

EAST BARNET SCHOOL

Summary

East Barnet School wanted to introduce cashless catering for its busy canteen. The school selected Gladstone Education's OnRecord Cashless catering system, which included new EPOS tills and a revaluation terminal for the school's reception area. With the help of Gladstone Education's consultants, the system was installed and all staff trained in its use.

OnRecord now provides a complete cashless catering solution for the school. Students are able to pre-load money (cash or notes) onto their accounts then use proximity cards to pay for snacks or meals. Kitchen staff are freed from cash handling duties, queues are shorter, and the school's management team now have management reports on the catering service.

Benefits

- Reduces queuing by eliminating cash handling for students and staff
- Increases free school meal take up
- Web-based application on the latest Microsoft .NET Framework
- Integrates seamlessly with school's Management Information System (MIS). Gladstone Education is an approved Serco Facility Partner.
- Comprehensive business reporting and data analysis suite

"The school lunch break always meant long queues of students in the canteen waiting to pay. Gladstone Education's OnRecord Cashless catering system has proved the ideal solution. Queues are shorter, catering staff are no longer handling money, and we have management reports too."

**Sue Waters, Bursar
East Barnet School**

It is so much easier when students pay for their lunch without using cash. This is the welcome experience of East Barnet School after implementing the Gladstone Education's OnRecord Cashless catering system. Now, thanks to a successful project managed by Gladstone, East Barnet School has ended lengthy queuing, eliminated cash handling in the servery, and improved management information.

East Barnet School in North London has 1,250 students and is spread across two sites. Its Chestnut Grove location has 800 students in years 7 to 10 with the remaining students attending Westbrook Crescent.



Before implementing OnRecord Cashless at Chestnut Grove, the school's canteen relied totally on manual cash tills. Lunchtimes were always hard work for catering staff, with as many as five tills open to cope with the rush. According to East Barnet's bursar, Sue Waters, around two thirds of the students use the canteen regularly - perhaps 500 children in an hour.

"It was too slow. We needed to speed up the service quite considerably," says Mrs Waters. *"The fact that staff were handling money was also a big security and hygiene risk."*

Ensuring a timely lunchtime service and handling cash weren't the only issues for the school. There were outdated practices such as a paper checklist for free school meals.

Opportunity for change

When the school took control of catering management from its contractors and moved towards a healthy meals programme, Mrs Waters wanted to eliminate cash handling and improve management information.

The school had several key requirements. The cashless system needed to be cost-effective, and the new Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) tills had to be easy for staff to use. Furthermore, Mrs Waters required the new system to be seamlessly integrated with the school's Serco Facility CMIS™ management information system (MIS), so that data could be easily extracted for financial management purposes.

"We didn't just want a stand-alone system but needed a complete solution that would easily link with our MIS system," says Mrs Waters. "It also had to be a one-card-fits-all solution for our future needs such as daily registration and library access."

Some cashless systems were too expensive but Gladstone Education's powerful OnRecord technology seemed the right solution from the outset. The cost-effective OnRecord system is designed specifically for the education market to improve meal time administration and operational efficiency. What's more, the system uses proximity smart cards, which Mrs Waters favoured over biometric (fingerprint) or swipe card systems.

"We made the decision that Gladstone Education were going to be the best option for us. The solution that they came up with was cost-effective and flexible."

Project managed by Gladstone Education directly, the implementation was straightforward. The OnRecord software was installed on the school's existing server, a revaluation terminal was placed in the reception area, and new EPOS tills were installed in the canteen. Student data was extracted from the CMIS system, printed MIFARE™ proximity cards were issued, and training was given to catering and administrative staff. A comprehensive software support and on-site hardware support contract was also provided.

Cashless payments

Improvements were felt almost immediately when the new system went live, with reduced lunchtime queuing as students no longer paid with cash. Not having to carry money around has the added benefit of reducing the risk of bullying. Students on free school meals use the same proximity card as all the other students, removing any stigma.

Students regularly top up their cards with cash via a revaluation terminal in the school's main reception. Alternatively, payments may be made by cheque to the finance office.

On the other side of the system, Mrs Waters can now easily view management reports or extract selected data for spreadsheet analysis. These reports now help with tasks such as VAT analysis, staff duty meals recording and student spend analysis. One report even shows details of food sales to complement the school's healthy meals initiative.

"I can get information out of the system for my regular month-end accounts too," says Mrs Waters. "But the main benefit is the improved speed of service from not handling cash. It's made a big difference to the kitchen as we now finish lunchtime service very quickly."

The school has plans to extend the OnRecord Cashless system by having an automatic monthly accounts statement for each student and allowing parents to view information online to check their children's meal preferences. Mrs Waters views Gladstone's OnRecord as an adaptable system that delivers precisely what is required to meet the changing needs of the school.

"I find the OnRecord Cashless catering system easy to use. It's also flexible in terms of the management information I can extract from it," says Mrs Waters. "There's good support from Gladstone Education when required and they respond pretty quickly too."



For information on the
OnRecord solution suite

Contact Us

T: +44 (0) 1491 20 10 10

F: +44 (0) 1491 20 10 20

E: info@gladstone-education.com

www.gladstone-education.com