**APPENDIX A**

**The Mead Educational Trust – Cashless Catering Solution including Hardware, Software & Support/Maintenance**

**(Required Operational Use – August 2026)**

**Document Control Table**

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**The Mead Educational Trust Details**

(<https://www.tmet.uk>)

The Mead Educational Trust, a Multi Academy Trust based in Leicester and Leicestershire, is seeking to enhance its operational facilities by refreshing its Cashless Catering software and hardware. This tender is aimed at ensuring that our 6 schools already utilising Cashless Catering solutions, are equipped with an effective and reliable solution that meet the dynamic needs of our school environments.

Below is a summary of the specific requirements for each section of the tender.

**Head Office Location:**

The Mead Educational Trust

The Mead Centre

343 Gipsy Lane

Leicester

LE4 9DD

**Our Schools:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **NOR** | **Staff** | **Total** |
| Brook Mead Academy (Secondary) | 1200 | 170 | 1370 |
| Brookvale Groby Learning Campus (Secondary + 6th Form) | 1500 | 180 | 1680 |
| Castle Mead Academy (Secondary) | 1222 | 170 | 1392 |
| Kibworth Mead Academy (Secondary) | 829 | 140 | 969 |
| Orchard Mead Academy (Secondary) | 1099 | 193 | 1292 |
| Rushey Mead Academy (Secondary) | 1744 | 258 | 2002 |
| **TOTAL** | **7,594** | **1,111** | **8,705** |

**This tender refers to:**

1) Cashless Catering Platform (Software Solution)

2) Cashless Catering Hardware

3) Cashless Catering Support & Maintenance

4) Warranty

Through this tender, The Mead Educational Trust aims to establish a partnership with a provider capable of delivering a efficient and reliable solution that supports our mission to provide exceptional education and facilities to our students and staff.

**DETAILED IT REQUIREMENTS**

# Cashless Catering Platform (Software Solution)

The Trust requires a sophisticated, centralised software platform, cloud or centrally hosted, to manage the catering operations across our secondary and sixth-form estates. The solution must provide a seamless interface between the school’s Management Information System (MIS) and the catering point of sale to ensure real-time synchronisation of student and staff data. For example, dietary needs and FSM data should be readily available within the solution and at the POS. Ideally, the system will block any items from being sold to an individual who has allergies/dietary requirements set.

Furthermore, the platform should include a robust parental engagement portal or, preferably, integrate with existing third-party payment providers (Bromcom & Arbor) to facilitate online top-ups and allow parents to monitor nutritional choices and transaction history. The software must be capable of handling complex "meal deal" logic and dietary alerts, which should trigger immediate notifications to the operator upon the identification of a student via their MiFare ID card.

The proposed solution should make use of new technology where possible and introduce methods of use that can improve efficiency of catering services in our schools; thus, to reduce waiting times for students and staff. For example, the use of, but not limited to, self-service kiosk technology.

The solution should provide resilience against network/connectivity failure, allowing the catering service to continue until connectivity back to the server/cloud is restored, effectively creating an “offline” provision.

All solutions will need to abide by GDPR legislation and complete/provide a Data Protection Assessment, in addition to having an effective Cyber Security policy in place.

* **Core Functionality**: The software must provide a robust, cloud-based or centrally hosted platform capable of managing student and staff meal accounts across all 6 sites.
* **Integration**: Must integrate seamlessly with existing School Management Information Systems (MIS) for automated data syncing of student/staff records, dietary needs and FSM (Free School Meal) status.
* **Pre-Ordering & Portals**: Integrate with existing payment providers, such as Bromcom and Arbor MIS, with the choice of a web-based portal and mobile app for parents/students to view balances, transaction history, and pre-order meals to reduce queue times.
* **Reporting**: Comprehensive trust-wide and school-level reporting for financial auditing, VAT accounting, and meal pattern analysis.

# Cashless Catering Hardware

To support the software platform, the Trust requires high-performance, durable Point of Sale (POS) hardware capable of withstanding the rigors of a high-volume secondary school canteen environment. Where possible, existing hardware should be repurposed if capable of running the new solution.

Each terminal must be equipped with a high-resolution touchscreen and a MiFare card reader to maintain consistency with our existing ID card infrastructure. The hardware must demonstrate high reliability during peak service windows, with minimal boot times and rapid processing of transactions to prevent queue congestion. In addition to the till points, bidders should outline their provision for revaluation kiosks or balance-check stations if applicable, though the Trust's preference is for a solution that prioritises digital/online account management. All hardware must be energy efficient and designed for easy cleaning and maintenance by onsite catering staff.

Initial quantities required for hardware are outlined in the App D - The Mead Educational Trust - Cashless Catering Tender 2026 - Cost Matrix. However, please note that the Trust holds the right to reasonably change quantities with the schools changing requirements when awarding the contract.

* **Point of Sale (POS)**: Terminals must be durable, high-speed touchscreen units designed for high-volume school canteen environments.
* **New Technologies:** Hardware should support new technologies where applicable to the overall solution.
* **Identification**: All hardware must include **MiFare card readers** to align with our existing ID card infrastructure.
* **Revaluation Units**: If required, provide options for "cashless" kiosks for balance checking, or confirm the system is strictly "online-only" for top-ups.

# Cashless Catering Support & Maintenance

An integral part of this partnership is a comprehensive support and maintenance ecosystem that ensures zero disruption to the Trust’s daily meal service. The successful bidder will be responsible for the full migration of existing data, including current account balances and historical reporting, from the legacy system to the new platform.

We require a tiered support structure with clearly defined Service Level Agreements (SLAs), specifically highlighting "Critical" response times during the primary lunch service windows (typically 11:00 to 14:00). Support should include remote diagnostic capabilities and onsite engineer visits for hardware failures that cannot be resolved via the helpdesk. The bidder is expected to provide thorough training for both front-of-house catering staff and administrative finance teams to ensure the Trust can maximise the efficiency and reporting capabilities of the system from the commencement of the contract.

* **Onsite & Remote Support**: A tiered support structure with guaranteed Response Level Agreements (SLAs) for hardware failures during peak service times (11:00 AM – 2:00 PM).
* **Migration**: The provider must migrate all existing data, current balances, and user profiles from the legacy system to the new platform prior to the August 2026 go-live.
* **Training**: Comprehensive onsite training for canteen staff and administrative training for the finance/IT teams.

# Warranty

The Trust expects a comprehensive warranty and support package that ensures peak performance of all catering hardware throughout the 3 or 5 year contract term. This warranty must cover all parts and labour, with a "swap-out" service or onsite repair to ensure minimal downtime. Rather than a "just in time" approach, the Trust values an active maintenance strategy where critical spares or loan units are held on-site or readily available to ensure that no school is unable to serve meals due to a hardware malfunction.

Bidders should also clearly outline their approach to hardware lifecycle management, including the provision of necessary peripherals and the secure disposal of legacy equipment in an environmentally conscious manner.

* **Duration**: A comprehensive warranty covering all hardware for the duration of the contract term.
* **Consumables**: Clear provision for thermal printer rolls for receipts (if used) and any necessary cleaning kits for card readers/scanners.
* **Loan Hardware**: Provision of "hot swap" or loan units to ensure no school is unable to serve meals due to a hardware failure.