



Background

The Samuel Ward Academy's aims are to be a school "at the heart of the community and the inspiration for the people within it." **eats** works with Samuel Ward to reflect the school's ethos and our values and approach to continuous improvement.

The school has recently invested in its pupils, building an indoor sports complex, as well as a new dining area, and now boasts some of the best facilities in East Anglia.

eats has provided catering at the school for a long time, and were retained once the school converted to Academy status. We were asked to develop our offering to mirror the development within the school, including an new-build dining area for students.

The Brief

- The old school diner, in the main school building, offered an uninspiring area for pupils to sit and eat, with poor lighting and low ceilings. Uptake was at 30%, and the profit share for the school was negligible.
- The kitchen area was adequate, but offered a counter service which the school suggested was unattractive, another factor in the low uptake.
- The Catering team, despite their skills and understanding of the eating patterns of Samuel Ward's pupils, were constrained by dictated menus.

Our Solution

- **eats** developed a bespoke model for the new dining area, following consultation with the school about what they would like to see offered in the new dining area.
- Working closely with our colleagues at Samuel Ward, **eats** came up with a design concept for the new kitchen, which worked within the space constraints and ensured the counter service complemented the style of service and menus.
- The **eats** team were involved throughout the project to create a fantastic new space for pupils, staff, parents, and any other visitor to the school.
- Using our responsive menu and nutritional development team, we developed Samuel Ward's menu to reflect what pupils want to eat, incorporating a focus on appealing, meals using local produce.



The Results

- Everyone at Samuel Ward was delighted with a vibrant, colourful area, full of natural light and engaging features.
- **eats** introduced a "cashless" EPOS system, speeding up the queue at break times. Also as the system only recognises biometric data, pupils will not be identified as receiving free school meals.
- The unique design of the new "coffee bar" has created an attractive area and fresh revenue stream in the diner, offering quicker queuing for sandwiches, salads and hot/cold drinks. Vending has also been revamped, with smart new machines offering a varied selection to complement our other outlets.
- Key to the success of the relationship is communication, and our new Campus Manager offers a dedicated feedback link, working with the Senior Leadership Team to continuously improve the service.
- Regular menu updates ensure pupils are engaged and interested in the food offered. Our skilled team, many of whom have been with the school for some time, are now able to use their culinary skills and extensive knowledge of what works to make responsive changes to the menu, incorporating local ingredients .
- The changes made have had the effect of increasing uptake by 15%, and revenue by 30% to £1,100 per day. The increased revenue is being put back into the school, with the future addition of an outdoor kiosk. This will maximise footfall and make it easy for students to have access to quality food, whatever the weather.

"We are delighted with our new dining area - eats have done a great job in bringing together the innovative new space and a quality catering service tailored to the our needs. I would absolutely recommend eats as a premier supplier."

Howard Lay
Principal, Samuel Ward Academy