

SEN school guide: Enhancing your school meal service with technology

How digitising your school meal service can reduce costs & increase meal uptake at your SEN school or MAT.



Introduction

SEN educators face significant challenges daily. Many schools have a shortage of specialised SEN staff, combined with high classroom numbers. Additionally, teachers are often juggling the needs of a classroom with different learning styles against a curriculum that isn't always designed for SEN pupils.

These difficulties translate across to school lunches too. Schools need to manage students with varying nutritional and mobility requirements, alongside maintaining menus and a speedy school meal service. Using digital technology for SEN school catering can help ease the admin and creates a traditional dining experience providing your pupils with independence to make their own choices on their school meals.



Digital technology and how it benefits you

Catering for pupils with various SEN requirements daily requires comprehensive care and management. To ensure that each child is protected and has an enjoyable experience, you must be supported by technology that can ease this burden.

Digital technology has transformed the way SEN schools cater for their pupils by providing them with a dining experience that is on par with their peers. Enhancing efficiencies and the effectiveness of school kitchens for caterers, whilst making the service enjoyable for parents and pupils alike.

Solutions offering cashless point of sale (POS) and digital meal ordering are designed specifically with SEN schools in mind – providing you with tailored tools that simplify your school meal service.

Catering to allergens and dietary requirements

All SEN schools understand their duty of care when catering for students, providing comprehensive care around food allergies and dietary requirements.

Providing your team with digital catering solutions that centrally display bespoke menus with images, nutritional information, and any allergen or special dietary flags completely removes the human error of potentially serving an inappropriate meal to a pupil.

Using BlueRunner's solutions, the menu adapts to reflect all allergens and dietary requirements for each pupil, so that students and parents cannot choose meals with ingredients that they are allergic to.



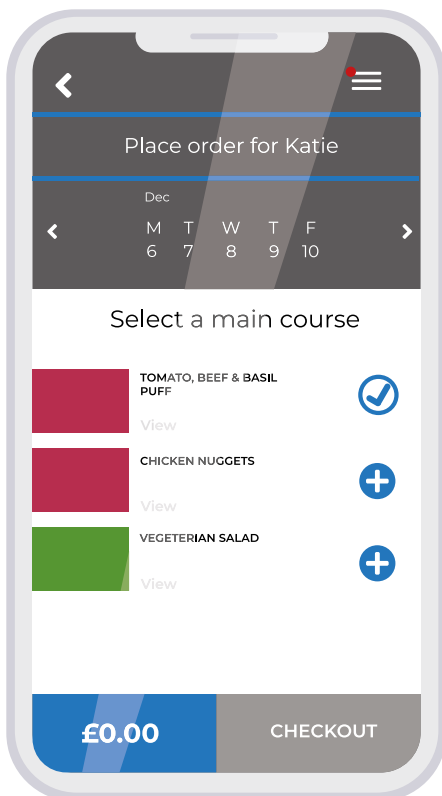
Speeding up service

The last thing you want during a lunchtime rush is to be delayed, spending excessive amounts of time processing orders and payments while students are hungry. Your catering staff are under pressure to cater for a multitude of students with varying needs and it is essential that staff are supported by digital solutions that make their lives easier.

With high classroom numbers in SEN schools, having an effective and quick school meal service can be tricky. That's why it's important to use all available resources to help your school teams improve efficiency and effectiveness wherever possible.

- Invest in modern POS solutions – your school meal service will benefit from a portable tablet-based solution that eliminates the need for costly hardware and can operate without network connectivity.
- Implementing multiple student recognition methods like student RFID or biometric recognition can significantly decrease the time it takes for pupils to pay for or take their school lunch. Having a variety of identification methods means there are options available for students regardless of disability and mobility requirements.

Whether a local authority or a SEN school implementing a digital point-of-sale solution has proven in countless schools to be a queue-buster to your school meal service.



Making school dinners easier for parents and pupils

By using digital ordering systems, you can display full bespoke menus online and on app, as well as ensuring that parents or pupils have complete visibility over available options. This helps make your SEN school meal service more efficient for both your staff and your pupils.

Giving your students and their parents transparency over the booking process helps engage pupils with meals in your SEN school, as they can be involved in deciding what they would like to eat and gives parents peace of mind knowing that their child will only be eating healthy and nutritious meals that take any allergens or special dietary requirements into account.




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