

# INTO THE FUTURE

**A NEW KITCHEN AND SERVERY** at the **Beacon preparatory school** helps to promote healthy, balanced meal choices among pupils





**With pupil numbers rising every year**, the limited space in the kitchen and servery at the Beacon in Chesham Bois, an independent preparatory day school for boys aged four to 13 years, meant the catering facilities needed expanding and upgrading. Independent contract caterers Wilson Vale brought in commercial kitchen design company Catering Design Group (CDG) with a brief to re-design the existing kitchen and servery areas to accommodate not only the increasing numbers, but also the school's forward-thinking values and the caterer's fresh food ethos. "It was vital that the equipment and design were both efficient and flexible to meet Wilson Vale's operational requirements and cope with the school's continued growth," says Philip Howard, managing director at CDG. "For front-of-house it was important that we created a vibrant and stimulating environment, where the benefits of choosing a healthy, balanced meal were showcased in an engaging way for the pupils."

The new facility was required to accommodate large volumes at peak times – approximately 530 pupils, 100 teaching and administration staff, and a busy hospitality service for evening functions. In a single week the catering operation can serve 3,000 school lunches, 100 breakfasts, fine dining for 24 school governors and up to 300 match teas. Although a new extension was built to house the kitchen, space was still somewhat limited so a compact design, effective workflow and multifunctional

equipment to provide maximum flexibility were all crucial factors. The space and layout were improved to maximise operational efficiency, and the incorporation of the latest Frima technology and Rational combination ovens ensure the caterers are able to produce a wide variety of menu items. An area to one side of the kitchen is furnished with Foster refrigerated counters and two freestanding stainless steel benches, providing plenty of space for the preparation of fresh ingredients.

The dining area was designed as a contemporary, interactive experience for both pupils and staff and incorporates the school's brand colours. A new servery was created to showcase the fresh, seasonal ingredients and provide a view of the cooking area, while a window through to the baking area allows pupils to watch their cakes being made.

"The new facility is already having a huge impact on both the staff and pupils, reducing queuing times, enhancing the presentation of the food, whilst also making it a talking point," says Edward Stothard, bursar at the Beacon. "It's not just about where everyone gathers to eat; it's also an educational experience for the boys to learn about the importance of nutrition and making healthy eating choices. The investment is also reaping the benefits from a marketing point of view, when showing around prospective parents."

