

# CASE STUDY

## Bicester Academy revamps catering services for students with 'Innovation Station'

### Innovate Services awarded catering contract for its 1,275 students

**Innovate Services;** the innovative catering operator to the education sector is now providing the complete catering services for the students and staff at the Bicester Academy, Bicester in Oxfordshire. Innovate, which won the contract following a competitive tender in April, installed the brand new catering service and dining areas, now named the 'Innovation Station', over the summer break ready for the September term start.

'The new Innovation Station is a significant improvement and students are using it from breakfast through to lunch and in the case of the Sixth Form Afternoon Tea' confirms Steve Cook, Business Manager of Bicester Academy. 'Previously, the catering area was dull and in need of innovation. Now we have a bright, airy, well decorated and welcoming space and the feedback has been very positive from students, staff and also parents at a recent year six open evening.

As part of the contract, Innovate completely transformed the existing dining area into a bright, modern and comfortable space, as well as introducing brand new menus to suit all tastes and dietary requirements. The service is open for breakfast, break and lunch, and students and staff can opt for something hot or cold from the grab-and-go ranges, or choose from a range of hot plated meals. There is also the 'culinary theatre' of the Teppan grill, which makes a range of dishes to order, such as pancakes, stir-fries or kebab and rice dishes.

'We had been looking to review our catering facilities for some time,' continue Steve.

'The tender process allows us to see presentations from four organisations; however, Innovate was ultimately awarded the contract because of the quality of their offer. We particularly liked the 'freshness' of their approach as all the meals and snacks are made on site, each day.

'The variety and quality of the food is excellent,' adds Steve. 'The updated service area includes a new Teppan Grill, hot chute for 'Grab & Go' hot meals plus a new self-service salad bar. The menus are different every day and vary from English to Italian, from roast to curry. There is something to suit all tastes, yet importantly has a focus on healthy eating.'

Concludes Steve: 'We feel that more flexibility over meal choice and the healthy options on offer can only help improve concentration levels in the classroom. Later this year, we also plan to implement a cashless payment system where parents can top up accounts online and get reports on what the students are eating.'

The Bicester Academy in Bicester, which is for 11-18 year olds, is the town's largest school with 1,275 students on roll. Judged as 'Outstanding' in the 2011 Ofsted inspection the school utilises a combination of traditional and innovative teaching methods.