



member services

APSE healthy community accolades 2008 - Best practice in action

**An e-publication incorporating the
winners and finalist submissions**

Catering and cleaning

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Introduction

Health and well being has never been so high on the Government's agenda with its important contribution to healthy living and the attempt to tackle the issue of obesity in Scotland. The recognition of healthy eating within our schools has been nurtured for a number of years with the introduction of Hungry for Success. This was designed to change the way in which schools fed pupils and focused the attention onto healthier options.

The change has been embraced by all local authorities and it has led to closer working relationships within schools and a 'whole school approach' has led to many examples of best practice being identified. For one reason or another, many authorities fail to highlight these types of best practice and on many occasions it has previously passed by relatively unnoticed. However, through the APSE advisory group meetings, many examples of best practice have been identified and shared throughout the Scottish local authorities.

Sometimes cleaning our public buildings is overlooked, but local authorities work tirelessly in order to achieve a high standard of cleanliness for our schools and other related buildings. The standard of entries was high and yet again, the authorities should be complimented on showcasing just how good a service they provided to the public.

In order to address these issues, part of this process involves sharing of better practice examples. With the introduction of the Healthy Community Accolades yet again, there has been numerous examples of best practice in this category. The local authorities who submitted for this years awards proved that the health agenda is a high priority for councils, taking forward the Hungry for Success agenda and building a more stable, healthy approach to eating within our schools.

I would especially like to thank my fellow judges for helping to make this a memorable experience and I would readily welcome the chance to judge again next year. Hopefully it will be easier job to do then!

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Outstanding Achievement in Catering

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Winner

Winner: East Ayrshire Council, “The Implementation of Hungry for Success for complex learning difficulties”

A successful and innovative approach

The particular and often unique requirements of mentally and physically handicapped children attending Special Schools can be overlooked in the implementation of Hungry for Success and other similar health improvement initiatives. This is neither inclusive nor educationally or morally desirable.

For many children with special needs, diet and food is fundamental to their health and well being, even more so than in mainstream schools. Our objective was to take forward Hungry For Success in Special Schools in East Ayrshire. We successfully introduced a range of strategies, approaches and support for curricular programmes suited to the complex support needs of our young people attending Special Schools.

A significant problem was identified during a review of the implementation of Hungry for Success in Special Schools. As a Catering Service we provide a wide range of up to date, attractive, colourful branding and menu boards in primary and secondary schools which inform pupils and promote the service provided in schools. However in reviewing the implementation of Hungry for Success, for children with special needs, it was clear that their requirements are frequently very different.

The needs of the pupils were not being met and we resolved through an interdisciplinary working group to address this, using an amount of funding drawn from Hungry for Success.

The project began with the development of a menu board that allowed children with a range of sensory impairment and complex learning difficulties to engage with the school meals service and the aims of Hungry for Success.

We were successful in this first objective and encouraged by the difference that this would make to each pupils time at school. We further reviewed the entire service and developed a plan of work to address the needs of the Whole Child, within a Whole School Approach, in the manner expected by Hungry for Success, which advocates– A Whole School Approach for School Meals. This is described below.

INTEGRATED TEAMWORK APPROACH

We worked as a team which consisted of the catering staff, the head teacher, pupils, parents, community dietician, school nurse and a speech and language therapist. Having established the group, ensuring that it was comprised of all the appropriate disciplines, we worked through an integrated approach, bringing their expertise from education, health and the community. This approach was carried out through a team research project, designed to look at individuals support needs across the range of complex learning difficulties and how these could be developed in order to allow more independence and access to catering facilities within the school.

THE INTERACTIVE MENU BOARD (PATENT PENDING)

“Voice output, pictorial, symbol and Braille output”

We developed and manufactured from scratch an interactive menu board which now allows pupils to access food and nutritional information whatever their mode of communication. This includes the following attributes:

- **Voice Output** : The catering manager records and explains the day’s menu and the pupil presses large bright coloured buttons to hear about the food on offer.
- **Pictorial**: The menu board holds a picture of each dish on the menu for children with complex learning difficulties and children with hearing impairments.
- **Symbol**: Some children cannot recognise photograph pictures, but are able to recognise symbols or cartoon representations of food and these are provided on the menu board.
- **Braille Output**: For children who are blind, deaf or with other sensory impairments.

This has had several major outcomes for our pupils. These include, better social interaction, better communication, a greater focus and clarity about the importance of nutrition within the school as a whole and the fostering of positive pupil attitudes toward food. It has also allowed a greater level of individual independence, empowering pupils by allowing them to make

their own decisions about food choices, as well as providing the opportunity to develop the experience of taste preferences, food and nutrition.

This project has been so successful that these interactive boards are now working in all East Ayrshire Special Schools and is being extended to mainstream schools, where there is a requirement.

This innovative project has also attracted interest not only in Scotland but also across Great Britain and the menu board may be patented as nothing similar exists. It has also been selected by the HMIE as best practice and will be showcased at their Best Practice Conference Seminar in 2008.

FEEDING CLINICS

The catering service is active at feeding clinics which involve all the personnel described above and the young people themselves. The clinics look at individual needs and strategies for nutrition and feeding at school, at home and within the community. Within this forum we promote health through staff training, parent programmes, diet at home links and at school. The feeding clinic team took the responsibility to pilot how we could take forward the core principles of Hungry for Success in a special school environment.

THE THERAPEUTIC DIETETIC CATERING MANAGER

We invested in the improvement of the service by employing a dietetic catering manager who works as a key member of the team in Special Schools addressing pupil profiles and menus suitable for pupils. The catering manager works with the community dietician and speech and language therapist to look at contents of menus and the related feeding issues depending on the individuals physical or cognitive needs.

PUPIL CENTRED DIET PLANS

We created a partnership with the NHS and 50/50 funded a dietitian who will produce a diet plan specific to the needs of each pupil. This information will be added to each 'Pupil Health Assessment Profile' which will follow each individual as they progress through their school career and beyond.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACHES

These whole school approaches have been incorporated as an integral part of Health Promoting School and Hungry for Success programmes for Special Schools. Our action plan for this year, as part of our overall approach has promoted the importance of both diet and physical activity, including Special Sports, West of Scotland Sports, a review of tuckshop and snacks as well as the introduction of Health Evenings for staff, parents, pupils and members of the community. This is also extended to our pupils attending mainstream schools and "buddying-up", for health and social activities.

SUMMARY

For many children with special needs, food and diet is fundamental to their health and well being, even more so than in mainstream schools. The development of the catering service in Special Schools in East Ayrshire is now integral with parts of the curriculum and actively demonstrates the Whole Child Whole School Approach which is central to the philosophy of Hungry for Success.

The introduction of new health assessment profiles and the review of communication needs on an individual basis, has brought about the development of the 'Interactive Menu Board' and has created a great asset for use in Special Schools. Nothing similar exists and therefore this may be patented.

This integrated approach has helped Special Schools achieve National Health Promoting Schools status. Schools themselves readily testify to the improvement this approach has made and the important contribution the catering service is making to the life of the school and its pupils. But perhaps most rewardingly, Head Teachers report improvement in the well-being and behaviour of pupils. We would be pleased to provide referrals and testimony in this regard and photographs of the unique menu board that has been developed.

Outstanding Achievement in Catering

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Finalists

Finalist 1: Aberdeen City Council, “Café Culture in Aberdeen's Secondary Schools”

By the advent of the Scottish Executive's 'Hungry for Success' Guidelines, the School Catering Service within Aberdeen was already considerably down the road of change with regard to improving school meals and increasing the nutritional content of these meals. There was concern that further change could adversely affect the relatively high up takes enjoyed by the secondary canteens across the city. Through discussion at the 'Hungry For Success' Steering Group, the idea was born to 'brand' the canteens in an attempt to promote ownership of these areas by the pupils and encourage them to think of the canteen as 'the' place to eat and spend time at lunchtime. The Steering Group had already given funding to secondary schools to improve the canteen experience and many schools had spent this on plasma screens or music systems that improved the canteen experience. The Steering Group now agreed to invest £100,000 of funding from 'Hungry for Success' in this new and exciting project. The aim was to create a theme or brand for the canteens, perhaps similar to the High Street concept that youngsters enjoyed when they ate outside school in outlets such as 'Subway', 'Costa' and 'Starbucks'.

The project was put out to tender in the summer of 2006 and many commercial companies expressed an interest in developing our idea across the secondary canteens in the city. After a rigorous screening process that included a high level of input from our customers, the pupils themselves, a concept was agreed and contract awarded. The 'brand' selected was a café bar style, incorporating individual school names and individually tailored to each, very different canteen. Implementation of the individual school themes was carried out in two phases, the first during the summer of 2007 and the second over Easter 2008.

Achievements

This initiative deserves recognition as it is extremely innovative and has proved to be a worthwhile project for Aberdeen City Council's School Catering Service. Canteens that had previously been subject to high levels of misuse and vandalism are now bright, attractive spaces that encourage pupil use. These spaces are treated with respect and enjoyed by customers using the facilities. Pupils do use the canteens and have an increased ownership of their areas, a fundamental hope of the project. Feedback and comments from pupils has been very encouraging - "It feels like a 'grown up' place to eat lunch" and "a lot less 'school canteen' like".

As implementation was undertaken over a school year (and across two budget years), it is still really too early to claim that uptakes have increased as a direct result of the implementation of the concept. However, uptakes have not dropped during the period in line with reducing school roles. Indications are that the numbers of pupils making use of the canteens has remained constant and these pupils are spending longer in the new surroundings.

Initially some schools were not totally 'on board' as they were wary that the 'café bar' concept would suit. Some schools were reluctant to change the décor within the canteen as former pupils had carried out the existing decoration. Others were concerned that the concept was not in their schools colours. There was also an issue of how best to carry out installation in canteens that are multi-purpose areas, also used as an assembly hall and/or gym hall. These issues were overcome by including those schools that were more keen to move forward with the concept in the first phase and then using them to showcase the finished product to others schools that initially took more of a back seat. Once the first phase was completed, we found that the schools that had expressed initial concern were much keener to go ahead and are now very happy with the outcome

Summary

The initiative submitted for consideration for the award of Outstanding Achievement in Catering is the branding of canteens carried out in secondary schools across Aberdeen City. The main aims of this project were to

maintain/increase the uptake of school meals, promote ownership of the canteens to the pupils and encourage the pupils to eat in school over lunchtime, rather than leaving school to go to the local shop or café. There were a number of challenges and barriers to overcome when trying to promote the initiative within all secondary schools. These were however, overcome, and today all schools are extremely happy with the resulting improvement of their school canteen facility. Pupils have expressed their pleasure at the way their canteen now looks, describing it as 'a lot less canteen like' and the 'sort of place they would go to out-with school!'. The initiative has given the pupils ownership of the canteen areas and has resulted in them not only showing more respect for the canteens but also making increased use of these new social areas. Aberdeen now has a café society within the secondary schools across the city.

Outstanding Achievement in Catering

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Finalists

Finalist 2: Dumfries & Galloway Council, "Cafe DG"

The Dumfries and Galloway Council vision is to make Dumfries and Galloway the best place in Scotland to live, learn, work, visit and grow and is the southernmost county in Scotland, the area covers 2,380 square miles.

The Combined Services catering management team is a small group committed to delivering front line services to Dumfries and Galloway. The catering section sits within the Facilities Management Service. Facilities Management has approximately 1500 employees covering, building cleaning, catering, janitorial, crossing patrol, playground supervisors, caretaking and bar and food provision in leisure complexes.

The catering service employs over 400 employees serving school meals to 16 Secondary schools (pupil roll of 9,416) and 107 Primary Schools (pupil roll of 10,715).

Due to the geographical area of Dumfries and Galloway and the disperse workforce, the implementation of the Hungry for Success Initiative was carefully managed to ensure continuity across the region. The initiative was implemented in two stages. (Primary Schools by December 2004 and Secondary Schools by December 2006.) The implementation in Primary Schools saw a decline in the uptake of school meals and the management team had to think carefully as to how it would increase the uptake in primary schools whilst taking forward the implementation in Secondary schools.

Achievements

The service put in place a strategy that marketed and developed the secondary school meals experience and created a brand that could one day take its place on the high street. The brand Café dg was created. As the Hungry for Success Initiative was phased in Café dg was launched in tandem to raise the profile of the school meals service and enhance the school dining experience.

The senior management team acknowledged very quickly that in order to develop and sustain the business in the secondary schools it would need to invest in customer focused training for employees. The service needed to look at developing a unique training programme to compliment the Cafe dg brand.

The Catering Development Officer met with the Dumfries and Galloway College and worked in partnership to provide a framework for a unique training programme to compliment the Café dg brand. The training programme aimed to improve the service to the customers and improve the understanding of the product, whilst developing skills such as customer care, effective team working, preparation and planning, sales techniques and communication skills.

The training environment had to be right and therefore the training was delivered in a secondary school dining area that allowed for visual and practical examples to be incorporated into the training. The partnership has successfully delivered a certificated training programme. This training complemented the first phase training for catering staff.

Key catering employees were offered the opportunity to attend a Foundation Certificated training course in Nutrition. 97 key catering managers undertook the first round of training courses with an excellent achievement of 100% pass rate. The employees now understand the nutrition element of the Hungry for Success Initiative and the vision for the Café dg brand. The employees have been given the customer care skills and confidence to sell the products and refresh the school meals service. Staff morale, motivation and enthusiasm has grown.

Summary

The health issues in Scotland are well documented. By committing to train employees on healthy eating initiatives, this knowledge will not only be present within the school environment, but also within the community, allowing Dumfries and Galloway to meet with the Scottish Governments vision for a healthier Scotland.

The catering service is committed to developing and nurturing home grown talent and the training provided so far has boosted morale, confidence and shown a marked improvement in ownership of the service at unit level. The service has witnessed a significant difference in the approach now shown by the catering employees when serving the customers.

The partnership with Dumfries and Galloway College has presented other opportunities for the catering service. Further development training is planned. This will be carried out in the two new fit for purpose kitchens that are fitted with all modern equipment. Training will again be delivered by our partners from Dumfries and Galloway College.

Outstanding Achievement in Catering

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Finalists

Finalist 3: Glasgow City Council, "Fuel Zone"

Direct and Care Services is the department of Glasgow City Council which is responsible for the provision of catering to all 29 secondary schools across Glasgow.

The Hungry for Success Report was released by the Scottish Executive in 2002, it provided key guidelines for improving the quality and nutritional standards of school meals across Scotland. A key element was for educational authorities to consider incentives to promote healthy eating as well as increasing the uptake of school meals.

As a direct result, the Fuel Zone Points Rewards Scheme was created. A concept designed to combine a new look canteen, based on high street fast food outlets, with healthy but tasty menus, from which pupils earn points if they choose to eat from it. Each menu item in the Fuel Zone is attached to a points value, the healthier the item, the higher the points. Pupils are able to accumulate points on their cashless catering card when they pay for lunch. When enough points are saved, they can be exchanged for items on www.fuelzone.co.uk such as ipods, TopShop vouchers or gym memberships.

An important factor is that the brand is constantly developed in order to prevent it from becoming stagnant. Recent such developments include "Fuel Zone Choices", a new menu which combines a variety of food types which are all served at dedicated stations, for example, combinations that schools may take include:

- Sub Zone (a build-your-own baguette counter)
- Pizza Slice
- Hot Bites (a main meal)
- Grab 'n' Go (pre-ordered packed lunch of your choice)
- Curry Bar
- Bake 'n' Take (Baked Potatoes)

The menu was developed in consultation with pupils and it due to complete its "roll-out" phase by December 2008.

Achievements

The media launch of the Fuel Zone Points Reward Scheme generated the single most positive and widespread response from the media than any other initiative of Glasgow City Council. It generated in the region of £500k worth of free publicity, which in the current climate in relation to school meals has given the initiative considerable mileage in reaching the end-user. It has also attracted attention from press around the world, with some countries, including France, Germany and the United States showing an interest in the scheme.

Fuel Zone has been the recipient of numerous awards which lay testament to its success, including:

- APSE 2005, Innovation and IT in Service Delivery
- COSLA 2006, Health Improvement
- E-Well Being 2007, Improving Public Services

However, possibly the most important achievement of the Fuel Zone initiative has been the manner in which it has revolutionized school meals, creating canteens that would not seem out of place on the high street, whilst providing healthy food that can earn the user great rewards. This achievement has led to the following:

Free school meal uptake has risen from 56%-67% across the city.

65% of Fuel Zone consumers regularly choose the healthiest option on the menu.

Approximately 6,500 members are registered to use the points reward scheme.

1,600 rewards were distributed for the period January to June 2008.

Summary

In summary, the Fuel Zone concept combines a high street fast food outlet with healthy and tasty menus, whilst simultaneously providing incentives for choosing to eat there. It has been a highly successful campaign for Glasgow City Council and is currently being replicated by other local authorities, such as Stirling Council. Also, a pilot of the scheme is underway at Glasgow University, titled the Blueberry Points Award Scheme and if successful will be rolled out.

Outstanding Achievement in Catering

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Finalists

Finalist 4: Renfrewshire Council, “Food Safety Management System”

Environmental Services - Site Services provide a catering service to the majority of secondary, primary and nursery schools, homes for the elderly and children's homes throughout Renfrewshire, employing approximately 365 staff.

With food safety being a critical business risk within the catering operations, a decision was taken to establish an effective food safety management system based on a proven standard, as this would optimise food safety within the catering service. Furthermore, a certified system to a recognised standard would provide third party endorsement of the commitment to food safety.

BS EN ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management Systems is an international standard defining the requirements of a food safety management system, which covers all organisations in the food chain, from “farm to fork”, including catering and packaging. Therefore, some of the benefits in achieving this standard are, that we could:

- Demonstrate our commitment to food safety management
- Provide assurance that systems in place are best practice
- Provide our stakeholders, including customers and environmental health enforcement, with assurance that management and control systems of the safety and legality of food, are in place.

Due to the enormity of the project, we chose our secondary schools as our initial core area - seven in total employing approximately 60 staff. The area managers and catering managers for these units could then assist their feeder primary schools in any future implementation. It also meant that higher standards would indirectly be fed down to all other catering units.

Achievements

Catering staff (both management and front line) led by the Food Safety Team, spent about 18 months working on the food safety management system. This project was facilitated through an implementation plan and included:

- **Food Safety Team:** was set up to include key members consisting of management representatives; catering managers (from both secondary and primary schools); and supporting members; environmental health officers and suppliers.
- **Pilot:** a secondary school was selected, on the basis that both the area manager and catering manager were members of the food safety team.
- **Review:** existing food safety processes and practices, including food safety policy and objectives.
- **Training:** Management and catering staff in secondary schools were trained in: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP); BS EN ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management System awareness and implementing and auditing to ISO22000:2005 Food Safety Management.
- **Product characteristics:** every ingredient used in our menus was assessed, with the source and chain of all ingredients identified, recorded and referenced into the HACCP plans.
- **HACCP:** plans were developed and road tested for each unit; a food safety audit programme was developed; an audit was carried out in each of the units to ensure compliance to the standard and a programme of regular food safety team meetings and management review meetings was scheduled and implemented.

In October 2007, a Stage 1 - “State of Readiness” assessment was carried out by BSI Management Systems. This received a very positive report reflecting the intensive efforts of all staff involved. An action plan was developed and implemented over the course of the next 8 weeks, which involved full implementation to all secondary

schools. This was effectively carried out via a programme of tool box talks delivered by members of the Food Safety Team, to all catering staff in each of the secondary schools.

December 2007 saw the commencement of Stage 2 - Initial Assessment, leading to the successful recommendation for registration covering "The Council Provision of Catering Services to Local Secondary Schools".

Site Service's - Catering service is the first local authority in the UK to be registered to BS EN ISO 22000:2005. The highly respected certification has only ever been obtained before by manufacturing and packaging companies.

In recognition of their hard work and effort, catering staff were invited to a ceremony that was attended by the Chief Executive, Directorate and Department Convenor. The Managing Director of BSI Management Systems also came along to present the certificate. He said that this was a remarkable achievement - BS EN ISO22000:2005 Food Safety Management is an international standard, recognised in 23 countries. Environmental Services' catering is the first local authority in the UK to achieve this registration with us.

As Renfrewshire Council's catering service is the first to be awarded this standard, BSI Management Systems are writing a case study for their prestigious "Business Standards" magazine. The headline which reads "COUNCIL BECOMES FIRST UK AUTHORITY TO RECEIVE FOOD SAFETY STANDARD" - School dinners in Renfrewshire are the tops! is a true reflection of our Food Safety Team's outstanding achievement.

Summary

The key to the successful implementation of ISO 22000 was the support from staff at all levels; they recognised what a worthwhile process this was. Rather than feel it was more work for them, catering staff bought into it, knowing that food safety is paramount to our customers and the council.

An important outcome to the whole process was that it boosted staff morale, whilst raising the focus of the front line catering service and employees. Raising their profile has had a very positive effect, improving the whole culture of the organisation. Everyone feels more confident about the standard of food safety we are providing.

The system is currently being piloted in eight primary schools and four nursery schools. The intention is to eventually extend the BS EN ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management Systems into all catering units in nursery and primary schools, as well as children's homes and care homes for the elderly.

Outstanding Achievement in Catering

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Finalists

Finalist 5: Tayside Contracts, “Our Journey to Better Nutrition in Dundee’s Secondary Café Discovery”

Tayside Contracts and Dundee City are undertaking a unique approach to providing school meals which has seen the two bodies collaborate & work together on the introduction of ‘Café Discovery’ theme and enhance the nutrition in the school meals service.

In 2006 a new Working Group was established to discuss the ‘Way Forward’. This included input from Client Officer, Area Manager, Assistant Area Managers and 2 Unit Supervisors.

The Key Objectives of the group were:

- Improved communication & awareness
- Encourage more pupils to come for lunch/increase spend per head
- Comply with legislation
- Improve the diet of our customers

Achievements

This initiative has reformed the service, improved the image, speed of service, increased the average spend per head, complied with ‘Hungry for Success’ and ultimately improved the diet of customers – the school pupils, which is demonstrated through the following:

- H.M.I.E. inspection at Morgan Academy in November 2006. This endorsed the action was on the ‘right track’. Feedback was positive from the pupils, stating improved quality
- Meal Deals have increased uptake of traditional Main Courses, with corresponding increase in spend per head
- Census for Spring 2008 showed an increase of 3% from the year before with a falling school roll of 6.28%
- Monitoring was carried out in each school using a Bar Chart to track the increased meal uptake and spend per head

To achieve this the following was undertaken::

School Meal Marketing

1. Planned 6 different ‘Meal Deals’ with 3 different pricing bands
(All deals had a drink free)
2. All deals – extras could be added – Fresh Fruit, Traybake or Yoghurt
3. 4 of the Deals could be pre-ordered, with a Fast Track Pick up Point
4. Marketing – Photographs of each deal, drinks & traybakes were taken by a professional photographer and made into posters for each dining room
5. Looked at counter presentation, disposable packaging and sourced ‘High Street’ image
6. Designed a Leaflet with brief explanation, showing all types of Deals with their prices
7. Introduced Hot Drink Machines that would dispense Coffee, Cappuccino & Hot Chocolate
8. Introduced Healthy Vending where appropriate

Communication

1. Meeting with H.T. and Health Promoting Co-ordinator. Explaining changes to the service giving the reasons behind the changes. Agreed that the new service would be promoted at the school Assembly and Guidance Teachers would be involved to issue information for pupils to take home
2. Meeting with Pupil Focus Group in schools
3. Promoted the New Service at Parents Evenings and Health Fairs with Taster Pots and display of Meal Deals
4. Encouraged Partnership at all levels
5. Radio Tay sponsorship to promote Theme Days

Challenges

The challenges of redeveloping/launching a package to suit the consumer and satisfy the law were significant and the following challenges had to be overcome:

- Customer resistance – further restrictions on type and variety of popular drinks, snacks & confectionery
- Staff resistance – training with staff to change image, speed of service, to 'upsell', increase spend per head
- Competition from external vendors - local shops can still supply fizzy drinks, confectionery and unhealthy snack food.

Summary

"Tayside Contracts believe that it is vital to communicate any future changes in service provision and have achieved our success with these initiatives":

- To introduce Cooks Practical Workshop focusing on Homemade Savoury and Sweet recipes which included the addition of more Vegetables and Fruit to improve the diets
- Primary 7 Induction Days at Secondary Schools – All pupils received a voucher for a free Healthy Snack to attend the Dining Room at Morning Break where they given a flyer for information on the Meal deals and invited to come to lunch
- National Entitlement Cards – This had been a problem in the past as some pupils were not receiving their cards until the October Break. In 2008 all cards were available at the P7 Induction Days.
- New legislation for August 2009. We have carried out a 'Road Show' in every Secondary School with 10 pupils from each year group being invited to a sampling session of the new products that would be on offer and getting their feedback
- The current 'Meal Deals' will have a facelift in October 2008 to meet customers seasonal trends and tastes.
- The next step will be to trial a 'Pick & Mix Trolley allowing pupils to select 5 items to achieve a Healthy Balanced Lunch using Eco Friendly Packaging to 'Grab & Go'

Outstanding Achievement in Building Cleaning

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Winner

Winner: Tayside Contracts, “Providing a Clean Learning Environment Menzieshill High School”

Tayside Contracts is the contracting arm of three constituent councils comprising Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross.

Provides the cleaning service for Menzieshill High School, one of the largest High Schools within the Dundee area. It caters for the educational needs of approximately 1200 pupils and includes a nursery unit for young mothers and their babies, a Social Work department, housing a co-location unit for adults with drug related problems, and an NHS Health Initiative department.

The community wing of the school hosts classes for Football, Swimming, Gymnastics and Dancing as well as Scouts and Cubs. Tayside Contracts work in partnership with the Education department and the Rector for this very busy and forward thinking school to achieve the highest standards of cleaning on a daily basis. As the needs of the school change constantly the challenge for the cleaning team is to maintain these standards in sometimes very difficult conditions. The team rise to this challenge through recognised high cleaning standards, a forward thinking approach and highly dedicated teamwork.

Menzieshill High Schools cleaning team consists of 17 operatives and a non-cleaning, member of staff, in charge and dedicated to ensuring that the entire school is cleaned in accordance with the cleaning specification laid down by the client.

One of the roles of the person in charge is to liaise with the janitor or Rector on a daily basis to ascertain if there is a variation to the cleaning service, (for example, a flood in a toilet, broken windows or vandalism,) and to deal with the problem immediately to reduce any disruption to the smooth running of the school.

Achievements

Their high standards were recognised through winning the Albert Grant Award for Building Cleaning Excellence in 2008 through The British Institute of Cleaning Science. (BICS) This award is recognised throughout Scotland and is open to all aspects of building cleaning, from Local Authorities, Private Cleaning Companies, NHS Hospitals and Prison Service.

As a result of achieving this award we now feel the time is right to offer our team the recognition they deserve. Their contribution of hard work, commitment and enthusiasm enables us to submit this application for the APSE Team of the Year in Building/Facilities Cleaning Service.

While it is recognised that there are two distinct roles within the service (Client and Contractor) it is hoped that this common single approach to overcome problems which arise within the school at any given time will result in opportunities to improve communication and awareness of the cleaning service provided.

To ensure the highest standards are maintained each employee undergoes the following training:

- Tayside Contracts Safe Working Arrangements
- Health & safety at Work
- Risk Assessment
- COSHH Regulations
- Use of Specialist Machines
- Customer Care
- Safe Lifting & Manual Handling
- Tayside Contracts Policies and Procedures

Challenges Overcome

Menzieshill High School was built in the 1960,s by Dundee City Council to provide Secondary education for the children of a large council housing estate. It is a functional building, consisting of classrooms, home economic, technical and science rooms, gymnasiums, offices and common areas for pupils to congregate. With the fabric and colour schemes used, and the lack of routine maintenance over a period of years this makes it a difficult building to maintain to a high standard.

With the building open 7 days a week, throughout the year, to pupils, teaching staff and members of the public it is always a challenge to clean. The first challenge to overcome is to ensure the building is clean for pupils use at the beginning of the day. This is recognised as the core business, however as the school is used in the evening by various clubs for extra curriculum activities it is a challenge the cleaning team overcome on a daily basis thanks to their commitment, dedication and sheer hard work. They work hand in hand with the facilities staff and are very flexible in their approach as no two days are the same.

The team also provide a daily lunch time clean for the building, ensuring that facilities standards remain high throughout the day. It is essential the users and visitors each day leave the building with a good impression. The cleaning staff recognise this and go that extra mile to ensure nobody is disappointed with the cleaning standards.

A further consideration is the young mother and baby unit located within the school. The cleaning staff took this new addition to the premises in their stride, providing the unit with a safe, clean and hygienic environment in which the mothers can relax with their children.

The Social Work office is another new addition to the school and brings it's own challenges to the cleaning department in that it is open to clients during the evening, traditionally a time when cleaning operatives are working.

To overcome this, the cleaner in charge arranged for the cleaning to be carried out in the morning, minimising contact with vulnerable adults and ensuring their confidentiality is maintained.

Summary

Future Targets & Goals

The cleaning team of Menzieshill High School is clear and focused in the direction in which Tayside Contracts want to go, both in the short and long term goals such as:

- To continue to maintain the current high standards.
- To strive to improve the cleaning service by exceeding customer expectations
- To continue to develop working relationships with Facilities and Teaching staff.
- To be flexible in their approach to challenges.
- To continue to Grow and Excel.

Outstanding Achievement in Building Cleaning

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Finalists

Finalist 1: East Ayrshire Council, “Taking qualifications to the Cleaning Supervisors”

Onsite services provide a range of Soft FM services to East Ayrshire Council, including the in-house cleaning service. In 2005-06 the financial arrangements changed and Onsite became a budget holding service within the Department of Educational and Social Services, establishing core Services Level Agreements across a number of Customer Departments.

Although Onsite changed financial arrangements in 2005, since its inception in 1998 the service has operated under clear best value principles, with professional and customer focused management arrangements. As part of this it has always acknowledged the importance of the people that deliver the services.

Onsite value its people

“People are our main asset and we will aim to ensure each employee is trained and supported to achieve their full potential”

However, it was recognised that operating under the new arrangements mean more responsibility and accountability to deliver, develop and improve the service would be expected of the staff within the service. There would be no client to dictate requirements, customer satisfaction and professional pride would determine standards.

It was critical then that an approach was taken to ensure that our staff were given the right tools and skills to adapt to a more inclusive Facilities Management environment rather than previous CCT contract cleaning arrangements.

Achievements

In October 2005 onsite achieved Investors in People accreditation, demonstrating the ongoing commitment to staff. In addition the cleaning service in East Ayrshire has continually performed to a very high standard with excellent customer satisfaction results and first quartile performance in many financial and productivity indicators, through APSE Performance Networks.

However through discussions with staff at annual seminars and from feedback from staff satisfaction questionnaires, there continued to be a feeling that cleaning staff and in particular cleaning supervisors did not see themselves at the same level as other staff working in the schools such as teachers, admin staff, class room assistants.

As part of the annual East Ayrshire Employee Review (EAGER) process, which involved a working group of cleaning supervisors and management staff discussing and agreeing training and development targets for the service it was suggested that first line supervisory training would be a key opportunity to develop the Cleaning Supervisors role in:-

- Managing their staff,
- Dealing with Head Teachers,
- Improving understanding of quality requirements within the new SLAs and
- Affirm their status as key people in supporting the running of the schools.

The units training co-ordinator investigated a range of options and identified the Institute of Learning Management Team Leading Certificate as meeting the needs of the service and providing an externally accredited award for staff that would give them a transferable qualification. The course subjects included.

- Role of the Team Leader
- Effective Communication
- Motivating the Team

- Risk Assessments
- Dealing with Conflict
- Fulfilling Customer Requirements

In 2006 the course was offered to all Cleaning Supervisors although only 3 took up the course which was run over 10 weeks between 9am and 12pm at the Council's training unit. With 48 cleaning supervisors in the service a way had to be found of engaging the staff.

Challenges and Barriers

In early 2007 following that year's cleaning supervisor's seminar, listening to the feedback and reasons why the supervisors were reluctant to take up the course, highlighted a number of reasons, including:

- "The location was difficult to get to"
- "I have another job at that time"
- "I have to look after my kids"
- "I don't think I could do a qualification"
- "I couldn't sit an exam"
- "what do I need this for I've been a cleaning supervisor for years"

Through review with the units training co-ordinator and operational managers, it was identified that a different approach was needed.

We would run a compulsory supervisors course, during their working hours between 3pm and 6pm, one day per week for 7 weeks, in 8 locations across the authority. Each group would be all the supervisors from the geographic area, so staff knew each other and could support each other. It was sold as an internal training course rather than an external qualification.

Outcomes

During June 2007 and March 2008, 41 supervisors attended the courses with all successfully meeting the requirements of the ILM certificate.

As part of the course evaluation the Cleaning supervisors were asked "To what degree their personal goals or expectations were met?" The responses have demonstrated that the resistance and concerns of the staff have been more than turned around and every person that was on the course feels much more equipped to do their job.

- After each week of the course, studying different subjects, I soon learned to deal with all kinds of situations and what was expected of me as a Team Leader
- Because I know a lot more about being a team leader, I have more confidence and knowledge through doing this course
- Made me feel I can achieve more
- This course has taught me how to deal with situations calmly and efficiently and how to be a better supervisor
- I got a higher pass mark than I thought – I'm really pleased and hope to carry on to the next level
- This course has made me more confident, provided an insight into people and better understanding of the team leader as a job and how important it is to the smooth running of the school
- Boosted confidence in making decisions
- I enjoyed it all!

And the cleaning service, through its people are now better equipped to continue to deliver a high quality customer focused service.

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Finalists

Finalist 2: Midlothian Council, “Teamwork Equals Success”

Midlothian Council’s Building Cleaning Services has 96 locations Managed by two Area Managers Mark Sands and Craig Gillie and supported by Alistair Clark the training Supervisor and Lexie Campbell Operations Manager.

During 2007/2008 the whole Service had to be restructured due to the Service being awarded the Facility Management contract to the New PPP School Estate by Skanska Ltd, the FM contract comprised of Soft Janitorial, Building Cleaning, Landscaping & Grounds maintenance, Waste management including recycling, pest control, winter maintenance on all hard surfaces and Window Cleaning. This contract commenced on October 2007 with the first of seven Schools being opened.

Along with this new venture Building Cleaning Services had also started to change the whole cleaning methodology by introducing Back-Pack vacuum’s, Scrubber/Driers, Team working, new Uniforms, Eco Chemicals and a dedicated Trainer to ensure that the Service was more robust, more efficient, more customer focused and more productive, Team Work was essential in introducing these changes.

Mark, Craig and Alistair were instrumental in ensuring that these changes were introduced in a manner that was acceptable to the work force, trade unions and the customer.

Achievements

In August 2006 Midlothian Council’s Commercial Services Division was awarded the FM Contract for Midlothian’s new PPP School Estate and was to be operated by the Catering & Building Cleaning Services.

The Cleaning part of the Service had to increase the productivity, in square meters cleaned per hour, thus the introduction of a new cleaning methodology on a trial bases at a large Primary School was carried out. This trial proved very successful with the input from Mark and Craig who were both enthusiastic in the implementation along with the Staff themselves.

Both Mark and Craig along with Alistair rolled out this programme to other identified locations in consultation with the Trade Unions, Cleaning Staff and Building Users, they were impressive in their commitment to ensure that all parties worked in unison and thus increasing the productivity required not only in the current Service Specification but also for the new Facility Management Contract.

2007/2008 saw a dramatic change in Midlothian’s School Estate with the closure of fourteen schools and the building of seven new Primary Schools, with the merger of two or three Schools into one, this caused major logistical problems in ensuring that the provision of a cleaning service was provided through out and although both Mark and Craig had their own areas of responsibility, Mark was instrumental in the closing of the old schools and opening of the new schools, as well as setting up the FM contract. Craig managed Marks other locations and Alistair assisted in the Training to the standard of the BICSc Elementary certificate and the new Cleaning Methodology. Without their tremendous Teamwork and support from the Operations manager none of this could have happened.

Whilst all this was going on Mark and Craig had their day job to do in the operational supervision of all their Units including, Risk Assessments, Health & Safety, Site Audits, Financial and Administration data, ISO9001;2000 Managing Sickness Absence and staff recruitment.

During 2007/2008 the Building Cleaning Service in Midlothian has not seen changes quite like it since the CCT years and these changes have been for the good of the Council, good for the staff and good for the customer.

Summary

To reflect on the changes which have been introduced over the year into the Building Cleaning Service, has been quite momentous. Mark, Craig and Alistair along with the support from the Operations Manager have achieved a tremendous amount bringing the Service into the 21st century on the new cleaning equipment, new Eco cleaning chemicals and new working practices, managing and co-coordinating the Facilities Management Contract for the New School Estate as a sub-contractor for Skanska Ltd.

Mark Sands, Craig Gillie and Alistair Clark, supported by Lexie Campbell have proved that Team working along with commitment, dedication and with help and support to the Senior Cleaner on Site, does play an important part in ensuring that the Services which we provide is professional.

Both Mark and Craig are heavily committed to the delivery of a Quality service and regularly consult with the Building Users. They achieve set key performance indicators, they achieve operational targets and above all, with their team working and the backing from head office, they provide a service which is successful, provides what the customer wants and can claim to be providing Best value to Midlothian Council Customers.

Outstanding Achievement in Building Cleaning

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Finalists

Finalist 3: North Lanarkshire Council, “Supervisors Toolkit Training”

Staff training and development is fundamental to the success of North Lanarkshire Council's Building Cleaning Services. In 2006/07, this commitment to teamwork and excellence reaped rewards for the service when it achieved Investors in People accreditation and also retained ISO9001: 2000 status. The importance of employee development is also recognised by North Lanarkshire Council through direct links to the Corporate Objectives of “Lifelong Learning” and “Developing the Organisation” through “Service and People First”.

Historically, training has been developed in areas that had specific health & safety issues. Training courses included manual handling and coshh – awareness in the safe use of cleaning materials and fire safety. This was rolled out to all staff across the service encompassing senior janitors, janitors, centre supervisors, caretakers, cleaning supervisors and cleaners. The school crossing patrol service, which is also part of Building Cleaning service also initiated a specific personal safety/customer focus course, which was rolled out to all 220 staff.

Investors in People identified areas for future development, which would allow the service to grow and build on existing standards. Staff development was a key area to allow career progression, succession planning and an opportunity to grow and develop our existing employee resource.

Two other development areas were: to ensure that every employee was involved in performance, review and development (PRD), a significant target for 1850 part time and full time staff spread over 550 premises, and to reduce current absence levels and staff turnover.

To achieve success and deliver these objectives we needed to look at how we could utilise front line supervisory staff more effectively. The implementation of a Supervisors Toolkit training course was seen to be an excellent way of developing staff and initiating a succession planning process for Building Cleaning Services.

Achievements

The Building Cleaning Management team had to look at a way of developing the management skills of front line supervisors such as Senior Janitors and Domestic / Cleaning Supervisors, in order for them to undertake duties such as attendance management return to work interviews and PRD's. In conjunction with the Environmental Services training unit a three day course was devised. The course includes six modules, which consisted of Assertiveness Skills, People Management Skills, Better teams, Customer Relationships, Return to Work Interviews and Performance Review & Development (PRD).

Some of the key aims of the course are to develop the people management skills for supervisors. This type of training has never been carried out before within the service, as the majority of training given to front line staff has always been predominantly task orientated and dictated by health & safety.

The modules themselves were designed to focus on interaction between the trainer and staff to make the experience as enjoyable and intuitive as possible. The main challenges and how they were overcome are listed below:

- To ensure that staff were not intimidated by the tasks, they were now being asked to undertake. In order to overcome this, a pilot training session was developed to get feedback from staff before rolling the training out to staff. Feedback from staff was very positive.
- Trade union co-operation. In order to ensure a smooth transition for staff to participate in this course and undertake the tasks involved a consultation process was undertaken. Trade union representatives were consulted on the process and delivery methods.

- How would we roll this course out as it was a three day course and many part-time staff were involved in the process, many have family commitments and other part-time jobs. In order to overcome this a letter was sent to all senior Janitors and Cleaning Supervisors to introduce them to the idea of the course and the modules, with a descriptor to let them know what was involved in the course. They were also provided with the course duration and asked to ensure that they would be able to attend the three-day course rolled out over three weeks. It was vital to ensure consistency by running the course on the same day of the week.

Areas that are to be monitored to ensure the effectiveness of the course are as follows:

- Service Delivery Questionnaires - The quarterly questionnaires sent out to customers will be monitored for improvement in areas such as customer relationships and better teams showing that the course has made an impact on service delivery.
- Return to work interviews will be carried out on the day the employee returns from sick leave. This will encourage better attendance at work and improve motivation, as the line manager is engaging with them more effectively with regards to personal well being.
- Line Manager's participating in the PRD process with staff that they see on a daily basis ensures that more effective PRD can be carried out. This is because the Line manager is aware of staff capabilities and also areas where improvement is required. It also means that the Line Manager can organise any on the job or coaching directly.
- It is hoped the course will also instil better team working and communication within the workforce.
- An area for improvement has always been succession planning where previously the service has had problems in encouraging staff to undertake promoted posts. It is anticipated that this course will encourage staff to take ownership of their own development particularly that of senior janitors and cleaning supervisors, recognising that a clear career progression exists.

Summary

Future targets and goals include the following: -

- Roll out course to all staff with supervisory element with completion target of December 2008
- Assess absence levels to see if Return to Work interviews make a significant difference to absence levels between 2007/08 to 2008/09.
- Continue to monitor the course and gather course feedback to continually make improvements to the course.
- Monitor training and coaching which derives from the PRD process and encourage staff to take ownership of their own development.
- Continue to develop staff training in the supervisory role with courses such as Train the Trainer.
- Monitor staff turnover levels to establish if this has fallen since the start of the training.

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