

Job Description

Trust Catering Manager

Reporting to: Director of Business Services

Liaising with: Headteachers, School Business Managers, Catering Teams, Suppliers, External Auditors and Trust Executive Team

Grade/Salary: S3 (£51,356-£55,541)

Hours of work: 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year

Core Purpose

To provide strategic and operational leadership of catering services across 22 schools in our Trust, ensuring the delivery of safe, compliant, nutritious and high-quality food services that meet statutory requirements, support pupil wellbeing and deliver strong financial and commercial performance.

Duties, Responsibilities and Key Tasks

Health, Safety and Compliance

- Ensure full compliance with Health & Safety, Food Safety and Environmental Health legislation and Trust policies across all catering operations.
- Conduct regular safety walks, hazard spotting and risk assessments across all sites.
- Ensure effective implementation and monitoring of food safety management systems, including HACCP.
- Lead responses to internal and external food safety audits, ensuring timely completion of actions and continuous improvement.

Operational Excellence

- Lead and support site catering teams to deliver efficient, safe and high-quality food services.
- Check service standards and operational productivity on site.
- Ensure consistent compliance with Trust standards, training records and operational documentation.
- Resolve food purchasing, stock control, wastage and supply chain issues.

Nutrition and Food Quality

- Ensure full compliance with School Food Standards.
- Set menus and ensure menus meet Food Information Regulations (FIR), allergen and labelling requirements.
- Coach and develop teams to deliver consistent food quality and presentation.
- Drive engagement with pupils, parents and schools to maximise meal uptake and satisfaction.

People Leadership

- Lead, coach and develop Kitchen Managers and wider catering teams.
- Ensure 100% completion of mandatory training and compliance requirements.
- Support recruitment, induction, staffing levels and workforce planning.
- Manage performance, wellbeing and development plans for all catering staff.

Financial and Commercial Management

- Manage catering budgets, forecasts and financial performance cycles.
- Control labour costs, overheads and food spend in line with agreed benchmarks.

Consumer Engagement and Marketing

- Develop and deliver pricing strategies and initiatives to grow meal uptake.
- Support theme days, food education initiatives and cultural events across schools.
- Champion innovation, customer insight and continuous improvement.

Additional Duties

- Attend meetings, training and Trust events as required.
- Keep up to date with legislative, sector and best practice developments in school catering.
- Carry out any other reasonable duties as directed by the Executive Team.

Safeguarding

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. This post is subject to satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check, medical clearance, verification of qualifications and the right to work in the UK.

Equality and Diversity

The Trust is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Reasonable adjustments will be made to support disabled applicants or employees.

Person Specification

Trust Catering Manager

A. Training and Qualifications	Essential Desirable
Relevant qualification in catering, hospitality, food safety or facilities management	A
Level 3 Food Safety (or equivalent)	A
Health & Safety qualification (e.g. IOSH Managing Safely or equivalent)	A
Commitment to ongoing professional development	A
Catering or hospitality management qualification	A
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B. Experience	Essential Desirable
Proven experience managing multiple sites or contracts within catering, hospitality, facilities, retail or a similar environment	A & I
Experience of leading and developing managers and large teams	A & I
Experience of delivering operational and financial performance	A & I
Experience of managing food safety compliance, audits and inspections	A & I
Experience of school catering or education settings	A
Experience of mobilising new or retained contracts	A
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C. Professional Knowledge and Skills	Essential Desirable
Strong knowledge of food safety legislation, HACCP and allergen management	A & I
Understanding of School Food Standards and Food Information Regulations	A & I
Ability to manage budgets, forecasts and cost controls	A & I
Strong operational planning, organisation and problem-solving skills	A & I
Excellent stakeholder management, communication and negotiation skills	A & I

C. Professional Knowledge and Skills**Essential Desirable**

Ability to analyse data and drive continuous improvement

A & I

Confident use of ICT systems for reporting, compliance and performance monitoring

A & I

D. Personal Attributes**Essential Desirable**

Confident, visible leader able to motivate and engage teams

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High standards, attention to detail and commitment to quality

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Resilient, adaptable and able to manage competing priorities

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Proactive, solution-focused and commercially aware

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Ability to build positive relationships with schools, pupils and parents

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Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

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Willingness to support the ethos and values of the Trust

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E. Safeguarding**Essential Desirable**

Understanding of the Trust's and schools' responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people

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