

CATERING SERVICES FOR POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS



A Good Practice
Procurement eGuide



etbi
Education and Training
Boards Ireland
*Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann*



SPU
Schools Procurement Unit

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BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS GUIDE

The ETB Procurement Projects Working Group (PPWG) develops projects to support optimum procurement compliance as well as the ongoing professionalising of procurement across the ETB Sector. Established through the ETB Procurement Network which reports to the ETB Organisation Support & Development Forum, the group's work is a development of its previous policy output which included:

- Nationally agreed ETB Procurement Policy,
- Suite of ETB Tender Templates for below EU threshold procurements
- ETBI/ UCC Certificate in Procurement Management

In 2018, C&AG audits of ETB's highlighted areas of expenditure in excess of the €25,000 national threshold for ETB focus. These include typically high spend categories, for example, Bus Transport, Cleaning and Catering Services, Timber & Metal Supplies & Recruitment Agencies. The PPWG adopts a collaborative & strategic approach as a way of supporting procurement compliance through the utilisation of sectoral resources and expertise to progress a range of projects. It also brings a strong supplier engagement/ SME focus to all project development.

This Guide is one of the shared initiatives in the working group's projects plan and has been developed in collaboration with our colleagues in the Schools Procurement Unit (SPU)¹. It aims to provide a best practice guide for post-primary schools on how to manage the tender process for concessionary catering services to help achieve value for money and fit for purpose catering contracts. It includes a range of options and considerations that those wishing to procure food-related services may wish to use or adapt.

A recent survey of a sample post primary schools showed significant variances across schools in terms of service arrangements, types and durations of contracts, concession arrangements and fit-out provision. While the survey identified strong levels of satisfaction with service providers regarding value for money and low-cost nutritious food it also highlighted room for improvement regarding choice and innovation.

The project team also engaged with a sample group of catering service providers to the sector who identified challenges they face in tendering for school contracts – including contract duration, quality of information provided and school kitchen facilities.

¹ The Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) is the central support resource for providing guidance to all primary and post-primary schools (except ETB schools) on any procurement-related issue. More info [here](#)

Please note that this guide was developed to support compliance with procurement guidelines and best practice but does not constitute legal advice. ETBs and Schools should consider the contents of all tender documentation before issuing to satisfy themselves that they are in compliance with public procurement guidelines and that their needs as contracting authority are adequately set out in the documents.

For further advice and guidance ETBs schools should contact their ETB head office – details [here](#), and non-ETB schools should contact the Schools Procurement Unit [here](#). The Office of Government Procurement provides procurement supports and services to all public sector bodies (including schools) [here](#)



HEALTHY EATING? AN INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL CATERING

Unlike many countries, school food is not provided on a statutory basis in Ireland, but at the discretion of School Principals, Parents and Boards. Nationally, there are over 722 post primary schools and 360,000 possible users and while all schools are not the same in terms of size or facilities, there is a universal desire to provide catering services that will deliver quality food to all end users.

There is direct evidence on how nutrition impacts educational achievement: the quality of school lunch affects student's academic performance. Ireland, is however one of the 28 EU member States known to have guidance on Developing Health Eating Policy in Schools, through public sector organisations such as the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health and Children, as outlined in the links [here](#) and [here](#):

2015 research by the Irish Heart Foundation 'Food Provision in Post-Primary Schools', examined what second level students are eating; models of food provision; and whether national standards are needed, or wanted by school authorities.²



² extract from Houses of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Skills Report on tackling of obesity and the promotion of healthy eating in schools - July 2018.

The research found:

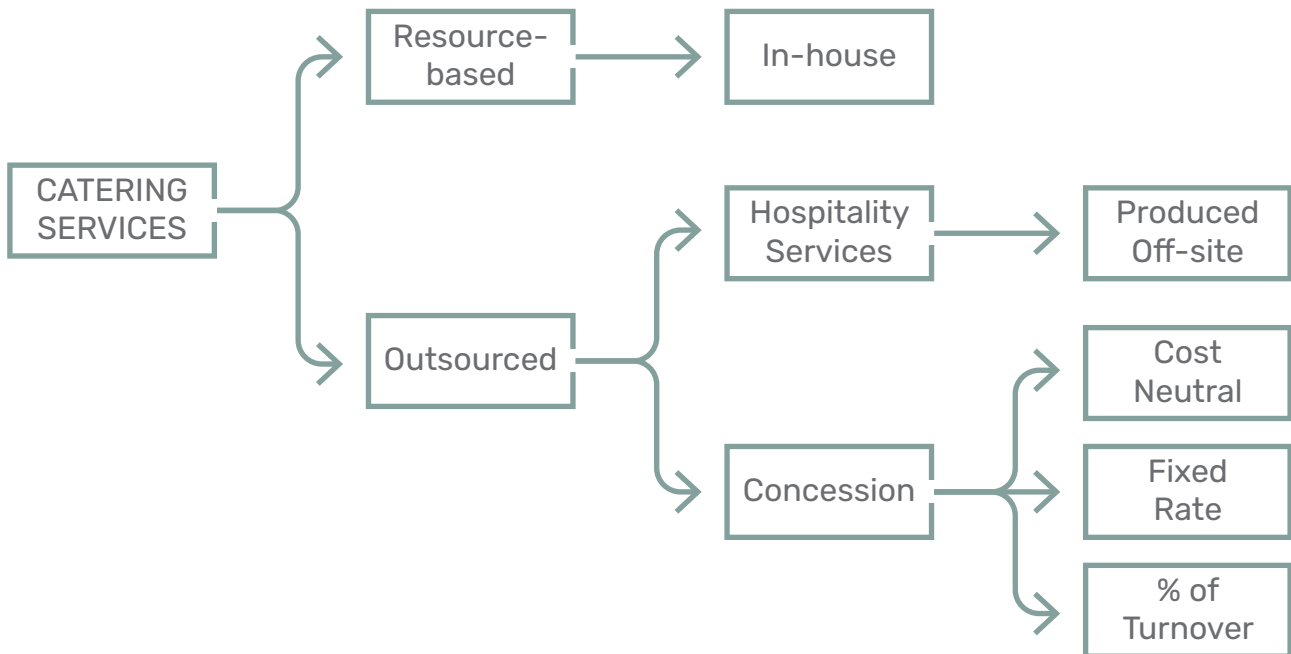
- Overall food provision was very varied, from full hot meals, hot and cold snacks to food available from vending machines.
- Facilities within schools varied greatly from full preparation kitchens to tuck shops and vending machines.
- Some pupils are benefitting from hot nutritious meals while other pupils only have cold snack foods available.
- There is still a wide range of Top Shelf from the Food Pyramid foods ('junk food') sold in post-primary through tuck shops and vending machines, but also hot snacks also high in fat and salt. This is at odds with the new Healthy Eating Guidelines which state that such foods and drinks should only be consumed a maximum of once or twice a week.
- Water was not available free in some 40% of schools, which either means students are paying for bottled water or replacing water with less healthy options.
- 37% provide full hot meals, such as meat, veg and potatoes, and casserole dishes.
- 67% provide hot snack e.g. soup, Paninis, sausage rolls, pizza slice etc.
- 37% of schools offered sandwiches and cold snack options e.g. fruit, yoghurts, salads, cheeses, juices, smoothies, cans etc.
- Over half 51% offer non chilled snacks e.g. confectionery (sweets, chocolate crisps) cereal bars, scones, buns, cakes.
- 47% schools had vending machines;
- 25% had a tuck shop, selling a combination of hot and cold snacks, sandwiches and confectionery.
- Over half of the schools surveyed (59%) had a [healthy eating policy](#)
- 95% schools said they would be interested in a National Catering Standard, e.g. through a Healthy Catering Award scheme.

A follow up seminar attended by school caterers, teachers, dietitians and public health experts produced a strong consensus that unhealthy food can be removed completely from school campuses, delivering a massive health dividend for children.

The report also identified that schools often lack the proper catering facilities, equipment and space to allow for adequate catering and that the state funding under the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection available to disadvantaged schools does not allow for funding of equipment. Further information on the report [here](#).

While a sample healthy eating policy is included at [Appendix 5](#) for information, it is important that you develop your own – guidance available [here](#).

WHAT KIND OF CATERING SERVICE DO YOU WANT?



The focus of this guide is on concessionary catering services as this is the most frequently procured type of service in the post-primary school sector.

WHAT IS A CONCESSION?

A concession agreement is a contract between a company (catering service provider) and a public body (school board of management/ETB) that gives the company the right to operate a specific business within the school's/ETB's jurisdiction, subject to certain conditions.

Example: a private catering company is contracted to provide healthy snacks, hot and cold lunches to the school staff and students onsite, runs the risk that revenue generated will not cover its investment and other costs incurred. The concessionaire (the catering service provider), typically pays either a fixed sum or a percentage of revenue to the owner (ETB/School) in return for being able to provide the service.

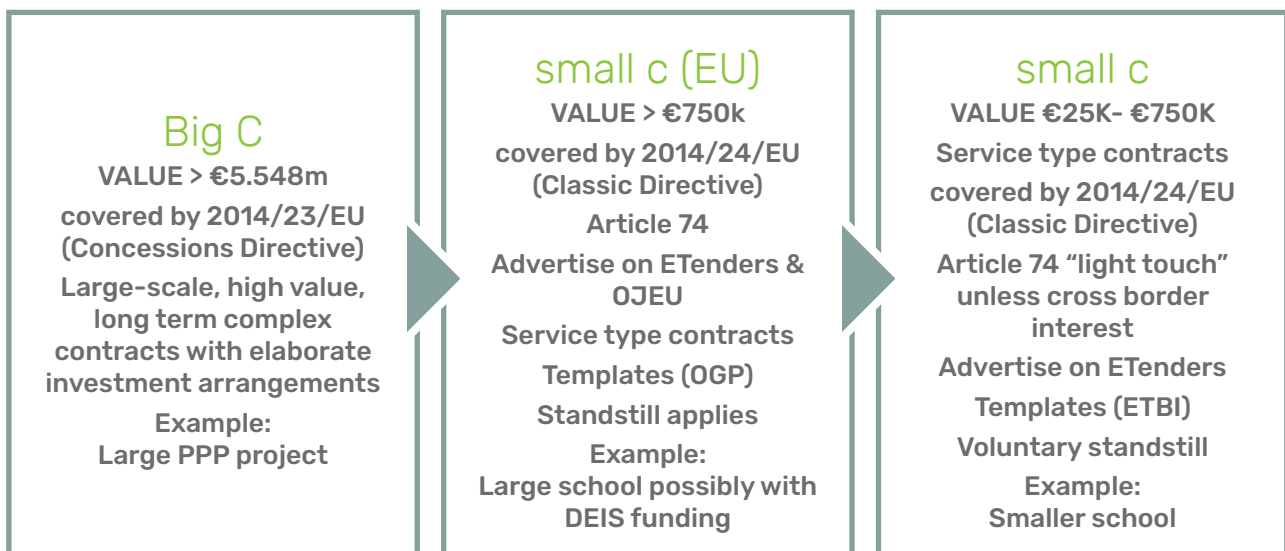
Differentiating between “Big C” concessions and “small c” concessions

Definition of concession (with a Big C):

The 2004 public procurement Directives contained a provision for concession contracts within the general procurement regime. These provisions were little understood and not referenced in this jurisdiction. The EU Commission reviewed the concession contracts market in its consideration of procurement Directives issued in 2014. The Commission decided in the final event to establish a separate procurement regime for concessions to reflect the circumstances of the concessive market and with the aim of more transparently identifying the incidence and dynamics of concessive contracts across Member States.

On 18 May 2017, the Concessions Directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Union (Award of Concession Contracts) Regulations 2017 (S.I. No. 203/2017) (the Concessions Regulations). These Regulations (deemed to apply from 18 April 2016) did not transpose Title IV of the Concessions Directive which dealt with remedies. The Concessions Remedies Regulations apply to all decisions by contracting authorities (and contracting entities) taken after 17 July 2017 in relation to the award of “reviewable concession contracts”, regardless of when the relevant concession contract award procedure commenced. The main elements of the 2014 Concessions Directive are available [here](#).

Below is a simple guide to the 3 main types of concession contracts:



For the purpose of this guide, and to reflect most post primary requirements, the concession with a small ‘c’ will be referred to throughout the document.

Definition of concession (with a small c):

Where service concession contracts are below the €750,000 threshold³, there is no requirement to advertise on the OJEU or to publish an Award Notice on OJEU unless there is cross border interest / EU financing. Contracting Authorities are advised to use a public competitive process (www.etenders.gov.ie where the contract value is >€25k) to ensure value for money when tendering. The procedure should be fair and impartial and comply with the general principles of EU law including transparency and equal treatment. Regulations as per S.I. No. 284/2016–European Union (Award of Public Authorities Contracts) Regulations 2016 should be followed. Where the value of the contract is below the €750K threshold, OGP recommend using their below threshold model letters (Appendix III latest OGP Guidelines [here](#)). Where service concession contracts are estimated at a value above the €750,000 threshold for the duration of the contract, there is a requirement to publish on OJEU.

NEED MORE INFO ON CONCESSIONS/ PROCUREMENT?

- OGP information notes on concessions [here](#)
- ETB Procurement Policy [here](#) (ETB log-in details required)
- SPU Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices [here](#)

³ Often referred to as “light touch” regime. Relevant CPV codes listed at [appendix 3](#)

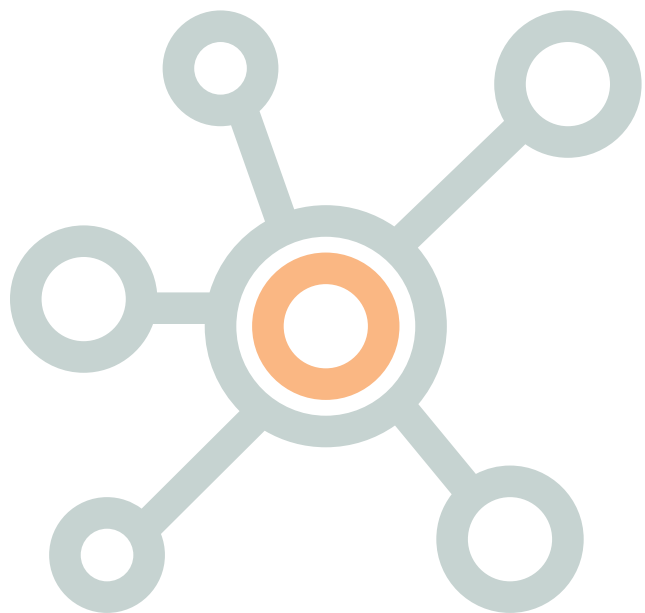
THE MARKET

A recent sample survey of post primary schools indicated that most catering services suppliers are a mixture of SMEs and sole traders.⁴ The project team's engagement with a sample group of these suppliers indicated the following challenges they face when tendering for business in schools & ETBs and some project team recommendations for mitigating these

- Short contract duration (especially when capital investment required)
- Insufficient facilities / equipment for delivering catering services
- Schools changing from a 5-day week to 4.5-day week during contract (especially on Friday's)
- No provision for price review
- Insufficient information about school provided in tender documentation
- 'Over spec-ing' where everything is added into the tender rather than prioritising what is important for the individual school

Suppliers also report the advantages of doing business with schools:

- The defined nature of the service (times and requirements) allows suppliers greater planning and control of resources than in other catering contracts.
- Growing area – planned expansion of School meals programme by government
- When good balance is struck between requirements and costs – it can be profitable.



⁴ In order to facilitate maximum market interest in your tender it is advised to include as many of the catering-relevant codes as possible. Relevant CPV codes for catering services are listed at [appendix 3](#)

The diagram below represents some insight as to reasons why a tenderer **may** or **may not** be interested in tendering for your school's concession catering contract. It is recommended that you examine your schools' strengths, the opportunities to the supplier and acknowledge the threats and weaknesses, in advance of describing the requirements within any tender document. These will help form an overview of the school and could help the school gauge the level of turnover through the till, hence the contract value.

Strengths

- Greater number of customers (staff, visitors, students), school has a 'student stay on school grounds' rule
- Canteen area easily accessed centrally located
- Location of school no deli shops close by
- Current Disposable Income of the school community
- Assets of the school, incumbents' figures, equipment available
- Reputation

Weaknesses

- Limited number of schools.
- Limited kitchen & seating capacity
- Location
- High level investment required for fit out of kitchen etc
- School rules (students can leave school grounds)
- Fixed return to the school/% of concession that can be offered
- Duration of contract
- Reputation

Opportunities

- Key market drivers – growing population, parents working, new consumer tastes, healthy eating policy
- Rise in Technological Advancements
- Less than half of students eat canteen food – potential for growth
- Growing Disposable Income
- Lack of competition

Threats

- Access to staff
- Flexible working hrs.
- Increased number of food outlets, eating from home, vending machines
- No movement on subsidies for meals
- Higher expectancy for quality, range of products, healthy eating, VFM
- Change in regulation /procurement rules
- Cash flow

SWOT analysis of a post-primary school from the mindset of the Tenderer in relation to Concession Catering in a Post-Primary School setting

Tips for making your offering attractive:

- Longer duration of contract – include options for extensions (dependent on performance)
- School Meals Scheme – DEIS funding
- School policy regarding students remaining on-site for lunch
- Cost neutral – not being charged a rental income
- No vending machines or the Catering operator also operates these
- Provide for price reviews- based on **validated** cost price changes
- Provide accurate and up to date information on student population (e.g. specifying numbers of ‘senior’ students who are permitted to leave school during lunchtime; diversity of student population, setting realistic expectations with regard to sales- high student numbers do not always mean high levels of sales – can be dependent on socio-economic and other factors. When drawing up tender documents, it is helpful if you detail a reliable volume of activity, (e.g. number of and type of meals annually, number of daily users) in the specifications to allow tenderers to fully understand the size and structure of the business. Seek actual turnover for the last few years along with daily meal, bestselling produce from current service provider and add the detail to the tender document if applicable.
- Start the procurement process as soon as possible – get it out in the market as early in the year as possible and give suppliers as long as possible to respond.
- Consider clustering of schools, who alone, may not be an attractive offering but together may be, or clustering small school clustered with larger/ more profitable school.
- In a 4.5 day week, the half day falling on a day other than Friday
- Allowing suppliers to make a presentation to the evaluation team – they like to have face to face time with the customer (especially after filling in a long tender submission!). Be careful about marking this however (see [page 30](#))

FIRST STEPS – ENGAGING WITH THE MARKET

Market engagement with the industry is critical to ensuring that as a Sector we develop an understanding and knowledge of the industry and how best it can serve our needs and in a manner that is attractive to both schools and catering service providers.

Prior engagement with service providers before the commencement of the tender process can benefit both the Contracting Authority and the Supplier. For the most part the schools sector operates their procurement practice alongside the marketplace rather than in cooperation with it. It is imperative that we develop a culture of engaging with Suppliers as part of our procurement practice and this should become the norm in our ETBs and schools. Pre-market engagement will support the delivery of contracts that best suit our unique requirements and will also encourage and provide opportunity for Suppliers to provide services that enable them to operate a sustainable business model in a competitive environment.

INITIAL MARKET ANALYSIS

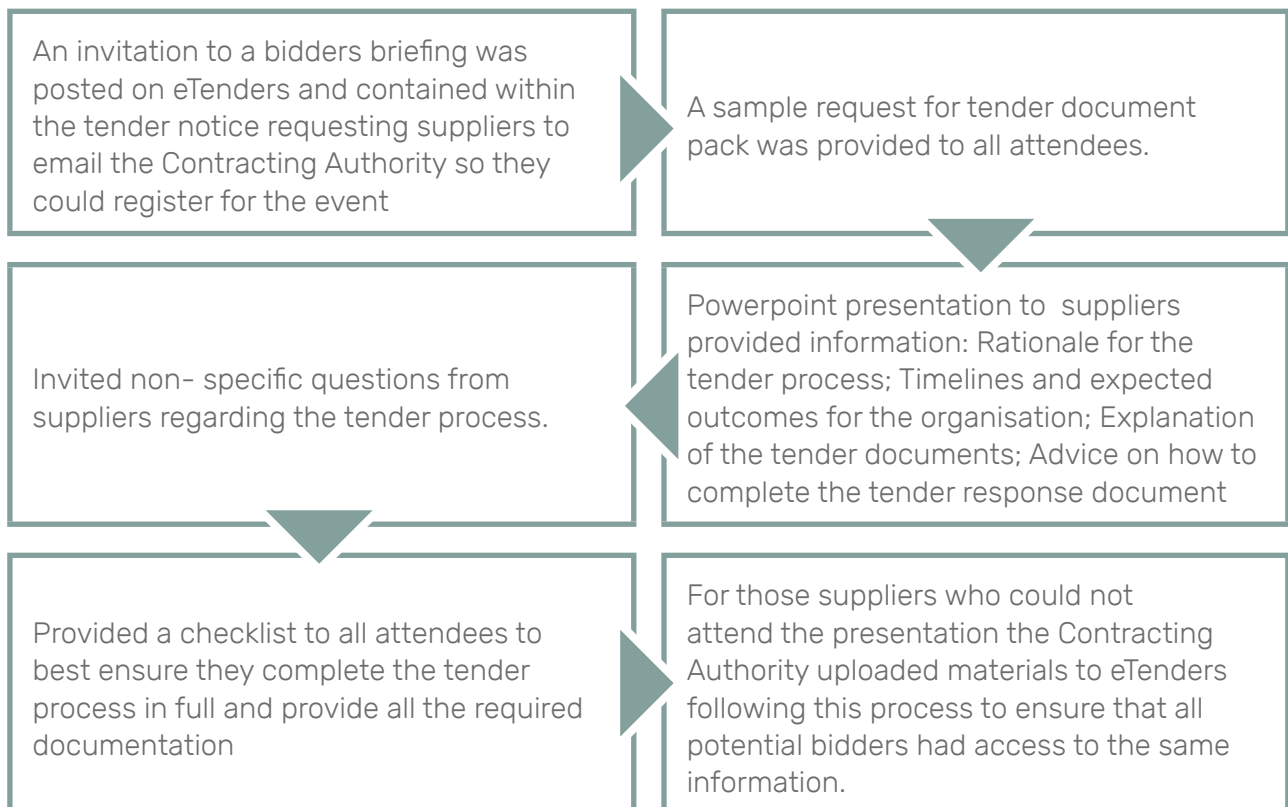
- **Who are the service providers and how many of them are there?**
- **How big are they? (SME Sector, sole trader etc)**
- **Are they registered on ETenders?**
- **Have you considered doing a Supplier survey?**
- **Request for information**



OGP guidance stresses that the process adopted, and information received during market consultation should be clearly recorded in writing. Contracting authorities should take appropriate measures to ensure that participation by potential tenderers in pre-market consultations does not distort competition, that any relevant information exchanged in the context of, or resulting from, the involvement of a tenderer in the pre-market consultation is be made available to all the other participating tenderers.

Note for schools- before actively engaging with the market- you should contact your [ETB Head office](#) (if you are an ETB school) or [SPU](#) (if you are a non-ETB school)

Once the tender goes 'live', supplier briefings, when managed correctly, have worked to the benefit of the ETBs and the marketplace as is evidenced in the success of the School Books Framework for the sector. Below is a recent ETB example of a bidders briefing held by Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB as part of their tender process:



If your supplier base is not e-tender familiar- you can involve your Local Enterprise Board or the OGP in on-boarding them through supports/ resources. There is also a YouTube video for suppliers on the home page of the OGP website [here](#).

COSTING THE SERVICE

In order to get the best value for your school while encouraging suppliers to bid for the business it is essential to consider the estimated cost of the Catering service provision. To do this you need to consider:

- What kind of food provision/service will meet the requirements of your school and its potential school community?
- What is the commercial turnover on current activity, for example, each of the last three academic years if possible?
- What does the information shared with me by current service provider / market analysis tell me about the contract value of this concession?
- Is an upgrade of Kitchenette/food preparation area required?
 - Has the school a capital budget or parents association investment available?
 - Is the Catering Supplier required to invest in permanent fixtures and fittings?⁵
 - Is there a need to replenish any of the existing kitchen catering equipment or does the basic kitchenette with domestic type equipment suffice?

SPECIFY refurbishment required: acceptable standards of workmanship, quality of equipment & timelines



- clarify whether the capital cost associated with any necessary permanent fixture and fittings should be met by the Catering Supplier in the absence of school own capital funding. The pricing strategy may be to link this necessary capital investment to the 'Financial Proposal Award Criteria' which will allow the tenderer to propose a yearly rental income (33weeks) to the school for renting of the commercial canteen space whilst bearing in mind the initial set-up cost to the Catering Supplier over the possible commercial lifetime of the contract. It may be prudent to propose a 4-year contract with a further 3year option (total of 7 years) where large investment is necessary.

⁵ e.g. extraction fan and associated ducting, some wall and floor finish surfaces, associated building works, electrical and plumbing modifications such as additional power sockets for equipment, grease traps and adjustments to waste outlets etc

- **What kind of concession fee/ arrangement do I want to put in place?**
 - fixed rental amount stipulated by the school board of management as a requirement in the tender document with no marks assigned to it
 - fixed rental amount allowed be stipulated by the tendering service provider with marks assigned to it in the tender document
 - percentage based on the Concession with marks assigned to it in the tender document
 - combination of the above concession arrangements.
- Consider how much influence does the school want the concession to have on the overall service provision.
- Is there School Meals Funding - DEIS involved?⁶ If so, how does the school want this funding to influence the price the school community pay for their breakfast, snack or meal?
- Does TUPE apply and do I have the TUPE information required?
- What is the duration of the Service Contract, how many years?

CALCULATING THE CONCESSION FEE

When calculating the value of a concession fee a distinction should be made between “Big C” Concessions and “small c” Concessions. In the context of the post-primary sector our catering requirements in the main fall into the Small “c” category and in this regard, ETBs are advised to consider the sample wording provided in this section.

Sample formula for calculation:

$$\text{Half the number of students} + \text{staff that MUST stay in} \times \text{€8 per week} \times \text{No. of school weeks} \times \text{No. of years contract required for (e.g. 3yrs or 4yrs)} = \text{Potential contract value}$$

Sample wording for “small c” concession:

- The Fee proposed should represent a percentage of the concession i.e. annual turnover.
- The Tenderer should set out the proposed fee in Euros and exclusive of VAT. This must be done for each of the potential years of the contract and the Tenderer must set out the proposed timeline for payment of concession fees and this must be agreed with the Client in advance of a contract being signed.
- The fee schedule must show a breakdown of all costs, fees, expenses and charges, including utility charges, associated with the full delivery of the requirements over the whole of the life of the contract. It must also clearly state the total fee exclusive of VAT.

⁶ DEIS: Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools

- In preparing their proposal, service providers are to consider all risks, contingencies and other circumstances relating to the delivery of the requirements and include adequate provision in the proposal and fee information to manage such risks and contingencies.
- Service Providers are to document in their quote all assumptions and qualifications made about the delivery of the requirements, including in the financial pricing information. Any assumption that the school or a third party will incur cost related to the delivery of the requirements must be stated, and the cost estimated, if possible.
- Fee should be tendered in Euro (€) Ex-VAT. Unless otherwise agreed, the school will arrange contractual payments in Euro (€).

TUPE

TUPE is an acronym for the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006. Although the detail of the regulations can seem rather complex and technical, the purpose is very straightforward. The rules simply aim to protect employees if the business they work for changes hands. TUPE applies in two situations:

1. when a business (or part of one) is transferred to a new employer
2. when a service provision change takes place⁷

When looking at these transfers of a contract critical factors include:

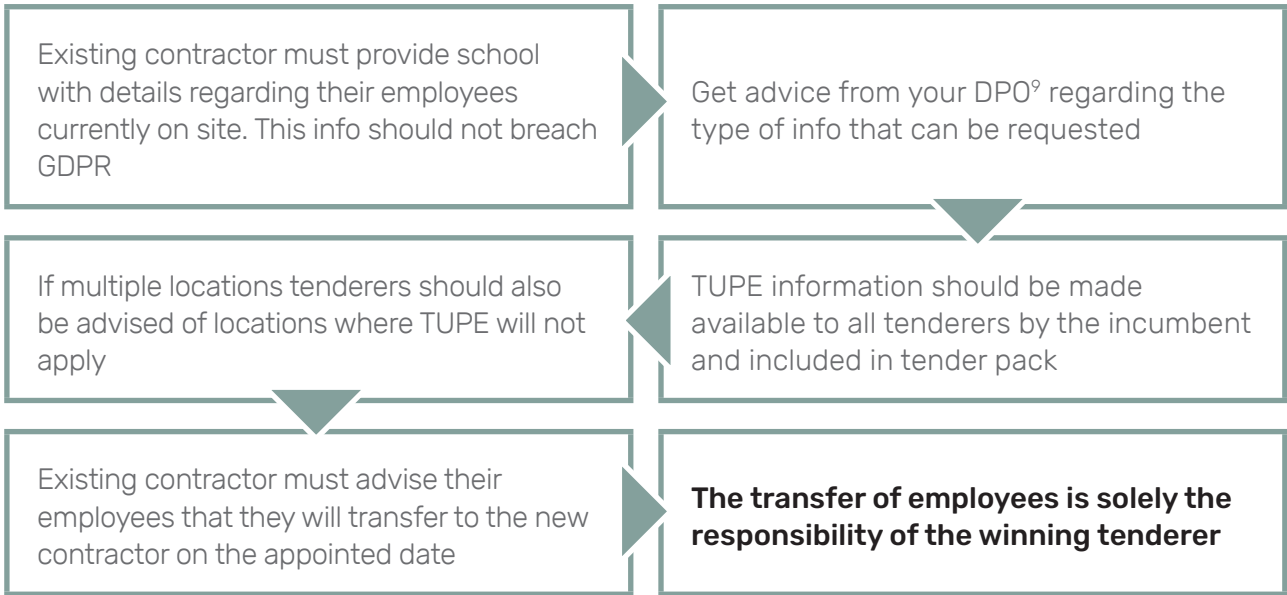
- Is there a transfer of significant intangible or tangible assets?
- Is there a transfer of the majority of workforce associated with the contract?

Key phases

1. Identify if TUPE applies – Identify any risk, seek advice⁸
2. Early preparation – time, staff, HR, cost, employment liabilities, draft agreement (keeping in mind any relevant GDPR rules)
3. Heart of TUPE – identifying, information, consultation with staff, due diligence information and measures.
4. Managing the transfer – induction package, factsheets for customers, payroll, training, mentoring, provision of the workspace and equipment.

⁷ A first-generation transfer arises when a business decides to contract out a function of its business, for example cleaning or catering or security. A second-generation transfer arises where a business decides to change its existing service provider. Bringing back in-house an activity which was previously out sourced to a service provider.

⁸ If an ETB school seek advice from ETB HO, if a non ETB school seek advice from relevant school management body.



For further information on TUPE please refer to *A guide to TUPE transfers* at [Appendix 1](#)

⁹ Data Protection officer. If an ETB school seek advice from ETB HO, if a non-ETB school seek advice from relevant school management body.

THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR CATERING SERVICE TENDERS

TENDERS

If you are an ETB or acting on behalf of a school remember to involve the school in the process as early as possible.



1. Identify Need and Scope Catering Requirement

2. Estimate Catering Service Contract Value & any capital investment

3. Preliminary Market Investigation - who are the suppliers

4. Tender process

- Assess Risks & Identify Suitable Tendering Procedure
- Develop Specification (incl: healthy eating policy) & Requirements for the Catering Service
 - Prepare RFT Documents and decide on Pre-Qualification, Selection & Award Criteria
- Advertise Tender Competition (e-tenders /OJEU) based on Tender Procedure requirements and applicable Contract thresholds
 - Conduct Tender Opening, Validation, Assessment & Evaluation
 - Complete Tender Report & issue Notification of Award Letters

5. Administer/ Manage Contract

- draw up contract documents, setting out the requirements, preferred tenders response & pricing and SLA's included

6. Review Catering Service performance & close contract

SCOPE YOUR REQUIREMENTS

By asking & answering the following questions:

What Organisational Policies are in place that are relevant?

What are the funding arrangements in place in your school?

What is the estimated Catering Contract Value?

Have you a School Meal Scheme and what is the Grant per Meal?

What are your existing Kitchen & Canteen Area Facilities like?

Consider who should pay for the utilities and waste associated with the service provision

What are the catering demand levels?

What are the risks to be aware of?

What's your School Calendar?

Have you considered sustainability?¹⁰

Have you a Healthy Eating Policy in the School?

Is your school interested in the Irish Heart Foundation *Happy Heart @ School Catering Award*?

More details [here](#)

Are there any TUPE Considerations?

What are the possible Cost Models for the catering service?

What are your Student Numbers?

How many eat in the canteen daily on average if service provision already in place?

School mealtimes - one sitting or two?

Indicative Number of Meals Required Daily?

(Ask your current supplier for these figures if applicable).

What kind of flexibility do you require?

Menu Options/Frequency of Rotation of Menus?

Managing Menu Fatigue/ variety/food innovation?

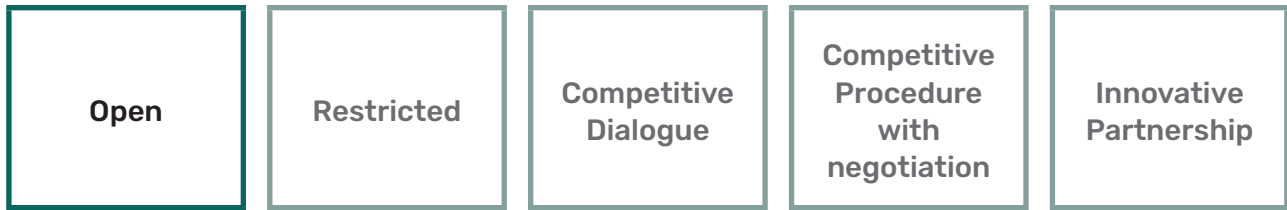
What makes your school attractive to a supplier?

Have you healthy vending machines and who owns/ operates them?

¹⁰ See [Appendix 4](#)

WHAT PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE TO USE?

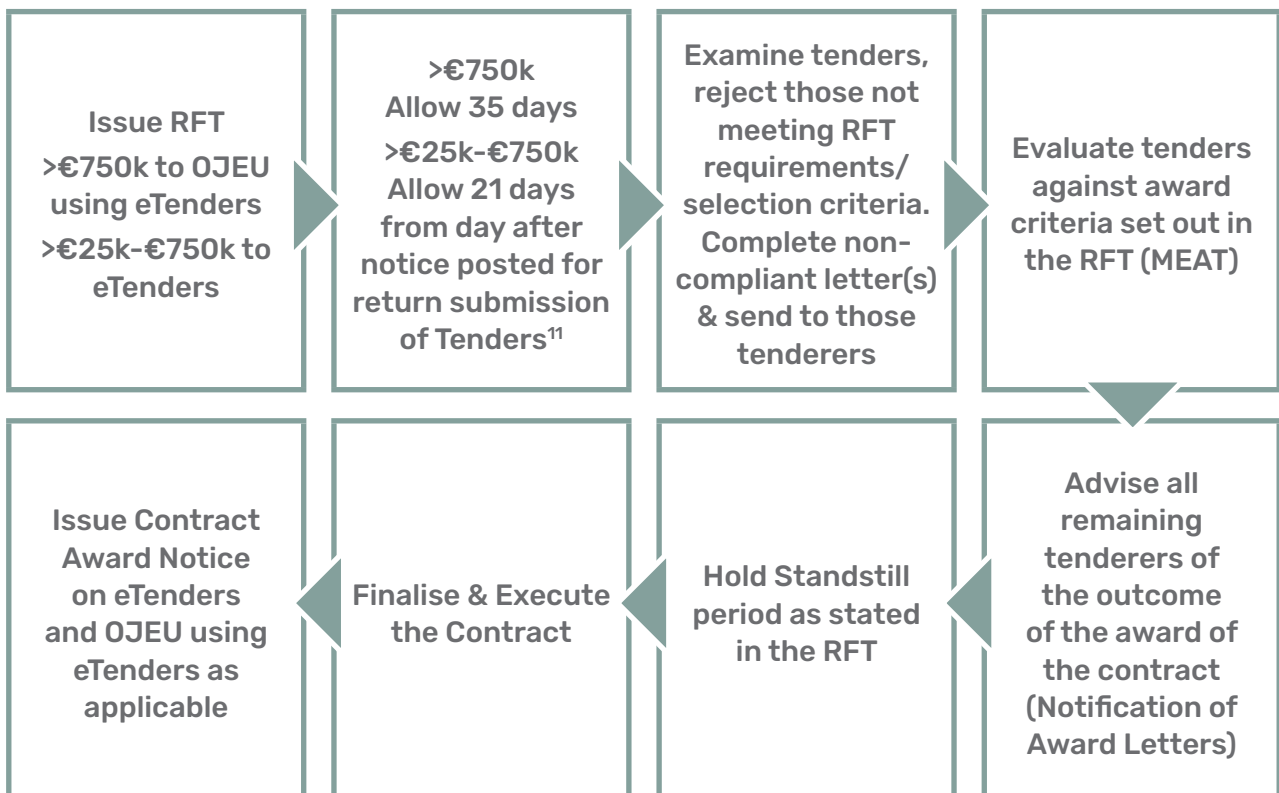
There are 5 main procedures under the 2016 regulations



The 2016 Regulations introduced a simplified award regime for certain services and this regime applies to School Catering Services/School Meal Services. This simplified regime is often referred to as the 'Light Touch Regime' and only apply to School Catering contracts with an estimated value at or above €750,000.

The preferred and most commonly used option across the post-primary sector is the **Open Procedure**, but it is at the discretion of each contracting authority to use alternative procedures which best suit their specific needs.

Open Procedure



¹¹ If you can, consider allowing the full 35 days so your tender is more supplier-friendly – it would also allow more time for site visit, clarifications and a bidder's briefing whilst in the market

Competitive Procedure with Negotiation

The **Competitive Procedure with Negotiation** may only be used in specific circumstances and is recommended **only** where schools do not hold enough information on the numbers of users of the service and/or current commercial value of the canteen contract to the market/supplier/tenderer. **If you wish to utilise the competitive procedure you are strongly advised to seek professional procurement advice.**

For tender templates for below and above EU threshold for open see [Appendix 1](#).

Request for Tender documents for catering services generally have three key elements;

- **Selection Criteria**
- **Qualitative Award Criteria**
- **Pricing/Concession Fee**

The following information are recommendations for you to include in your concession catering Request for Tender document. **Only use those criteria that best match the outcome you are seeking to achieve and that suits the individual schools' requirements.**

SELECTION CRITERIA

Ensure that each of the selection criteria and rules used are relevant and proportionate to the subject matter and will not result in the inappropriate inclusion/exclusion of tenderers.

European Single Procurement Document (ESPD)

From 28 January 2019, the ESPD will be provided in exclusively electronic format (eESPD) on the ETenders platform for all procurement processes that are valued above the relevant EU thresholds. See [here](#) for information. **While ESPD is only required for above EU Threshold tenders, if a supplier is interested in competing for multiple tenders, it may be worth encouraging them to complete the ESPD so that they are tender-ready.**

Under the 2014 Directives, suppliers may have compiled an ESPD which will be accepted as evidence of compliance with legal and financial requirements. However, the Contracting Authority will also require evidence relating to technical capacity (i.e. quality assurance, health & safety, environmental policies/systems), mere confirmation will not be enough under these headings.

Please note that if the tenderer has not compiled an ESPD they must still provide details of all legal and financial requirements as requested by the Contracting Authority.

Prior to the award of any framework agreement / contract, the Contracting Authority will request evidence of self-declared information prior to award decision.

SELECTION CRITERIA
Company details including address and contacts
Declaration of Bona Fides as per Article 57 Directive 2014/24/EU as implemented by Si 284 of May 2016
Tax Compliance
Turnover
Insurances

Recommended Insurance Levels

Public Liability:

€6.5 million for any one claim or series of claims arising out of a single occurrence.

Employers Liability:

€12.7 million for any one claim or series of claims arising out of a single occurrence (where required).

Product Liability:

€6.5 million for any one claim or series of claims arising out of a single occurrence

The following are some suggested minimum standards when setting technical capacity:

TECHNICAL CAPACITY

Previous Contracts (two comparable projects, similar in scale and nature, including the range of food provided and their experience in providing seasonal/organic menu options, in the past five years).

Access to minimum levels of staffing and skills as detailed in specification, as per the FSAI guidelines in addition to an **organisation chart**.

Environmental - details of sustainable environmental policies and systems in place and whether third-party certified.

Health & Safety - details of health and safety policies and whether third-party certified.

Quality Assurance - details of quality assurance systems and whether third-party certified.

The Healthy eating policy example included at [Appendix 5](#) is a good starting point for developing your technical specification. It constitutes the minimum compliance requirements that must be met by all tenderers. Offers not complying with the technical specification/healthy eating policy must be rejected, they are strictly pass/fail requirements.

For DEIS schools or schools that qualify for the Schools Meal Scheme consider including a section for tenderers to self- declare the following:

- Tenderers guarantee that they can meet the funding arrangements per child under the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the Department of Education and Skills
- Tenderers agree to provide menu proposals that adhere to the Department of Health guidelines and Food Pyramid proposals see [here](#)
- Tenderers accept that the contract is conditional on the provision of continuous funding through the School Meals Programme Initiative.

Provide a note to Tenderers that DEIS schools are subject to regular DoES inspections to ensure that the School Meals Initiative is being managed efficiently and in line with national guidelines in relation to the provision of healthy eating options for learners.

LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE: The following are some examples of some relevant legislation/ regulations with which you should require any suppliers to self-declare that they are in compliance:¹²

Employment Equality Acts 1998 - 2011
Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2011
Disability Act 2005
National Minimum Wage Act 2000 as amended
Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 as amended
**Safety , Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 and Safety, Health & Welfare at Work
General (Application) Regulations 2007**

**Standards (based on the HACCP Regulations and in compliance with the relevant
legislation and FSAI guidance notes) in respect of the following:**

Cleaning and Sanitation
Personal Hygiene Training
Deliveries, Storage, Distribution and Transport
Sustainable Energy & Waste Management
Zoning (separation of activities to prevent potential food contamination)
Management of Allergens and customer facing declarations on same

HACCP Regulations:

Regulation EC/852/2004 on Hygiene of Foodstuffs (guidance found in IS 340:2007 - NSAI
Hygiene in the Catering Sector
Regulation SI.489/2014 on Allergen Labelling
Regulation EC 178/2002 Traceability and Recall
Regulation EC/834/2007 on organic production & labelling
S.I. 619/2001 Safety Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations
S.I. No. 282/2014 on European Union (Packaging Regulations 2014)
S.I. No. 190/2015 - Waste Management (Food Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

¹² Please note this list is not exhaustive and should be updated as appropriate

In addition, you may also require the successful tenderer to implement the recommendations as outlined in the following:

- Green Tenders: [An Action Plan on Green Public Procurement](#), Chapter 9
- New Directive on healthy options in food (Calorie Counting) when enacted
- Social Considerations see [here](#) for OGP information note
- Have procedures in place to ensure that Subcontractor Providers, if any that are used for this contract, apply the same standards.

Additional requirements:

- (Optional) Managerial staff (contract manager and/or daily leader) to have a minimum of 2 years' experience. They **must** also have a minimum Level III as a legal requirement per FSAI Training Guidelines (www.fsai.ie/faq/training.html)
- (Optional) Operational staff, to have a minimum of 1 years' relevant experience (canteen service). They **must** also have a minimum Level II as a legal requirement per FSAI Training Guidelines (www.fsai.ie/faq/training.html).

Recommended Conditions

- All staff must be proficient in English and or other language of choice.
- All staff garda vetted in advance of working onsite at the school's premises (and provide evidence on request) Updates are available on the DES (Department of Education and Skills) [website](#)
- May require that staff attend child protection training provided by ETB or school.
- All tenders must attend a school site visit before submitting a response, to assess fully the area assigned for the delivery of the catering service.
- Canteen Security - the successful tenderer has the right to possession of the kitchen and ancillary areas during the catering service contract and the right to exclude others from this area. The canteen provider will be responsible for appointing a member of staff to ensure the opening up and locking up of this canteen area. This arrangement must be agreed with the School in order to meet the school's overall security requirements on site.¹³

¹³ In order for the income generated from the canteen service to be exempt from VAT – it must meet the ECJ criteria. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has determined that a VAT-exempt letting exists where the letting is for an agreed period, the tenant has the right of possession of the property during the letting period and the tenant has the right to exclude others from the property. ETBs/ Schools should contact their finance department/local tax District office should they require guidance on whether a particular lease or license agreement may be regarded as a VAT-exempt letting.

You also might want to include in your requirements:

- ability of pupils/staff that bring in their own lunch/meals to eat them in the school canteen areas
- school may need to use the kitchen and canteen areas as required for other events such as graduations e.g. changing the table configuration etc. and the school will expect the full co-operation from the successful tenderer.

AWARD CRITERIA

Contracting authorities (ETBs / Schools) need to decide upon the final tenders or offers based on objective award criteria. Such award shall be made based on the most economically advantageous tender determined according to price or cost, using a cost-effectiveness approach, and may include the best price-quality ratio which shall be assessed based on criteria linked to the subject matter, with characteristics specific to the product/service being procured, including qualitative, environmental and / or social aspects, linked to the subject matter of the public contract in question.

Sample Award Criteria

Only tenders meeting the selection criteria and confirmed as valid and responsive to the specifications set out should be evaluated against the award criteria.

The following are sample criteria and sub-criteria that can be considered for use as award criteria in a concession catering tender. Only use the criteria that is representative of the requirements set out in your individual tender. The importance of the criteria should be weighted as such, in descending order within the tender document, highlighting the weighting and the sub-weighting for each. It is an option to highlight the minimum marks which must be met also. See [Appendix 1](#) for RFT templates which include suggested minimum scores

ADVICE

- get some advice on your RFT and SLA to ensure they are robust
- check if any FOI or Data protection implications



The award criteria you use should allow the tenderer to best understand the response you are looking for, hence, to best demonstrate their ability in meeting the requirements of the tender. It is also recommended that the evaluation team test your criteria by putting themselves in the position of the tenderer when reading the award criteria – are the responses the evaluation team would like to receive evident from the content and wording of the award criteria set out?

Criterion 1:

Quality and range of services to be provided incorporating the following elements:

(Sample sub criteria to be considered and to suit your own schools' requirements):

- Proposed methodology on the operation of the service on a typical school day, including food preparation, traceability and presentation.
- Please describe how your organisation will ensure that the food it serves is tasty, well-presented and professionally served
- Development of a food plan that integrates quality, variety, seasonality, palatability and meal balance, frequency and portion size appropriate to the age group and diversity of the school community
- Quality guarantees in term of nutrient-preserving cooking methods, use of short distribution channels, freshness and traceability of food origin
- Details on range of food, proposed menus, sample menu design, food merchandising & display of food and pricing for each of the service requirements (breakfast, break, lunch and evening if applicable).
- Please describe how your organisation will measure and manage the nutritional aspects of its service provision
- Proposals for marketing and promotional plans to increase customer usage and participation whilst operating the canteen.
- Proposed marketing plan, communication with all parties concerned, loyalty rewards, how the service provision will be measured and how will it evolve
- Proposal to meet management requirements for board meetings, events, etc. and proposed price lists.
- Seek information about how the plan to track school meals e.g. signing in by students/ swipe cards/fobs etc.¹⁴
- Seek commitment to registering the premises with the HSE
- Attach proposed menus, price lists for each of the seasons within the academic school year
- Assess tenderers on their demonstrated understanding of the specific needs of the contract, the range and variety of menus proposed and the health and nutritional make-up of the menus.

¹⁴ See [Appendix 6](#) for info on cashless canteens

Criterion 2:

Proposed plan for refurbishment of the canteen/kitchen.

(Sub-criteria could refer to the following elements where appropriate and request indicative timelines for each)

- Scope of the construction work
- Electrical requirements
- Plumbing requirements
- Flooring proposal
- Colour scheme proposed, and scope of the painting works
- Equipment to be installed
- Timelines & details of any subcontractors and ESPD for each sub-contracting company.
- Proposed canteen furniture and colours
- Draft design of healthy eating promotional material for display in the canteen area.
- Details of the quality of dinnerware including cups, plates, bowls, glassware and cutlery.
- Proposed innovative design and display solutions suitable for a school environment.
- Proposal for management of utilities including the provision of a separate electricity/gas meter.
- Proposal for the management and storage of stock and food deliveries.
- Provision of a drawing showing the proposed layout of the refurbished kitchen/canteen area and the realistic timeframe for the completion of the works.
- Request for a structured estimated timeline for proposed mobilisation/ transition
- Works and supply of equipment will be at the expense of the successful tenderer and the kitchen/canteen area must be fully operational in time for the school year. **Consider asking the tenderers to highlight key challenges and milestones envisaged.**

SPECIFY

- How the tenderer is to manage utilities i.e. should they need to install a separate meter and supply their own refuse bins.



Criterion 3: Health & Safety:

Sample sub criteria:

- Provide evidence of compliance with food safety requirements. (This could be confirmed through copies of Environmental Health officer's inspection reports and feedback and food hygiene ratings)
- Provide details of any audit programmes which will be used to manage food safety and hygiene
- Procedures used in food traceability, how suppliers are accredited.
- Describe Sustainable Packaging & Waste Management efficiencies proposed to be undertaken
- Measures taken with regard to environmental impact, health and staff assistance,
- How customer complaints/incidents in relation to (but not limited to) food products, foreign materials and or those of a medical nature will be resolved.
- Provide evidence of compliance with food safety requirements. (This could be confirmed through copies of Environmental Health officer's inspection reports and feedback and food hygiene ratings)
- Provide details of any audit programmes which will be used to manage food safety and hygiene
- Procedures used in food traceability, how suppliers are accredited.
- Describe Sustainable Packaging & Waste Management efficiencies proposed to be undertaken
- Measures taken with regard to environmental impact, health and staff assistance,
- How customer complaints/incidents in relation to (but not limited to) food products, foreign materials and or those of a medical nature will be resolved.

Criterion 4: Resources & Contract Management

Seek an outline of organisation's customer service procedures, key account personnel and escalation procedures including:

- Management organisation structure & Key account personnel
- Description of management systems used in order to continually improve performance.
- How will energy use be managed, including details of roles and responsibilities, staff training on the correct use of energy using equipment and the routine maintenance of energy using equipment's.
- Details of how staff are recruited, holiday cover options and topics and types of training offered to staff
- Customer service procedures including escalation procedures & sample complaints procedure
- Concession fee validation process, e.g. EPOS
- Outline of MI reports to be provided to ETB/ school management, including information to be included, means of report communication and frequency of Management Information (MI) report
- Performance in terms of professional integration of disadvantaged groups

Criterion 5: Innovation¹⁵

Sample sub criteria:

- Cashless options
- Innovations to address menu fatigue
- Theme days
- Educational days/packs shared with key teaching staff where applicable to the curriculum
- Plans to optimise nutritional context and sustainable healthy eating focus

Criterion 6: Financial Proposals

Tenderers should outline their cost proposal by completing and signing the Form of Tender.

- Proposed annual concession fee to be paid to school: if applicable, select one of the following:

a) % based on actual sales – marks awarded for it
or

b) Fixed fee set by School / ETB – no marks awarded for it
or

c) Fixed fee proposed by supplier as requested in the tender – marks awarded for it
or combination of a) & b)

- Propose payment cycle
- Concession fee validation process e.g. EPOS if based on % of turnover



Don't

- guarantee numbers
- specify unrealistic deliverables

¹⁵ See [Appendix 2](#)

Presentations/ Clarification meetings:

If the evaluation team consider inviting presentations by suppliers, this should be approached with caution and not without the advice/support of professional procurement personnel.¹⁶ If presentations are to be marked this must be clearly flagged in the RFT. Sometimes a presentation might be considered where tenderers have been asked to meet certain minimum requirements of other key award criteria, which have already been evaluated and the evaluation team would like an opportunity to meet and allow proposals on other key criteria NOT already scored in the evaluation process¹⁷

OR

A presentation might be used to validate criteria already scored with **no new information provided** and no marking of presentations, as part of a clarification meeting.

Tenderers may have spent a considerable period of time completing a tender document and generally welcome the opportunity to actually meet the contracting authority. However, this interaction must be managed and recorded.



Samples

Be careful about sampling food/awarding marks.

1. It is very subjective.
2. Very tempting for suppliers to provide '5 star' samples which may not be sustainable cost-wise throughout the contract.

Include Service Level Agreement template in your tender Documentation

The objectives of an SLA are as follows:

- To provide a guide on the day-to-day operation of a contract.
- Establish a detailed common understanding of the services to be delivered by the Service Provider and the Client's expectations for each aspect of the contract
- Define a system of objective service level monitoring
- Provide a system for appropriate contract management and reporting

¹⁶ ETB schools should contact their [Head Office](#) and non-ETB schools should contact [SPU](#)

¹⁷ Those tenderers who meet this requirement should be contacted to present to the evaluation committee, on their proposals of criteria set out in the tender document for this stage of the evaluation process. How the marks will be allocated should also be set out and published with the RFT along with the estimated date and times of the presentation, perhaps as an Appendix to the main RFT document.

Sample Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Menu, as per Healthy Eating Initiative
- Quality and Freshness of Food
- Choice of Food
- Presentation of Food
- Quality of Service
- Price
- Innovation
- Conduct of Staff
- Cleanliness

SPECIFY

- How menu & price changes are to be managed
- How concessionary fees will be calculated and paid



The school/ ETB will set out in the RFT document when the successful tenderer will meet with the school Principal and/or another member of staff at a prearranged time each year to discuss performance. The successful tenderer could be asked to organise customer satisfaction surveys regarding quality and consistency of the menu(s) and these results must be shared with the school Principal / personnel in advance of the annual performance review.

Sample SLAs are included at [Appendix 1](#)

Tender templates (25k – 749.99k), including sample SLA and Contract Ts & Cs

Tender templates (> 750k), including sample SLA and Contract Ts & Cs

PREPARING FOR EVALUATION

If you haven't done so already, ensure that all members of the tender evaluation team have completed and returned their signed Conflict of interest/ confidentiality form (see [Appendix 1](#))

It is critical for the team to work together during the evaluation period as the goal is to make a structured and unified selection.

The approach must be:

- Highly structured
- Detailed timeline
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Objectivity
- Separate quantitative and qualitative evaluation (best practice suggests different team members evaluate)
- Fact-based analysis using the scoring method as set out in RFTs documentation

Benefits of a Team Approach

- Incorporates multi-disciplinary skill sets
- Rationalise Specifications
- Greater commitment from end-users upfront
- Total cost perspective
- Emphasise long-term strategic objectives
- Form a supportive environment during the sourcing and contract management phases

The key point in evaluations is that the same people on the evaluation team review the same part of the tender document for each of the tenderers and that the team has the appropriate mix of skills, experience.

Process

- Tender submissions must be received on time
- Option of electronic submission on ETenders
- Make a record of delivery and receipt
- Remain sealed, but open as early as possible
- Must be opened appropriately¹⁸
- Upon opening, record against a checklist;
 - Signed Tender
 - Signed Declaration
 - Completeness; numbers of soft & hard copies etc.
 - Price summary page
- The price summary should be notarised by witnesses and recorded – parties agree that the price submitted was not modified
- The process is subject to audit.

Evaluation can only include what was being asked within the Tender document. However, opinions can be exchanged, identifying and discussing anomalies in scoring, get a rounded view of all responses, then consensus.

¹⁸ ETB Policy: two people to include one member of the Management Team and a staff member. Schools: Principal and two other members from the Board of Management

Scoring of Award Criteria

- Use the same scorecard process for each evaluation of award criteria
- These must have been communicated to Tenderers at the time of issuing the tender.
- Identify any pass/fail criteria – this also must have been communicated at the time of issuing the tender.
- Decide if the team will score collectively or individually.
- Individual score from evaluation team should be consolidated and agreed.
- Various Price scoring mechanism can be considered.

You must notify the tenderers that have not passed the selection criteria, at that point in time, – stage 1 complete. The team must then continue to evaluate the remainder of the tender, award criteria – stage 2.

Standstill period (above EU 750k)

Must be 14 days (if sent electronically) 16 days if sent by post between award decision and contract conclusion (i.e. Must be 14 days after tenderers have received notification of standstill period)

- Tenderers must be given enough information to assess whether the award appears valid or there are grounds for appeal as per Remedies Directive
- Clock only starts whenever information has been received.
- Notice to appeal should be served within 14 days (by the Tenderer)
- Tenderers must lodge an objection within 30 days from the date when “grounds for the application first rose” – Court Order 84

Standstill period (below EU (25k – 749.99k)

Voluntary 7 days best practice

Conclusion of Evaluation Process

- Good tender design will give you good outcomes
- Gives you the opportunity for creative and innovative solutions
- Allow enough time to do a thorough evaluation
- Use a panel of experts to conduct evaluation
- Once tender has been awarded, implementation is key

Notification letters: OGP model letter templates for above 750k contracts [here](#)

Below threshold model letters available [here](#) if ETB school

Below threshold model letters available [here](#) if non-ETB school

MANAGING THE CONTRACT

Contract management is an integral part of the tender process from the development of the specification to the award and roll-out of the contract. Contract management combines administrative activities such as invoicing, in addition to maintaining a strategic focus on managing the relationship and managing the supplier market environment. The contract performance conditions are used to specify how a contract must be carried out and must be linked to the contract's subject matter. Compliance of such should only be monitored during the execution of the contract, therefore, after it has been awarded. It may be linked to penalties or bonuses under the contract in order to ensure compliance. For example, amount/percentage of fresh vegetables provided relative to the quantity specified in the bid, or monthly report of meals provided, foods consumed and assessed against nutrient requirements.



Don't accept

- sub-standard workmanship
- layouts that compromise your obligations
- compromises on H&S / food safety



Some common contract management issues that arise in catering contracts include:

- Menu changes without consulting and validating same with the school management
- Introduction of unhealthy options
- Staff changes
- Permission in advance
- Costs, late payments to the school
- Opening hours
- Cleaning
- Lack of marketing and promotion from the service provider to increase sales, footfall, failing to keep the menus interesting



Remember that poorly constructed contracts are more difficult to manage

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Project Team:

Veronica Feeney, Cavan & Monaghan ETB

Fiona Coy, Schools Procurement Unit

Gwen Moore, Education & Training Boards Ireland

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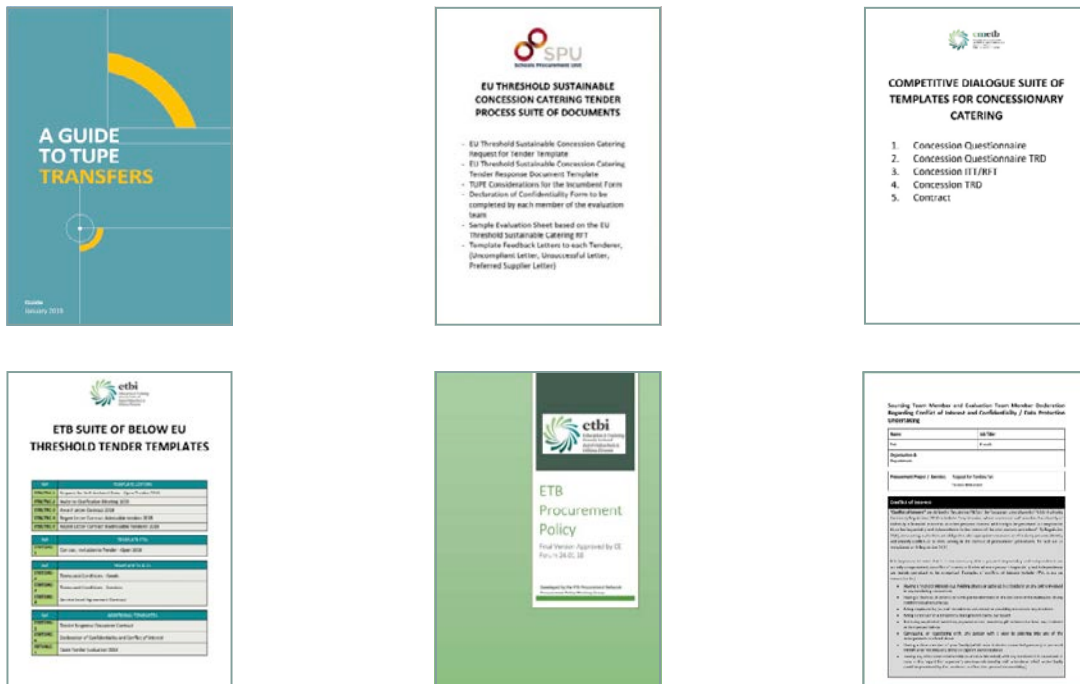
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Guides & Templates

The following guides are available by clicking on the document below:



The following guides and templates are available as follows: ETBs can download all from log-in section of the ETBI website [here](#) Non-ETB schools can request directly from SPU [here](#)



Appendix 2: Innovation

Sample Marketing and promotional plans to increase customer usage & participation (in no particular order);

- Loyalty card
- Social Media
- Focus Group
- Offers and promo's
- Word of Mouth
- Sampling
- Digital Customer Feedback/Portal
- Local Benchmarking
- 4 Quarterly marketing packs
- Monthly healthy eating themed modules
- Customer engagement portal
- At launch: teaser leaflets & vouchers, special offers & freebies, messages & easy competitions
- Collect 1 point each time you choose china over disposables – collect 10 = free gift
- Big Screens
- Diabetes Diet, Healthy Heart Diet, Hypertension Diet, Cholesterol Lowering Diet, Weight Loss Diet, Gluten Free, nut free, lactose free, egg free
- Mystery Shopper
- Tailored marketing plan: Communicate/give info – Feedback & receive feedback, Recognise & reward loyalty – Measure & evolve services – back to Communicate...

Sample Managing Menu Fatigue, nutritional & healthy eating focus;

- Service provider meets with their suppliers to discuss seasonality, locally sourced
- Colour coding menus
- Menu rotation: superfoods, wholegrain, protein, quinoa, low-fat milk, almond milk, greens, plant based
- Grab n Go range – soups, pots, pasta pots
- Big bowl suggestions
- Innovate with texture & taste, colour & shape
- Health & wellbeing – traffic light system
- Informing customers about choices
- Station identifiers so customers can map out their journey throughout the service area
- Retro – classic comfort food
- Eat well – be well; jelly pots, tray bakes
- Urban; food on the edge
- Porridge station, granola, fruit compote
- Mug of Soup
- Deli station, salad station (choose base, combine, add protein, top it, dress it, toss to serve)
- Pop-ups; tool for education, ingredients, local artisan suppliers, food trends, local breads & dips
- Fix wellness juices
- Recording the financial success of each innovation
- Only sell what sells
- Guidance on daily amounts to help customers make informed choice in selection

Appendix 3: CPV codes

Regulation (EC) No 2195/2002 established the **Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV)**, a single classification system applicable to public procurement, to standardise the references used by contracting authorities and entities (ETBs and Schools) to describe the subject of their contracts, when utilising the eTender website. Service providers are linked to specific CPV codes and will receive an automatic notification of a tender when that CPV code is chosen by the ETB / School. Below are some relevant CPV codes for procuring catering services:

CPV code	Description
15894210-6	School meals.
55500000-5	Canteen and catering services.
55510000-8	Canteen services.
55511000-5	Canteen and other restricted-clientele cafeteria services.
55512000-2	Canteen management services.
55520000-1	Catering services.
55523000-2	Catering services for other enterprises or other institutions.
55523100-3	School-meal services.
55524000-9	School catering services.

Appendix 4: Sustainability ¹⁹

Sustainable procurement approach in food and catering tender calls:

Procurement Stage	Examples of sustainable procurement criteria
Exclusion	Exclusion for violation of laws or failure to pay tax or social security.
Selection	<p>Operation of an environmental management system for catering services, including e.g. energy and waste management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous experience in managing environmental and social aspects of food production or service contracts. • Reservation of contracts for enterprises employing disadvantaged workers or sheltered companies. • Food safety record and procedures (e.g. HACCP).
Technical specification	<p>Provision of food and beverages from organic agriculture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of packaging from recycled or renewable sources which can be reused or recycled after use. • Use of cleaning products and equipment (e.g. dishwashers) which meet specified environmental standards. • Availability of tap water, half portions and vegetarian options.
Award criteria	<p>Provision of menus which are healthy, varied and use sustainable food e.g. seasonal fruit and vegetables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher percentage of food from organic agriculture than specification. • Use of tea, coffee, sugar or other products which meet fair trade criteria. • Approach to reducing food and packaging waste.
Contract performance	<p>Training of staff to support sustainable practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting targets for reduction in waste or increase in recycling rates. • Payment of living wages and rostering which respects family life. • Handover of data to enable transfer of undertakings (if relevant).

Good practice guide [here](#)

¹⁹ Extract from Procura+ manual European Sustainable Procurement Network "A Guide to implementing sustainable procurement (3rd edition)

Appendix 5: Sample healthy eating policy

School Name

School Logo

Healthy Eating Policy

The [ETB/ board of management] set as one of its priorities for _____
a review of the provision of food in the school. This was done via _____

It has been decided that any ambition to promote healthy eating in the school requires a whole school approach. This will address all aspects of food consumption in the school, whether the food is directly provided by the school/community or brought in by pupils. It also connects food consumption to other issues such as physical exercise, the school curriculum, environmental awareness and home-school-community links. Education on food safety and hygiene, nutrition, waste disposal and composting, and reviewing our current canteen service will be the focus. Furthermore, part of this work involves the development of a healthy eating policy for the school.

In developing this policy, we will involve parents, students, staff and board of management in a collaborative process. These guidelines will be reviewed every two years.

This draft policy statement on healthy eating which will be considered further by the whole school community of students, parents, staff and board of management in the _____ school year.

School Mission Statement

The mission statement of _____

Rationale

There is such a level of research now focusing on healthy eating and of the consequences to the health of the nation if we do not change existing practices that it is incumbent on our school to provide leadership in promoting healthy eating.

Adolescence is a time for developing the skills to make informed choices and decisions throughout life. What we eat and drink is one such choice. Young people need to be aware of the importance of good nutrition for health in order to optimise their growth, health and developmental potential through their teenage years and beyond.

Adolescence is a time of physical growth and development – the most rapid since infancy. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients. Food and nutrition are central to the physical and cognitive development of children and young people, which in turn contributes to educational success;

A positive experience of food in schools can filter through to children's homes and shape their attitudes to food and consumption patterns in later life;

Aims and Objectives

1. To help develop positive attitudes in all those involved in our school community, students, staff and parents, to eating and healthy living.
2. To promote 'the personal development and well-being of the student and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects' (Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) Guidelines).
3. Provide guidelines to encourage healthy eating habits. This will help to increase awareness, to enable students to learn about different foods so that they make informed choices throughout their life.
4. To recognise the dietary needs of all pupils and aim to ensure that all pupils' individual and cultural needs are met
5. To provide excellent catering facilities for our students, staff and others, with healthy affordable food and drink options.
6. To monitor and review the schools practise and policy and, if necessary, make amendments

Whole School Actions

1. The school will adopt a whole school approach to healthy living which include healthy eating. This approach will be supported in all curricular areas but especially in Science, Civic, Social and Political Education (C.S.P.E.), and S.P.H.E.
2. Our healthy eating guidelines will enable the students to develop and understand healthy living and develop an ability to implement healthy behaviour and willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health. This also includes physical activity.
3. All the junior classes will be taught a module on healthy eating in their S.P.H.E. classes.
4. School staff will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthier eating.
5. The school will organise and hold a Healthy Eating Awareness week annually, activities may include;
 - inviting guest speakers into the classroom
 - offering healthy options in the canteen at reduced prices
 - hosting a healthy-eating cookery demonstrations/competition
 - holding art/slogan competitionsThe activities deemed to be the most beneficial may be repeated at appropriate times throughout the school year and integrated into school life.
6. School rewards and treats will adhere to the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
7. The cookery classes in transition year and Leaving Certificate Applied will follow the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
8. Aim to earn a Happy Heart@School Catering [Award](#) in collaboration with the service provider.

9. Support the service provider in promoting sustainable healthy foods and drink options in our canteen, for example, involving a group of students and offering them specific roles in promoting and marketing healthy eating helps to influence the wider student body.
10. Increasing the service and range available to students via a breakfast club, meal deals, providing a minimum of two hot meals daily and an after-school club, where snacks and drinks (provision of water in general purpose area) will be provided.
11. To encourage parents to play a role, it is important to offer them support. This may take many forms (e.g. being kept informed via newsletter/flyer, information home on healthy eating and the nutrition needs of a young person).

Healthy Eating Guidelines

Students are encouraged to eat sustainable healthy food in our school and is guided by way of the food pyramid. Examples of foods and drinks we recommend and endeavour to provide include;

Bread, Cereals, Potatoes, Pasta, and Rice

- One or more types of food from this group should be offered at each meal. A choice of wholemeal/ wholegrain should be included e.g. wholemeal bread, cereal, rice, pasta, potato with skin.
- Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than one day each week e.g. chips, wedges.

Fruit and Vegetables

- One or more portions of seasonal vegetables or salads must be offered as part of a hot meal, sandwich or as an accompaniment every day.
- Whole or chopped seasonal fruit should be available all day, every day.

Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese

- At least one portion of food from this group should be provided in the canteen every day and low-fat options should be available e.g. low-fat spread, yoghurt, milk, and cheese.

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Egg, Beans and Nuts

- At least one meat or poultry and one other choice of food from this group should be offered daily. One serving is 4oz/100g of raw meat, poultry or fish, 6 dessertspoons of peas or beans.
- Offer fish as part of a main dish at least once a week. Include oil rich fish on the menu at least once a week such as salmon as a main dish or as a sandwich or salad choice.

Healthier Drinks

- Tap water shall be visible and freely available, and such provision should be promoted. Pre-bottled water (mineral / spring) shall not be included in the menu. Do not offer sugar-sweetened drinks. No added sugar juice drinks and milk (less than 5% sugar content) are acceptable. *Staff have the right to confiscate fizzy drinks and high-caffeine drinks or any other foods deemed inappropriate, from students on school grounds.*

Foods High in Fat Sugar and Salt

- Foods from the top shelf of the Food Pyramid i.e. high in fat, sugar and salt are not to be provided e.g. chocolate bars, crisps, sweets, cakes, pastries or sugar-sweetened drinks. Alternatives such as popcorn, dried fruit, unsalted nuts & nut bars²⁰, rice and oatcakes are suggested.
- If hot food is provided, food that is deep-fried, batter-coated, or processed should be offered no more than twice week.
- Fresh seasonal produce (organic) where possible, fruits vegetables, grains and other foods that maybe new to students
- Menu to include a range of locally sourced items along with a greater use of sustainable food, for example, in season produce, high animal welfare standards on meat, free range eggs, marine conservation certified fish, fair trade produce, produce from certified organic source
- In season produce shall be highlighted on menus by the service provider in the canteen
- The menu is to accommodate those with food intolerances and allergies, from lactose free, to vegetarian to gluten free for example. Successful tenderer to check with the school upon award of contract the details of such in order to accommodate those potential customers
- The menu should reflect the age of the student, their background, and their capacity to learn healthy and sustainable food behaviours through different human development stages
- Quality of food, presentation and service is to be monitored by the service provider in the canteen
- Provision of menus which are healthy, varied and use sustainable food for example, seasonal fruit and vegetables
- Homemade soup (daily)
- 2 healthy hot meals (daily) along with details of portion sizes appropriate to the customer type, half portions (to be available daily), and vegetarian option
- 1 fully organic meal to be served each week
- Provision of healthy sandwiches/baps/wraps/rolls (daily)
- At least 50% of tea, coffee, sugar or other products must be produced in accordance with fair trade standards
- Savoury snacks to be only available in sizes of 30g or less
- Salt shall not be available on tables
- No added sugar cereal bars
- Food must be safe, i.e. it must not be injurious to health or unfit for human consumption.
- Unsafe food must be withdrawn from sale or recalled from consumers if it has already been sold

²⁰ Check compliance with your school's policy on nuts

Students may choose to bring in their lunches from home or purchase within the school. **However, food purchased outside of the school or brought in from home must be in compliance with the above list.** By making changes to portion size, in addition to changing the types of foods chosen, significant reductions of calories and dietary fat, reduction of salt intake can achieve positive wellbeing and general good health.

Responsibility for Review

- Staff; feedback on their classroom success or otherwise. This will be discussed at a staff meeting.
- Pupils will be asked to contribute to the review by offering suggestions on other healthy snacks/meals that could be included in the school menu.
- Parents; The Parent Association will be asked to comment on the policy and its implementation.
- The review will be co-ordinated by the Healthy Eating Policy Committee.

The Board of Management will discuss the policy and any recommendations will be included in the review.

This draft policy will be reviewed and expanded during the _____ school year.

Appendix 6: Cashless Canteens

Schools are increasingly moving toward introducing electronic payment options. The Department of Education & Skills recently led a sector wide project (including SPU & ETBI) to put in place a multi-supplier Framework Agreement (FWA) to provide a range of ePayments options for schools to consider deploying. These ePayments solutions facilitate the handling of payments from parents to schools electronically (including internet, mobile phone app and chip and pin), while continuing to facilitate those parents who wish to continue making payments by cash or cheque. The three Framework members are MIT, 3Ireland and Payzone, and these companies have the capability to offer cashless canteen solutions to schools. They, and a number of other companies outside of the Framework, also offer external caterers fast and secure alternatives to cash-handling via smartcard options. More information on the Department's FWA for school payments is available [here](#)

Education and Training Boards Ireland

Piper's Hill, Naas,
Co Kildare, W91K729

W: www.etbi.ie

E: procurement@etbi.ie

T: +353 (0)45 901070

Schools Procurement Unit

Emmet House, Dundrum Road,
Milltown, Dublin D14 V3K8

W: www.spu.ie

E: procurementsupport@spu.ie

T: 01 203 5899

F: 01 269 5461