

CASE STUDY

Working in partnership with Plymstock School, Devon.

At Plymstock School in Devon there was a need for real change in the catering service. The School felt that, rather than attempt to tweak the failing system in their existing dining area, it would be better to create a vibrant new space - a break from the past and a space that could become the new hub of the school.

An under-used gymnasium on-site was selected as the venue for the new service, and work on designing a dining space and service counters that would capture the imagination of the School's 1500 students began.

Given the relatively large numbers on roll, it was decided very early on that every effort must be made to maximise seating capacity and make full use of the gym's space. The high ceiling lent itself nicely to a mezzanine floor, so it was decided this would form part of the solution.

Innovate's Design and Concept team performed a full survey of the gym and held a set of in-depth discussions with the SLT and students about what exactly was required and the vision for the new service.

The team then created a series of plans and visuals, representing the ideas that had been discussed and giving an early look at how the dining space and service areas could be laid out.

These plans were presented, discussed, reworked, tweaked, and changed until both parties were happy and a design which best fitted the School's initial requirements was finalised.

CAD programs were used to turn the early sketches and plans into full, quite spectacular 3D models of the new dining area.

The SLT could take a virtual tour of the new space and fully visualise all of their decisions. Some small changes were made at this stage, then the images were passed over to the Student Council to discuss a number of details, including colour scheme, flooring, lighting, graphics, artwork and furniture.

Decisions made by the students on colour scheme and other details were used to create final visuals, to give a very accurate impression of exactly how the finished project will look.

Part of the ceiling panelling would need to be stripped out to reveal the original oak beams, before the mezzanine would be erected. Work began in October 2010, with a view of launching the new catering service on the first day of the Spring Term.

Innovate sourced all materials for the transformation and used our own construction team, who have carried out dozens of projects with us. All project management was carried out by the Design and Concepts Team, who visited the site on an almost weekly basis throughout construction.



From time to time, the Student Council were kitted out with hard hats and reflective jackets and brought in to witness the progress that was being made.

The finished dining area looks fantastic. Several unique features were put in place, to reflect the unique identity of the School.

A famous local Yew Tree was used as inspiration for a bespoke lightbox at one end of the seating area. Following a competition to name the new dining area, "The Gallery" was picked, reflecting the School's nautical surroundings.

Feedback from the SLT, school staff and students has been fantastic. The project was completed in time for January launch, in spite of lengthy delays caused by the severe weather.

innovate
my goodness!