



Sir Thomas Abney Primary School – Catering service enhancements

School food has been high on our addenda for many years and managing our catering service in-house has been key. The quality of food on offer is our number one priority and we continually look for ways to enhance our service, we have just recently recruited a trained chef to assist our chef manager cater for the increases in school meal uptake. We are very aware who our customers are and always listen to pupil's views when planning new menus. Our catering adviser at [Health Education Partnership](#) ensures we always provide healthy nutritious food choices and analyses our menus to make sure we meet the government's standards. Our adviser also ensures we are meeting the food safety regulations and conducts regular audits to keep the catering team on their toes. We believe food safety is paramount in any food operation and even more so when catering for such a vulnerable age group.

To improve the pupil's dining experience we have ditched the dated flight trays in exchange for proper plates and bowls. Looking back we have to ask why the catering companies introduced flight trays into schools in the first place, at home we don't have our dessert and main course on the same plate! To help encourage pupils to eat their main course we decided to serve desserts from a separate servery counter and pupils collect this after they have finished their main, this caused some confusion at first but is now working well. When pupils were still using the flight trays we were surprised how many of the younger children were tempted to tuck into their pudding before their main course.

We have for some time been a cashless school and all school meal payments are now made online or at local pay points. Effort spent administering this process has been dramatically reduced and given us more time to concentrate on new challenges. Our cashless payment system also enables parents to pay online for trips, school uniform and other items. Monday mornings are a lot calmer now without the queues of parents wishing to pay for their child's school meals.

<http://www.sirthomasabney.hackney.sch.uk/>