



2025

LACA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

AWARD NOMINEES

LACA Catering Business of the Year Award

Sponsored by Rational



Bury Council School Catering

The team at Bury Council School Catering has consistently demonstrated excellence in sustainable procurement, community engagement, and financial revitalisation, significantly enhancing the well-being of schoolchildren and the wider community across Bury and Greater Manchester.

Greenshaw Learning Trust

Greenshaw Learning Trust's Catering Team, led by Jose Luis De Abreu, has transformed school foodservice through menu innovation, sustainability, and operational excellence. With a 35% increase in meal uptake, reduced carbon footprint, and enhanced student engagement, the team delivers outstanding, eco-conscious catering that promotes health, education, and community impact.

HCL Ltd

HCL is a leading school catering company with 30+ years' experience, serving 16 million meals annually across 440 sites in Hertfordshire and beyond. As a profit conscious organisation, they reinvest into service, staff, and sustainability, building strong partnerships with schools and communities — while also advocating nationally for fairer school meal funding.

Impact Food Group

Impact Food Group is transforming school catering through its Impact+ strategy, delivering nutritious, inclusive, and sustainable meals across 600+ schools. With standout initiatives like StreetVibes: Made Your Way, and a focus on FSM uptake, IFG empowers communities, reduces environmental impact, and fuels student success.

Olive Dining Ltd

The entire Olive Dining team have worked incredibly hard to increase student meal uptake in recent years, where their family values, commitment to sustainability and genuine passion for providing quality, exciting and nutritional meals for all students has attracted 35 additional schools over the last 12 months, while providing healthy meals for over 150 primary and secondary schools throughout London and the South East.

Waltham Forest Catering Service

Waltham Forest Catering Service have consistently provided the best service possible to all pupils and stakeholders. They also continue to invest in the catering team, where they believe staff are their greatest asset, and believe in valuing them by paying the London Living Wage, providing an in-house training programme focusing on craft skills, organising workshops with suppliers.

LACA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE - NOMINEES

LACA Primary School Catering Team Award

Sponsored by Middleton Foods



Belmont School, HCL Ltd

The HCL catering team at Belmont School transformed the school meal offer through creativity, cultural inclusion, and care. Meal uptake rose from 76% to over 90% within a year. Their work is now recognised by the Mayor of London as a model of best practice for Free School Meals delivery.

Carryduff School, EANI

Carryduff Primary School's Catering Team exemplifies what this award represents: creativity, commitment, professionalism, and deep community impact. Their blend of day-to-day excellence, pupil-centred innovation, and national recognition makes them a powerful role model for what education catering can achieve. They have pushed the boundaries of traditional service and made a lasting impact on pupils, families, and the wider school community.

Kenmore Park School, Nourish Contract Catering

Nourish's outstanding team at Kenmore Park Infant & Nursery and Junior School deliver more than meals. With creativity, care, and professionalism, they provide nutritious and inclusive food, support learning, and build trust with families. Their passion transforms lunchtimes into moments of joy, health, and community at school.

Wexham Court School, Taylor Shaw

Lisa and her team at Wexham Court School achieved marketing objectives by creating a welcoming dining culture and running engaging theme days (7-8% uptake increase). They promoted healthy choices through interactive events and catered meticulously to allergen awareness. Proactive communication and student involvement further boosted meal participation.

Woodlands School, Sefton Council

Woodlands Primary catering team are a part of Sefton Catering but they are an integral part of the Woodlands school team. Catering for 250 children daily along with teachers and support staff. The team consists of five people, Head Chef Holly and four General Assistants - Sharon, Nicky, Sammi and Helen.

LACA Secondary School Catering Team Award

Sponsored by Bidfood



Ashfield Boys High School - EANI

Ashfield Boys' High School Catering Team has transformed school meals through bold innovation, inclusive menu design, and a canteen rebrand that tripled uptake. Their creativity, professionalism, and team spirit have created a vibrant food culture, strengthened community ties, and positioned them as leaders in secondary school catering excellence.

Stoke Newington School - Olive Dining

Overall, Olive Dining has built a strong and positive relationship with all members of Stoke Newington School & Sixth Form – including all members of staff and the Senior Leadership Team.

The success of their unique and value-driven approach is showcased by the following outcomes:

- Student meal uptake, including Free School Meals, has grown from 60% to 85%
- 90% of the school enjoy Olive Dining meals either daily or 2 – 4 times per week
- Following the overall success of our approach, Olive Dining have been awarded contract extension to 2029.

Telford Langley Catering Team - Telford and Wrekin Council

The sense of community is as strong as ever with the Telford Langley Catering team, who play an important role within school, with pupils and staff, and food plays an integral role with this. The team ensures each meal keeps pupils energised for their busy days, whether it's tackling academic challenges or taking part in sports.

LACA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE - NOMINEES

LACA Unsung Hero Award

Sponsored by Civica



Kathy Dennis – Lets Dine, Telford and Wrekin

Kathy is the Catering Supervisor at Hollinswood Primary School for Let's Dine Catering, Telford and Wrekin. Her dedication to improving school meals is amazing, she always goes that extra mile to enhance every child she encounters on a daily base she certainly makes food fun.

Karen Fisher-Rees – Pembrokeshire CC

Karen Fisher-Rees is a superhero in disguise. Her dedication and commitment to the service has made a significant impact on the school meal uptake and by recognising her hard work, the aim is to celebrate and thank her for everything she does.

Sonia Blanchard and Gillian Morris – Blaenau Gwent CBC

The human qualities of kindness, willingness to listen to pupils and going the extra mile matter most. Sonia and Gillian, with a lifetime of dedicated service, remain the most valuable assets to school meals in Blaenau-Gwent. Our very own "Unsung Heroes".

LACA Marketing Award

Sponsored by Wafflemeister



CATERed

Since September, their first creative content apprentice has supported CATERed's marketing objectives of boosting engagement, consistently promoting healthy local food, increasing paid meal uptake, and strengthening community ties. Campaigns like NSMW and the 'Plymouth Fish Finger' project have enhanced their online presence, built audience trust, and aligned with LACA's aims.

ISS Education

ISS Education's rebrand brings school dining to life through imaginative visuals, age-appropriate storytelling and values-led communication. Rooted in their Feeding Hungry Minds ethos, it transforms pupil experience, encourages healthier eating, supports food education and drives meal uptake, illustrated through a flagship case study at Three Bridges Primary School.

Olive Dining

The Olive Dining marketing team supported 35 new school launches throughout 2024, while working hard to maintain a positive and engaged presence in existing schools. The team delivered on set objectives while also implementing new and successful marketing campaigns, such as the Ramadan Recipe Boxes.. National Schools Meal week is a great incentive, and Olive have incorporated this into the campaign plan for the forthcoming academic calendar.

SchoolGrid

SchoolGrid is an industry trailblazer in technology for education catering. With a portfolio of 1200 schools nationwide, it aims to provide every child with an excellent lunchtime experience. As a LACA Partner, SchoolGrid were delighted to be the 2024 Grab 'N' Go Challenge sponsor.

Shire Services

Shire Services' marketing initiative, featuring their mascot Sammy Sweetcorn, has successfully increased meal uptake by 19%, engaged children in healthy eating, and supported schools during the cost-of-living crisis. The innovative strategies and community engagement undertaken have significantly promoted the benefits of nutritious school meals.

LACA & Natasha's Allergy Research Foundation Allergy Management Award

Supported by NARF



Kirklees Catering Service

Commitment to allergen management runs right through the team at Kirklees Catering. With direction from the leadership team and consistent application of procedures by frontline teams who provide feedback to make improvements there is robust system in place that constantly develops and improves to ensure the safety of pupils.

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LACA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE - NOMINEES

Menu Development Team, Norse Group

Norse Group truly believe a child's school lunch experience shouldn't be compromised by their allergy. The team have worked hard on updating all allergen processes, staff training, working practices and recipes to deliver a safe and inclusive menu. To provide reassurance and encourage feedback, Norse developed an Allergy Award Parent Steering Group which has brought positive outcomes and greater allergen insight.

Food Development Team, Nourish Contract Catering

Nourish is committed to ensuring the highest standards of allergen management across all their school catering services. Through rigorous training, clear communication, and proactive risk assessments, they provide a safe and inclusive dining experience. Nourish's approach prioritises staff education, stakeholder engagement, and industry-leading practices to protect children with allergies.

SchoolGrid

SchoolGrid is a technology industry trailblazer in education catering. It was the first in market to deliver an Online Allergy Protection System, and in 2024 launched its next-gen allergy update. SchoolGrid's exceptional commitment to managing allergens has led to it supplying this module free to all school caterers.

Waltham Forest Catering

Waltham Forest Catering have gone the extra mile to ensure inclusiveness for all their customers by introducing two allergen friendly days to the weekly menu. Their robust allergen management systems mean that both pupils and parents feel confident in their processes.

LACA Apprentice/Trainee Award

Sponsored by The Worshipful Company of Cooks of London



Dilyana Merev - Bassingbourn Village College/Impact Food Group

Dilyana is a Level 2 Production Chef Apprentice at Impact Food Group who has excelled through hands-on learning, competitions, and work placements. She applies her training daily in her school kitchen role, combining creativity, flavour, and sustainability to deliver nutritious, balanced meals that reflect high standards and engage students.

Laura Falconer - Derbyshire County Catering

Derbyshire Catering Service are dedicated to nurturing aspiring catering professionals and empowering them with the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in the industry. As Laura approaches the completion of her Food Technical Professional Degree Apprenticeship, her exceptional commitment, expertise and growth shine through.

Sophie Piccioni-Vero - CATERed

As the first creative content apprentice for CATERed and On Course South West, Sophie's marketing training has enhanced their social media engagement, increased paid meal uptake, and strengthened community connections. From launching campaigns to designing posters, Sophie's apprenticeship has expanded her skills, boosted her confidence and positively supported CATERed's Objectives.

Nan Berger Memorial Award

Sponsored by Cereal Partners



Andy Hector - Impact Food Group

Andy has transformed IFG's approach to inclusive school food through innovative, SEND-focused menu development. His work at Milestone Academy increased uptake, improved wellbeing, and raised staff confidence. By blending creativity with compassion, Andy has set a new standard for inclusive catering now being adopted across our wider school estate.

Aron Jordan - Doucecroft School, Autism Anglia

The team at Doucecroft School consistently provide outstanding meal options for both pupils and staff. This is down to the dedication and commitment of the kitchen team, whilst also providing opportunities like themed days and taster sessions. There is no doubt Aron and the team have raised the profile of their school catering service.

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LACA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE - NOMINEES

Joanne Phillips – Caterlink

Jo and her team are an integral part of school life. They were winners of the 2023 Secondary School Catering Team of the Year, and this year it is time to highlight the incredible work Jo does in school as lead of the amazing catering team. There are four key areas where Jo supports the school and students - sustainability, collaboration, cultural and outcomes with a key thread highlighting Jo's passionate work with students, her collaboration with students goes above and beyond.

Lauren Moore – Shire Services

Lauren Moore, Area Manager at Shire Services and Member/Treasurer of the West Midlands Regional committee, oversees 118 catering sites. Lauren has transformed client care, increased meal income, and promoted healthy eating habits among students. Her leadership has driven growth and enhanced team performance.

Cardiff Council

The Food Hour pilot initiative from Cardiff Council provides children with a daily hour in school "with food" by sharing nutritious meals, learning about food, and learning through food. It provides practical activities, training and resources to upskill staff, embed food education into the curriculum, strengthen home-school engagement and increase meal uptake.

SchoolGrid

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Roger Davies Outstanding Achievement Award

Sponsored by Panasonic

Panasonic

Neil Fuller – Caterlink

Since Neil became Caterlink's Managing Director in 2009 his experience and passion has been instrumental in the company's growth from a turnover of £25million to £190million. He has seen the company through financially challenging times including the pandemic, each time embedding the foundations of the business to make it stronger.

Pokey Kitchen – Pokesdown Community School

Pokesdown school's transition to an in-house model for food has led to improvement in meal quality, economic benefit, community involvement and student health. It has presented operational challenges and requires careful management. Chef Russ Ball speaks with a lot of local head teachers and believes they are the key, a committed leader who regards school food as an investment as opposed to a cost has the best chance of success.

Susan Vuli – Shire Services

As General Manager of Shire Services, Susan has demonstrated outstanding levels of service and commitment, making an enormous contribution to local authority catering. Her exceptional leadership qualities, sound business acumen, and impressive personal abilities have earned her the respect and admiration of colleagues across the industry.

LACA Outstanding Supplier of the Year Award

apetito

As the UK's first pre-prepared school meals solution, apetito is proud to be different and believes in providing more than just meals. apetito is revolutionising school catering, by offering schools a brand-new business model that offers schools unparalleled ease and quality.

Bidfood

Bidfood is proud to be one of the UK's leading foodservice providers. A specialist within the Education sector, Bidfood delivers over 1,000,000 meals to schools nationwide every day and is a longstanding partner of LACA.

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Brakes

As the one of the UK's leading school food supplier, Brakes has over 40 years of experience with helping primary and secondary schools (both state and independent) and academies to provide healthy school meals every day.

Creed Foodservice

Creed Foodservice is a leading UK foodservice provider, dedicated to supporting the education sector. Last year, they launched the Brain Food campaign, in collaboration with a leading dietitian, promoting nutrient-rich school meals that support student concentration. With outstanding service levels and tailored customer support, Creed are driving positive changes within the school food provision.

Green Gourmet

Green Gourmet has a real passion for providing nutritional food to school children, while being constrained by the very small budgets given to Local Authorities by the Government. They work collaboratively to obtain the best price on raw materials to ensure schools are able to get more bang for their buck. A portion of the company's profits are then donated to charity each year.

Harlech Foodservice

Harlech Foodservice have been supplying Wrexham School Meals with all groceries, both ambient and chilled, since September 2002, stepping up at a time when they needed to source a new supplier as a matter of urgency, going over and above expectations. Harlech have recently taken over the frozen food supply deliveries for all Wrexham schools, since February 2025, and are now delivering frozen, chilled and ambient goods reducing the numbers and frequency of deliveries to site.

McCain Foods

At McCain, they believe great food starts with healthy soil and strong farming communities. That's why they're investing £30 million over the next three years to support their network of 250 UK growers facing rising input costs, extreme weather, and economic uncertainty.

Wibble Foods

Wibble is transforming school desserts with delicious, fun, and better-for-you jelly and mousse made from natural ingredients. Kids love the innovative flavours and delicious taste, while caterers and kitchen teams love the quick set recipe and convenient pack size. The products are easy to make and are lower in sugar, which means Wibble are improving the diets of millions of children in thousands of schools with a healthier option in a category that has not seen much innovation in the past 100 years.

William White Meats

William White Meats is a family-run meat processor serving schools for over 40 years. Led by siblings Tom and Becky, they co-create smart, practical products with school caterers — solving challenges around prep, cost, and compliance with genuine care, consistent service, and a deep understanding of what schools really need.

LACA Region of the Year Award

Sponsored by Muller



South West

The LACA South West Region has shown exceptional unity, growth, and commitment over the past year. With a welcoming, inclusive culture and strong collaboration across new and long-standing members, the region has reignited momentum through face-to-face events.

Wales

Supporting their members is a key driver for the committee when organising events and regional meetings. The collaboration between LACA Wales and key organisations critical to their member's day to day operation is testament to the region's hard work and dedication to the school meals service within Wales.

Yorkshire & Humber

The Yorkshire & Humber regional committee have delivered an outstanding year of progress, participation, and passion. From headline events and cross-regional collaboration to the hands-on commitment of every committee member, celebrating tangible achievements promoting LACA.