



Effective collaboration.

How The Greenshaw Learning Trust saved money with Pelican without compromising on quality.

The Greenshaw Learning Trust is currently responsible for three schools; Greenshaw High School in Sutton, Green Wrythe Primary School in Carshalton and Edenham High School in Croydon. Two further schools are joining the Trust in April 2016; the Victor Seymour Infants School in Carshalton and The Brakenhale School in Bracknell, Berkshire, with a further school in September 2016, Tweeddale Primary School in Carshalton. In all, the Trust will be responsible for almost 5,000 students and employs over 500 staff.

On top of this, the Trust has been given approval by the Department for Education (DfE) to open two new free schools in Sutton, an ASD special school and a secondary school, and is awaiting approval for a new primary school, also in Sutton. All of which will support a further 2,000 students. The ASD special school is planned to open in September 2017 with the secondary, which incorporates a sixth form, later in September 2018. The primary, subject to approval, is also planned to open in 2018.

The main aim of the Trust is that it “seeks to build a ‘family’ of like-minded schools that share essential values and a common ethos and vision for education and learning, while collaborating to provide mutual support, share best practice and learn from each other”. It is fair to say that this ethos is not just related to education and learning, but also in the way the schools are lead, resourced and managed from an operational perspective.

One example of this is the way the Trust manages its significant catering function.

We talked to Stephen Bradford, Executive Head of Resources of the Trust, and Luis De Abreu, Head of Catering, to understand just how they have been able to implement consistent systems and processes across all schools, while identifying financial savings of over 26% and, importantly, without compromising quality.

Consistency is Key

Stephen Bradford explains how an efficient, collaborative approach to its procurement is benefiting the growing Trust:

“When I joined Greenshaw High School three years ago, one of my objectives was to transform the food offering so all of our students could eat a healthy meal every day. Not only were we looking to improve the choice and quality, but we wanted to review our suppliers to see whether we could make any savings. I appointed Luis De Abreu as the Head of Catering and together we wanted to look at the support that was available to help us get more from our suppliers. We were able to build on our relationship with Pelican when forming the Trust and taking on additional schools. This has really helped us operate in a more consistent way across all schools.”

At the time, The Greenshaw Trust had been working with Pelican Procurement Services which was managing a central billing service, however the team were aware that with their expertise in the food procurement space, they were well placed to be able to help the Trust in realising greater efficiencies, savings and financial control.

“The overall financial savings were impressive – in fact a total saving of 26% was achieved, which calculates to just under £50,000!”

Luis De Abreu, Head of Catering

Explains Stephen: “For me, I’m very interested in consistency across all schools in terms of the way our catering functions are managed. This was very important for me, particularly as we have more schools joining us soon, new sites being built, plus we also support four other schools with a delivered meals service as they don’t have their own facilities. Having a consistent approach to food purchasing, budgeting, ordering, allergen compliance, food standards compliance, supplier management, and more, is very important.”

Luis embarked on arranging a briefing meeting with the team at Pelican to identify ways in which a centralised purchasing approach could be implemented.

Explains Luis: “When I came on board at Greenshaw three years ago, the first task was to look at ways in which we could improve the overall food service function –

quality and choice was cited as key areas to look at, in addition to putting a best practice approach in place for managing suppliers, food purchasing across all schools and more. I turned to Pelican for advice and it was recommended that the first step was to go to tender, in order to review prices, food quality and to consolidate suppliers.”

With Pelican’s support, the Trust went to tender and straight away it was clear that better pricing could be achieved by pooling together the power of the collective Trust’s spend. Pelican managed the tender



process and was able to retain better prices for the products specified by Luis within the categories of wholesale, fruit and vegetables and sandwiches.

“The overall financial savings were impressive – in fact a total saving of 26% was achieved, which calculates to just under £50,000!” exclaims Luis. “This is an excellent achievement, particularly given the fact the savings are not based on procuring lesser quality products. We have not had to compromise yet have been able to achieve real savings. We’ve been able to work together to meet our needs, and not adapt our approach to suit the supplier’s needs.”

Contracts were devised and awarded to Bidvest for wholesale, Sherringham’s for fruit and vegetables and Anchor for sandwiches.

“For me, I am proud that we now have a service that has not only saved the schools almost £50,000, but is giving the children and staff quality food and improved choice that they didn’t necessarily have before. It’s a real success story.”

Stephen Bradford,
Executive Head of Resources

As part of this, Pelican arranged for the Trust to move to a disciplined list of agreed products to not only manage budgets, but to ensure that the products being ordered by all the kitchens had been assessed from a School Food Standards point of view.

In addition to this, the Trust is also using Pelican’s Pi system, which is an online portal that provides complete transparency of all food purchasing transactions, agreed product lists, stock management, invoicing and more. Luis confirms that he uses the Pi system on a daily basis to review what has been ordered by the schools: “As head of catering, I am able to get a big picture view on what’s happening across the schools, from stock to sales reports and purchasing. This saves me a lot of time.”

Value Added Services

The team at Greenshaw has also taken advantage of a number of value added services provided by Pelican. For example, the team is currently working on reviewing the layout of the dining hall, and Pelican has been able to provide input on furnishings, as well as support the team in procuring new equipment for the kitchens.

Reflecting on Success

With over 950 meals served every school day across the Trust, and this number set to dramatically increase as new schools come online, undertaking the review of the catering function now has been a beneficial exercise for both Luis and Stephen, for a number of reasons.

Explains Luis, “Before we undertook the procurement review, I was having to do all the supplier analysis, pricing negotiations, contract discussions myself. Now, having

Pelican on board, not only do we have better pricing, but there’s a lot more expertise and support available that I can tap into. I can concentrate on other areas and this saves me a huge amount of time. To add to this, the support systems in place via Pelican mean we are on top of our compliance requirements, for example we can provide proof that our menus fully comply with the School Food Standards. This is very reassuring.”

Reflecting on his original aims of a consistent service for all schools in the Trust, Stephen confirms: “As I said at the outset, consistency across all of the schools is what is important to me. Having systems in place across the Trust means we are all looking at the same data sources, which improves accuracy. Now, every school is ordering the same quality products and the pricing for each is agreed and in a fixed price-hold – this is important. Menus are agreed, training is organised, allergen compliance has been arranged; Luis has been the driving force in making all of this happen and so now, when new schools come on board, we will be in a prime position to simply and quickly apply all the processes we now have in place.”

Concludes Stephen: “We have a great partnership with Pelican and I commend Luis for making this happen. For me, I am proud that we now have a service that has not only saved the schools almost £50,000, but is giving the children and staff quality food and improved choice that they didn’t necessarily have before. It’s a real success story.”

Pelican Procurement Services

01252 705 222
info@pelicanprocurement.co.uk
www.pelicanprocurement.co.uk