

Educo are specialist catering consultants who work with schools to improve the school meal experience. Educo work exclusively for the school to ensure that a complex and valuable school meal catering contract provides security for the school and best value for a healthy and nutritional diet.

Educo have been working with schools for over ten years working with primary, secondary and academy schools. Educo are currently responsible for monitoring millions of school meals per annum.

Educo also work with schools enhancing and managing the fabric of the kitchen. Educo review the suitability of equipment and will map out and plan the kitchen repairs or expansion allowing for additional meals or a new Sixth Form and Staff offer being provided. Kitchen development can often be funded by the caterer and repaid through the enhanced service income, so preserving the school's capital budget.

Educo's approach to improving the quality and financial performance of school meal catering is based around a three step interlinked process:-

- A clear specification of the catering service required by each individual school to ensure the right bespoke service.
- A thorough, competitive and OJEU compliant tender process to award the catering contract to a relevant, commercial catering company. Educo ensure the school is fully protected by the adoption of the Educo catering contract, setting out the relationship between the school and the catering contractor to ensure best practice for both food delivery and financial procedures.
- Thereafter the partnership between the school, Educo and the caterer is on going with regular meetings to evaluate meal and service developments for the duration of the catering contract. Educo also undertakes a monthly assessment of the school catering contract and regular on site audits of the service with follow up action plans to ensure the catering service remains alive, relevant and keeping well ahead of developing best practice.

Whilst the process works best if all three strands are accepted, some schools have taken just the meal service audit and catering contract management option if they are already "locked in" to an existing long term catering contract.

Educo expect the appointed caterers to work with our client schools on a nil cost basis or occasionally if required an agreed "commercial subsidy" i.e. a known financial cost to the school which is aligned with a profit share arrangement. The appointed contractors work with the specially designed Educo Catering Agreement which affords the schools all the protection they require to motivate and incentivise the catering contractor. Additionally all appointed caterers are required to provide monthly, transparent accounts and financial data to help monitor overall financial performance. All sites are subject to, spot check audits on their service.

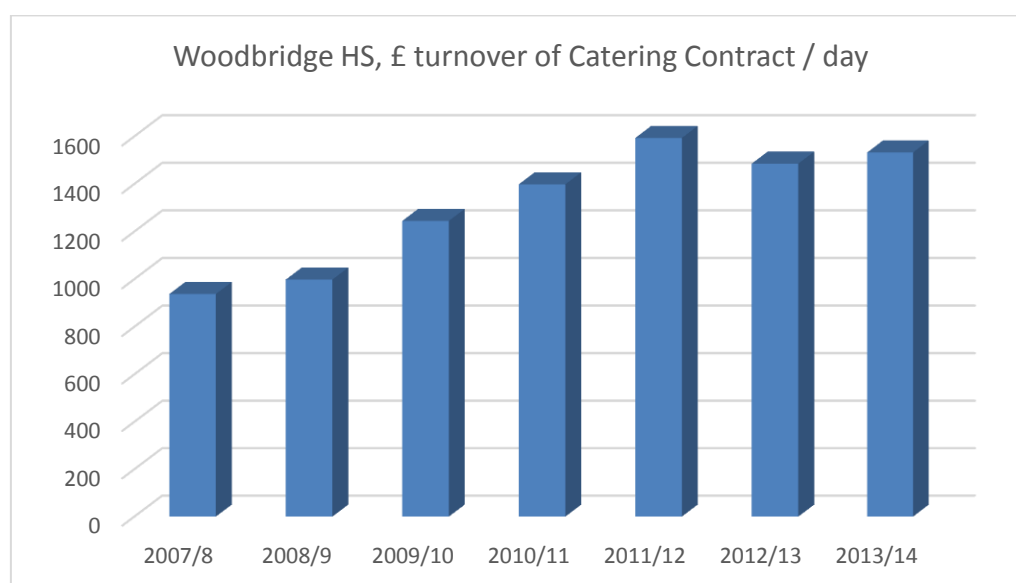
## Woodbridge High School

A large secondary school in East London, the school became Educo clients in 2006 when the existing catering service was being run by a large multi-national catering company who were clearly underperforming. The quality of food was very poor and investment by the caterer in the catering service was non-existent. There was little if any financial information available to the school and the catering service was costing the school budget considerable sums of money.

In partnership with the school, Educo implemented its three step model and managed an OJUE compliant tender process leading to the appointment of a new catering contractor, with all the operating matters including financial responsibility and commercial risk passing to the newly appointed contractor. The Caterer and the School both signed up to the bespoke terms and conditions of the Educo catering contract which gives all the necessary protections to the School.

Under the new service the food options have developed considerably with the provision of a healthy good value meal. On a daily basis there are multiple food options, from grab and go, to a full menu service. The food quality is excellent, the number of school meals eaten has tripled. Regular service and financial monitoring and improved communications ensure clear objectives and targets are known to the kitchen staff and catering management. The Caterer works in partnership with the School and Educo to ensure ongoing best practice and to implement continual improvements to the catering service.

Instead of the meal service being a drain on the school budget, Woodbridge now receives a substantial surplus from the meals service which contributes meaningfully towards the school budget.



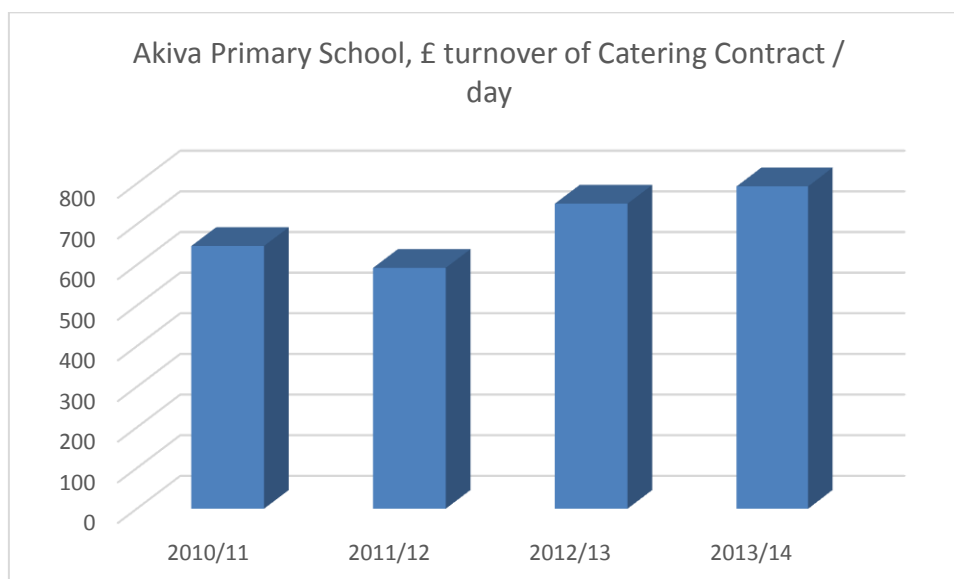
### **Akiva Primary School**

Based in North West London, the School appointed a catering contractor in 2008, but after two years of operation it was clear that the catering contract afforded little protection to the school and was costing the school considerable amounts of money - a situation that was forecast to worsen. In all good faith the School had accepted the Caterer's terms and conditions which were subsequently found to be unduly onerous on the school and left the school with much of the commercial risk of providing the catering service.

The school appointed Educo in 2010. Following a review of the catering service, on behalf of the school, Educo re-negotiated the catering contract with the Caterer to ensure that going forward all commercial risk resided with the Caterer and not the School. Educo are experienced negotiators and understand the nuances of catering contracts. Educo expect all appointed Caterers to follow the Educo catering contract which is specifically designed to provide best practise and protection for the school. In this instance the catering service itself was of an acceptable standard – it was a matter of getting the underlying financials correct and working in favour of the School.

The Caterer agreed to work with the School using the Educo catering contract and consequently the commercial risk has now all passed to the Caterer. The school's financial contribution to the catering service has vastly reduced whereas the food quality and service has dramatically improved along with uptake.

In this instance an existing satisfactory service has been managed to the school's benefit whilst retaining the goodwill of the Caterer. The commercial risk that had been financially costing the school has been passed back to the caterer and is now managed appropriately. The school have subsequently relied on Educo to assist the development of a strong working relationship between themselves and the Caterer. The use of the Educo catering contract which gives all the necessary protections to the School has facilitated clear responsibilities for both parties.



### The Ursuline Schools in Ilford

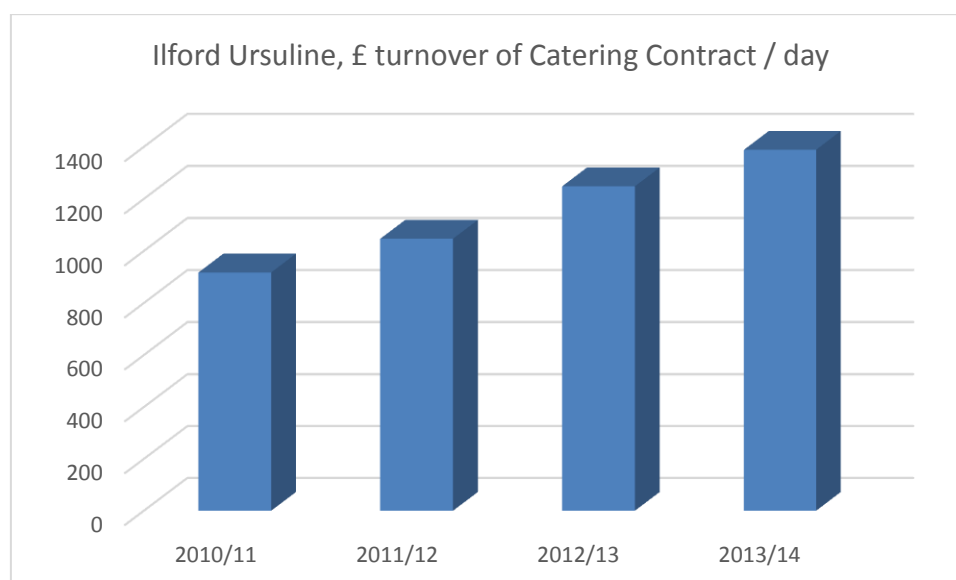
A Catholic maintained secondary academy and an independent Preparatory School located in North East London had previously been catering in-house. The increasing complexities of running an in-house service to meet ever changing food legislation coupled with the need to purchase food ingredients more competitively meant that the School wished to seek a commercial caterer to take over the running of the catering service.

At the time of the decision to appoint a commercial caterer the school was undertaking extensive building works which included a total rebuild and refurbishment of the kitchen and dining areas. An OJEU compliant tender was managed by Educo with school specific and detailed service specifications identified. The tender of the catering contract was purposely designed to seek financial investment into the school from the appointed catering contractor to assist with the financial demands of the building works. Ordinarily Educo suggest a catering contract of between 3 and 5 years, but in this instance to secure the larger financial investment required, a 7 year contract was tendered. The Caterer agreed to the use of the Educo best practice catering agreement which secures the School all the relevant protections.

The time taken between the School making the decision to tender their catering service and the physical appointment of the Caterer took about 4 months, which is standard timing. Not only was an innovative and successful caterer appointed but the school secured a substantial and meaningful investment to assist with the building project.

The service has been physically audited twice a year and is monitored financially on a monthly basis to assess progress in sales, margin and costs.

Today the service provided is in line with best practice and is being enjoyed by a growing number of pupils, whilst also providing a financial surplus for the school.



These are a few examples of where Educo has been able to assist schools improve their school meal service and contract manage the service to best practice. Educo work with schools in a variety of different situations - some are individual schools and some are school clusters who work together.

Educo believes the requirement for a bespoke catering service, tailored to the specific needs of the individual school aligned to commercial rigour and the ongoing monitoring that Educo undertake ensure that a school meal catering service can be developed to grow with a school's developing catering needs. Such arrangements are financially viable and in many cases create both financial investment and an ongoing surplus for the school.

For further information, details or for an introduction and visit to any of the EDUCO partner schools, please contact Robert Weiner 07831 460996 or email [Robert@educoco.uk](mailto:Robert@educoco.uk) [www.educoco.uk](http://www.educoco.uk)