carried out in the last 5 years on replacement. Operatives delivering the service also rated highly (95.6%) and overall value for money (87.3%).

Conclusions

16. Overall, the online survey results confirm a number of areas in which the services face important challenges, as perceived by customers. They also highlight some schools that are delighted with the services provided. Furthermore, the survey has also highlighted a number of clear opportunities to contact schools to discuss potential new contracts.

17. Some areas of concern are generalised across all services; access to managers, proactivity, training and resource levels need to be addressed. Other concerns are more specific to a service, such as meal quality and value in Catering, or reports in Cleaning. Each of these will need to be addressed appropriately, whether by changes in operating procedure, or improving communications.

The Action Plan is set out below:

- i. **Management** to identify high levels of satisfaction and ensure lessons learned across the C&FM team.
 - ii. **Management** to improve operational communications, responsiveness and proactivity.
 - iii. **At individual schools** to address and remedy specific issues which have been reported.
 - iv. **Through planned communications** to schools to acknowledge their participation and maintain open lines of communication.
 - v. **Improved communications** which address certain themes, such as innovation, quality, choice and value.
 - vi. **Publicise and capture** positive feedback and use it in marketing materials.
 - vii. **Benchmark** scores for each service, for each evaluation measure and at school/area manager level.
18. IPad survey results provide a useful indication of performance and opportunities improve, as perceived by end users of Catering and Cleaning services. As a new benchmark of satisfaction, this survey provides valuable information, which can help the C&FM Management team to prioritise areas for action and future communications.

The survey results suggest greater challenges in Cleaning Service, and some gaps to close for Catering services. They also show us that many pupils are delighted with the services we provide. There is a significant opportunity to raise the satisfaction of performance in schools, both to address current low scores – for Cleaning in particular - and to raise performance closer to expectations, for Catering services.

This is directly actionable in a number of ways:

- i. **Within the management team** to identify high levels of satisfaction and ensure lessons learned across the C&FM team.
- ii. **At individual schools** by drilling down into the key issues, reported at the 20 participating schools.
- iii. **Through planned communications** to schools to acknowledge pupils' participation and maintain open lines of communication, and address certain themes, such as meal choice and support for behavioural concerns – litter, chewing gum.
- iv. **By capturing the positive feedback** from the most supportive schools for use in marketing materials.
- v. **And by benchmarking scores for each service**, for each evaluation measure and at school/area manager level.
- vi. **By widening the research**, to allow input from more schools in future.

Other Options Considered

19. None – report for noting only.

Reasons for Recommendation

20. The monitoring of customer satisfaction of the Catering & Facility Management service users supports the aspirations of the County Council to secure good quality affordable services.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

22. The actions will be delivered from within existing resources.

RECOMMENDATION

1) That the Committee notes the contents of this report

Jas Hundal
Service Director
Transport, Property & Environment

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Kevin McKay
Group Manager, Catering & Facilities Management
T: 0115 977 4369
E: kevin.mckay@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

23. This report is for noting only no Constitutional Comments are required

Financial Comments

24. As this report is for noting only, financial comments are not required.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

- All