

## Weydon School selects Innovate Services as catering partner

Students involved in the decision making process see Innovate secure a three year contract.

**Weydon School, an academy for 11-16 year old students in Farnham, Surrey,** has selected Innovate Services as its catering services partner following a competitive tendering process. With the 'quality of food, and the passion and energy they have in delivering it,' being cited as two of the key reasons why Innovate was awarded the contract, according to Gill Wrobel, Weydon's Director of Business and Finance.

Six catering suppliers were invited to tender with two being shortlisted by a panel of Governors and the Head Teacher. A group of students was then invited to the final selection process, which involved visits to other school sites to see the catering function in operation, an interview panel, plus participation in food sampling sessions.

'Everyone involved in the decision making process, including the students, were really impressed with the food choice, quality of service and with what we saw when visiting other school sites. Innovate was therefore selected as our partner, and the service commenced on 16th April, continued Gill Wrobel.

The first phase of the contract is to revise the menu offerings, to provide students at Weydon School with a wide selection of hot and cold meals, 'Grab & Go' options including panini and the 'Simply Fantastico' pasta range, as designed for Innovate Services by popular chef Gino D'Acampo. The second phase will then be to refurbish the kitchen servery and dining areas during the summer holidays to create a more modern environment.

Gill Wrobel adds, 'The building work will commence during the summer holiday, with a view

to launching the fully revamped Innovate dining experience when students return in September. Our aim is to create a welcoming environment that doesn't necessarily feel like a 'traditional' school canteen, but instead provides a social environment that students will enjoy using during their breaks. We also plan to introduce a new breakfast service later in the year.'

To help reduce queues and improve throughput during the busy lunch and break sessions, Innovate Services has also implemented a new barcoding system, making it quicker for students to check-out. This integrates with Weydon's existing biometric cashless system, and helps to improve the speed of each transaction, therefore reducing the queues.

'By working with Innovate, we will not only improve the quality of food that is available, but will also improve the environment,' confirms Gill Wrobel. 'From September, the café area will be open from 8am until 4pm, making it more accessible to students and staff whilst also making available a catering service for after school activities and clubs, which is an added advantage.'

Innovate Services are thrilled to have added yet another new school to their growing portfolio; their spokesperson says 'It is great to have Weydon School on board. To have the students involved in the decision-making process was excellent, as ultimately they will be using the service each day and so they were able to select the team that best matched their wants and ideas. We are already revamping the food menus and look forward to embarking on the refurbishment project, via our construction team from July.'