

## **Cypad Case Study: Using tablets and smart phones to help with school catering**



Cypad is an on-line ordering and management system for school catering, local authorities and service organisations. It is simple to set up which makes the whole process of managing school meals easier for school cooks catering and kitchen staff as well as parents, children, and others monitoring the service.

Cypad offers a range of tools that can make the job of school catering easier, that can be operated using tablets or smart phones that removes the need for paper and ensures that all administrative tasks are carried out more efficiently.

Andrew Lipscomb, Regional Operations Manager, ISS Education and a Cypad user, looks after school catering contracts in West Berkshire, Slough, Richmond and Bracknell.

He says: “Two years ago, before they began using Cypad Kitchen Manager, school catering tasks and information were recorded manually and much less information was available for cooks and managers to plan ahead” “Now with Cypad pre-ordering and online payments, parents are more in control of their cash and their children’s diets. Using tablets for various activities gives flexibility and much quicker invoice and management data delivery. We are using the system to cover all daily tasks with the cooks, such as stocktakes, timesheets, form filling and training records. Everything is now so much faster and cleaner.”

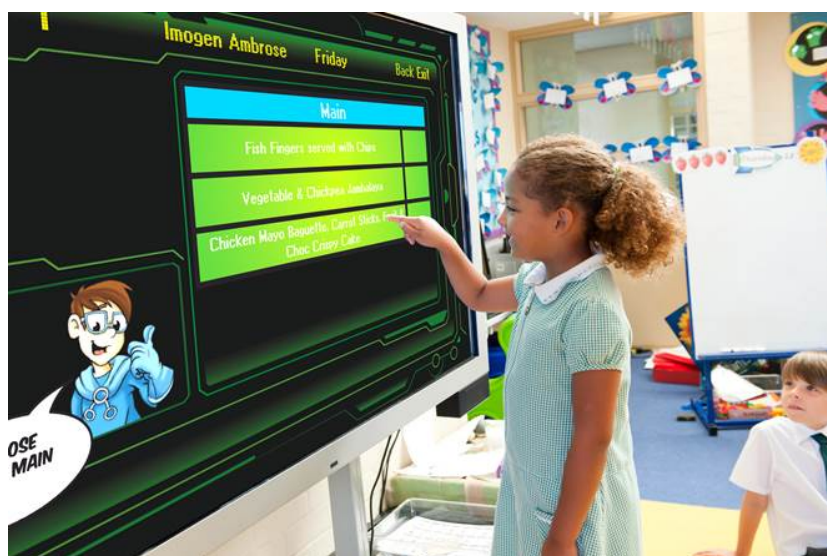
Meal Selection is an area that stands out. Previously, cooks estimated how much of each menu item to prepare. This meant that some children did not get what they wanted as some dishes would run out. Andrew explains that now with pre-selection of meals using the classroom whiteboard, the children choose what they want for lunch as they come into the classroom. The information goes to the kitchen, and so the cooks know precisely how much of each dish to prepare, whether the children are first or last in the queue they get what they want to eat for lunch as nothing runs out.

“The system is cool for the children, he adds, as the whiteboard pre-selection uses lots of colourful photographs and animation. “ Andrew is ready to work with Cypad to add the new labelling requirements for allergens. He says that ISS have worked closely with Cypad to keep the system evolving to meet their growing needs and will continue to do more.

At Holly Spring Junior School where catering is also managed by ISS Facility Services, Sharon Lyndsay, Head Cook and her Kitchen Assistant use Cypad tablets to mark off children as they take their meals. They look after 90 infants and 140 juniors daily. Sharon says: “We used to do it all on paper with an old fashioned till and then laptops. Now we also use the tablets for stocktaking, to add cash if the children bring in cash - we can go into their accounts and for me it is such a relief as it’s very easy to use. I have a smartphone, so the touch screen system is familiar. “

Sharon explains how the system helped them to reduce queuing. “We combine staggering of numbers (children come to the servery in batches) with use of the tablet, which reduces ‘pile-ups’. And the children love it. They all want to have a go. Some ask where I got my tablet; others say they got one for their birthday. It’s great for interacting with the children and making their meal experience fun and enjoyable.”

Many people in the school food sector agree that it’s important for children’s school lunch experiences to be happy ones. Getting their choice of meal, feeling comfortable with the process, not being rushed and not waiting in long queues are seen as key elements for this.



Tracey Spellman Operations Manager at the Contract Dining Company says the greatest complaint that they get from parents is that “by the time the last few children come through they do not get their choices.” Her company see Cypad system as a solution, which reduces anxiety for children and the feeling that they have to rush to get the lunch they want.

Sally Shadrack Client Catering Development Manager, London Borough of Newham says in her case study “availability of popular choices is very important: also key stage 1 children cannot be rushed through (they need time) and making it all fun is important.”

Sharon says she has used the system to remove almost all paper in her kitchen.” For us Cypad is really good to work with. I like the system and I am not worried about more free school meals come September, as the system will handle the increase in numbers.”

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