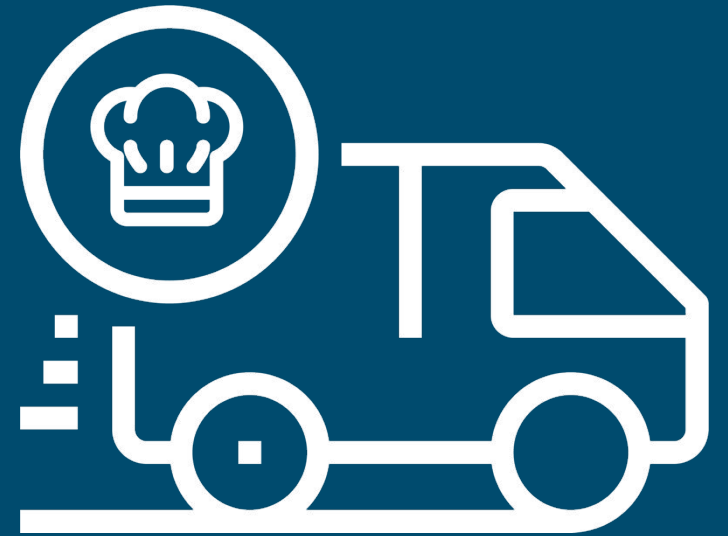




Supporting Information

Food & Supply Chain

Supporting Information



Navigating the Triple Threat.

Weather-Related Disruptions

This year's excessive rainfall across Europe has severely impacted essential root vegetables, particularly potatoes. Waterlogged fields have delayed planting and stunted growth, leading to one of the poorest potato crops in recent memory. Potatoes, a staple in many diets and a key ingredient in numerous dishes, are fundamental to the catering industry. The shortage and poor quality of these crops will force caterers to make significant menu adjustments, increasing reliance on alternative vegetables or imports, and driving costs up further.

Political Turmoil and Market Stability

Adding to the complexity is the ongoing political instability. The aftershocks of Brexit continue to reverberate through the UK's agricultural and food import sectors, with unresolved trade agreements and labour shortages still a pressing issue. Political decisions and trade negotiations are directly impacting tariffs, import-export regulations, and labour availability. This uncertainty makes it challenging for caterers to plan budgets and pricing strategies effectively, as market instability and price volatility remain high.

Compounded Market Pressures

Existing market pressures, including inflation and shifts in consumer behaviour, further complicate the scenario. In April 2024, the cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages in the UK rose by 2.9% year-on-year. Although this is a decrease from previous months, it still reflects significant economic pressures. As consumers adjust their spending habits in response to inflation, caterers are faced with the dual challenge of meeting changing demands while managing rising costs.

The Path Forward

For the UK catering sector, resilience and adaptability will be crucial in the coming months. Diversifying supply sources, adopting more flexible menu designs, and implementing efficient cost management strategies will be essential to navigate these turbulent times. Collaboration within the industry, from suppliers to caterers, will also play a pivotal role in overcoming these challenges.

As we move through summer 2024, the UK catering sector must brace itself against these combined threats with innovation and determination. While the road ahead is fraught with challenges, the industry's ability to adapt and evolve will ultimately determine its success in weathering this tumultuous period.

UK Catering Continues to Face Unprecedented Supply Chain Disruptions

As summer 2024 unfolds, the UK catering sector is contending with an unprecedented trio of supply chain disruptions. Extreme weather events, political instability, and persistent market pressures are presenting formidable challenges across multiple food categories. From the fields where crops are grown to the kitchens where meals are prepared, these disruptions are felt at every stage of the food supply chain.





Inflation.

In April 2024, the cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages in the UK rose by 2.9% year-on-year, marking the smallest increase since November 2021. This is a welcome slowdown compared to the 4% rise seen in March. Notably, food inflation has eased for the 13th consecutive month, after hitting a 45-year high in March 2023. The main contributors to this downward trend include bread and cereals, meat, dairy products, vegetables, and soft drinks, each experiencing the lowest annual rate in over two years.

While this easing offers some respite, the pressures remain. According to Trading Economics global macro models and analysts' expectations, food inflation in the UK is projected to be around 3.00% by the end of this quarter. Looking further ahead, it is expected to trend around 2.00% in 2025.

For the catering industry, these figures indicate a cautiously optimistic outlook. However, the ongoing need to adapt to fluctuating prices and consumer demands continues to be a significant challenge.

Oil.

Olive oil is being impacted by last summer's exceptionally high temperatures in the Mediterranean with many crops being destroyed, the prices have steadily risen and expected to continue until relief from the latest crop.

Fruit.

Get your sun hats on, as we are facing a critical point for the quality of the current crop of fruit to ripen and be the great british quality we have seen over the years, however the post-brexit challenge remains with a shortage of fruit pickers likely to disrupt once again.

Salad.

The rain is also playing havoc with salad crops with waterlogged ground, delaying planting in spring and although crops grown inside won't be impacted, the need to import more will likely push up the category as a whole.

Vegetables.

A relatively wet spring in the UK, will have delayed planting of some key crops so availability could be patchy throughout summer, likely impacting prices with demand outstripping supply.

Potatoes.

Root vegetables will be a concern across the board with potatoes particularly impacted by the recent weather across europe. Much of the UK & beyond has been impacted by heavy rains resulting in one of the worst yield & quality crops.

Beef.

UK beef production is expected to remain mostly stable in 2024. However, if consumer spending rises—perhaps due to favourable weather boosting barbecue demand—prices could see a significant increase.

Lamb.

Lamb has increased in price in spring as with demand driven by the easter season, and prices remain high as we start summer. Lamb remains a premium option across menus

Fish.

Fishermen are looking to catch a broader range of fish in the coming weeks & months as pricing on some of the more traditional species have seen increased pricing and poor availability.



Food Philosophy

Supporting Company Information



Supporting **Information**

Nutrition Update

Nutrition Education Toolkit

We have launched four nutrition education modules to the operations teams. The aim of these modules is to provide a consistent and approved nutritional message, acting as the single source of truth. This resource is about doing something different for our teams, schools and the children and can be used as an opportunity to 'bring' school meals into the classroom. This project is unique compared to other added value content because it is formatted in a way that promotes flexibility for clients, it includes all aspects of food and health and focuses on a inclusive, not an exclusive approach to food.

Nutrition Champions

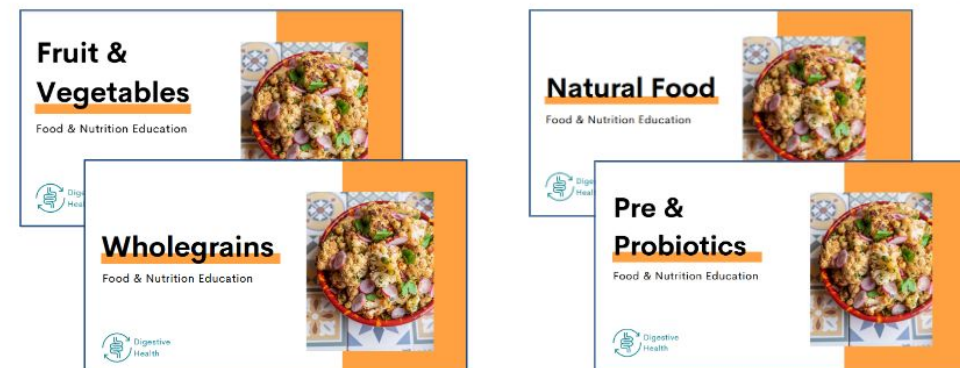
We have eight 'nutrition champions' into the business. Their roles are to: train teams in nutrition and health incentives, champion added value projects, provide feedback to support ongoing development of supporting materials and act as an overall extension of the nutrition team. More of our operations teams will attend nutrition champion training in the new year.

Live access to nutrition resources

We have produced a document that contains live links to all of the nutrition support that an operator would need to be able to effectively support our customers. Including education session plans, medical menu processes and compliance checklists. Resources are positioned into four categories (1. healthy recipes, 2. alternative menus, 3. added value and 4. training) to make it easy for the operator to find the relevant information.

The Content

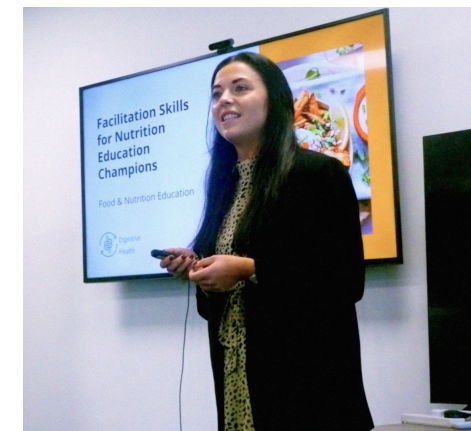
The resources available today are all related to promoting digestive ("gut") health.



Nutrition Library

Click on the icons to open the related document

Recipes & Menus	Allergy, Lifestyle & Medical Menus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Guide to Nutritious & Healthy Menus1 Commitments Beyond School Food Standards10 Point Checklist for School Food Compliance2 How to Calculate Carb Counts2 Nutritional Analysis Tool by Age & Gender2 Nutrition Fact Bank Key messages from menu analysis2 School Meal vs Packed Lunch2 Teenage Girls Nutrition2 Teenage Boys Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Guide to Alternative Menus1 Approach to Modified Texture Menus2 Alternative Menu Infographic2 Medical Menu Request Form updated to include IDDSI2 Core Allergy & Lifestyle Menus 6 menus are published twice a year2 IDDSI Menu Template + Testing Methods2 IDDSI 3 - 6 Menu Examples
Added Value	Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Introduction to the Education Toolkit2 Resource Library2 Fruit & Vegetables Resources2 Wholegrain Resources2 Natural Food Resources2 Pre & Probiotics Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Guide to Nutrition Training2 IDDSI Testing Methods Training Guide2 The Academy Level 2 & 3 Nutrition, Allergens & Alternative Menus2 Nutrition Champions Training Coming Soon2 Nutrition Promo Video Coming Soon
1 Guidance documents	2 Processes
	11 Resources



What Makes our Primary Menu Great?

We used all of your feedback plus food industry insight to create our best primary menu yet, incorporating a food festival theme every day:

- Our **Main Event** offers a real mixture of the most popular cuisine styles for 3 – 11 year olds, including authentic Italian, family favourites, best of British and fun day dishes.
- Our ever growing recipe database gives our cooks and chefs the opportunity to prepare traditional, scratch recipes with fresh ingredients, all of which are responsibly sourced and nutritionally analysed before approval. We monitor ingredients against our nutrient targets to ensure this is a truly healthy option.
- **Meat Free Magic** is a great option to promote our environmental awareness campaigns. With alternative protein sources and restricted use of dairy and cheese we can demonstrate these choices as not only 'Good For You' but 'Good for The Planet' too.
- Sometimes the main event doesn't always appeal to everyone, so roll up to the **Pasta Twirler** or **Big Topper** for hot and healthier options of pasta with homemade enriched sauces or crispy skin jackets loaded with tasty toppings.
- And arriving at the platform every day is our **Dessert Trolley** with something for everyone with a choice of tasty hot and cold desserts with at least two 50% fruit based per week, plus fresh fruit and yoghurt available daily.



TAKE YOUR IMAGINATION ON A FOOD JOURNEY



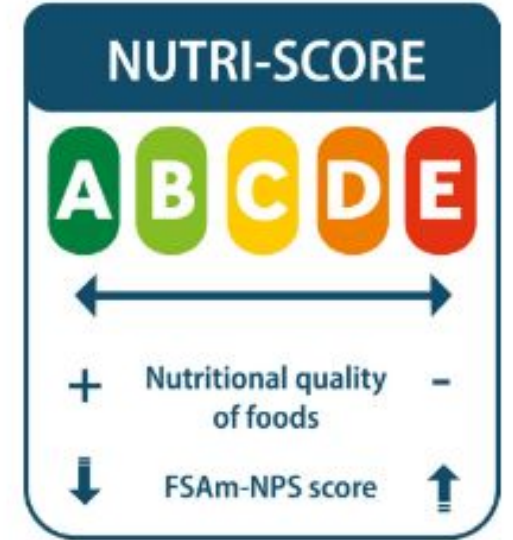
Primary Autumn/Winter Menu

Nutrition Spotlights

Our Nutrition Team have gone above and beyond compliance to School Food Standards. We have used a science backed algorithm to provide additional nutritional analysis for our new Autumn/ Winter primary menu. This tool provides a simple translation of data on nutritional composition, calculating positive and negative nutrients, to highlight the health impact of the dish.

Nutrients assessed are calories, protein, fibre, sugar, saturated fat, salt and quantity of fruit or veg in a dish. Dishes are classified into five categories:

From **Category A** - indicating higher nutritional quality, to **Category E** - indicating lower nutritional quality.



Our Top 3 Main Meals (achieved Category A)

- 1) Veggie Wholegrain Pasta Bolognese & Carrots
- 2) Classic Cottage Pie & Peas
- 3) Butterbean Ratatouille, Apple Slaw, Wholegrain Rice



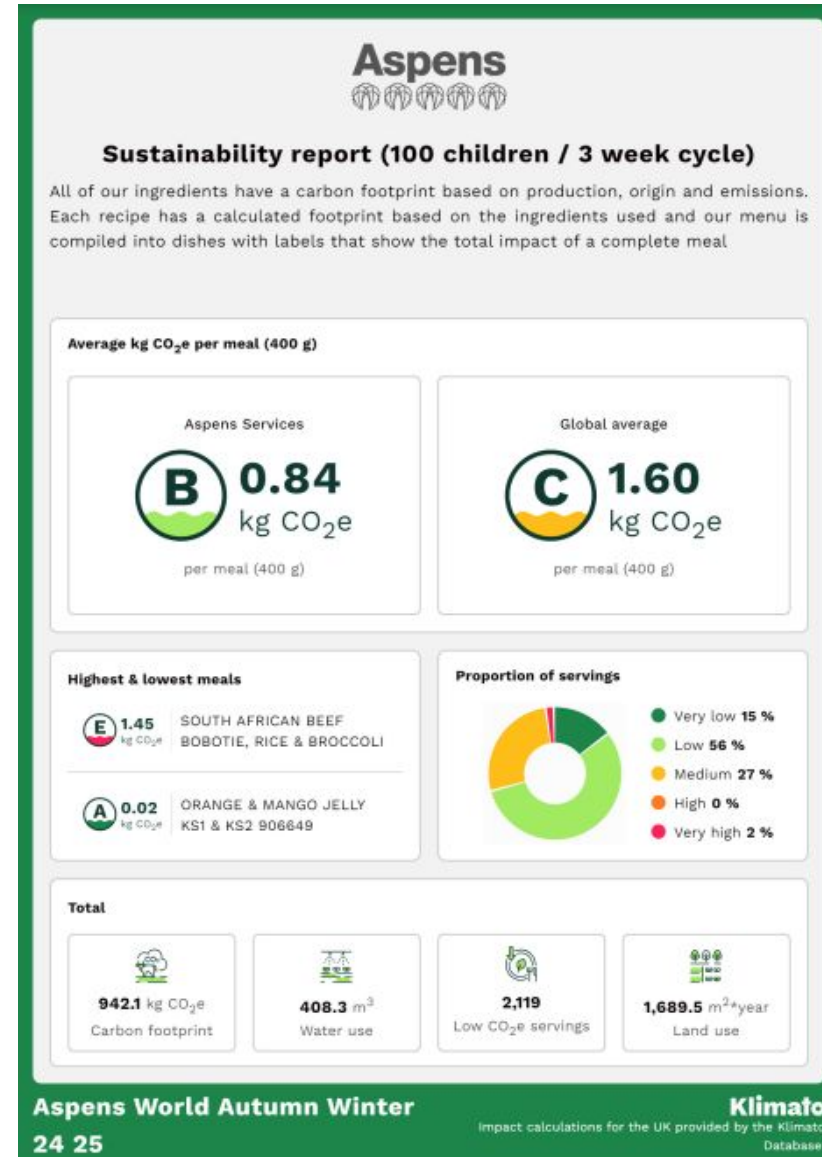
Primary Autumn/Winter Menu

Klimato – Menu Sustainability Report

Traditional Menu Cycle



World Menu Cycle



Marketing

Seasonality Calendar

We have a primary seasonality calendar with A4 posters per month, an activity pack with fun facts, activities and a recipe from home!

Driving Uptake

Healthy Eating Reward Scheme

We have a **Healthy Eater Reward Scheme**. We always looking at ways to encourage pupils to eat all of their food to reduce their food waste.

Census Day Promotion

In celebration of the October Census Day, we unveiled an exciting bespoke promotion designed to boost participation and engagement in our dining rooms!

What's the secret ingredient? We're putting the power in the hands of our young customers by inviting them to cast their votes for their all-time favourite school meal.

The winning dish, crowned by the voices of our fantastic customers, will take the spotlight on Census Day.

FEED YOUR FAMILY FOR £5



Chorizo Paella

BBQ Pulled Chicken Loaded Chips

Vegan Harissa Chickpea & Lime Stew with Couscous



With inflation continuing to have a significant impact on lots of families across the country, we recently launched a campaign that would offer some help in these challenging times.

Enjoy our newest line-up of affordable and delicious meals designed to feed a family of four for just £5. From Chorizo Paella to BBQ Pulled Chicken Loaded Chips to Vegan Harissa Chickpea & Lime Stew with Couscous!

Discover the quick, easy and affordable recipe complete with step-by-step recipe card instructions and a helpful cooking video. Get cooking a show-stopping meal that you and your family of four will love. Parents and Guardians can watch our youtube video and try the cost saving recipe for themselves at home!

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH ALL OUR NEW VIDEOS!](#)

Aspens FEED YOUR FAMILY FOR £5

CHORIZO PAELLA

Feed your family of four for £5 with this tasty chorizo chickpea & lime stew. You can make it yourself, just scan below to watch the method and get the recipe card.

SCAN ME

TO WATCH

SCAN ME

FOR THE RECIPE CARD

Aspens FEED YOUR FAMILY FOR £5

VEGAN HARISSA CHICKPEA & LIME STEW WITH COUSCOUS

Feed your family of four for £5 with this tasty vegan harissa chickpea & lime stew. You can make it yourself, just scan below to watch the method and get the recipe card.

SCAN ME

TO WATCH

SCAN ME

FOR THE RECIPE CARD

INGREDIENTS

Main Ingredients	Cost £	Veggie Switch	Cost £
300g Paella Rice	1.35		1.35
200g Diced Frozen Chorizo	1.88	200g soy bean edamame	0.96
1 x Green Pepper	0.55		0.55
1 x 400g tin Butter Beans (alternatively cannellini or borlotti beans)	0.65		0.65
1 x Brown onion	0.12		0.12
3 cloves garlic	0.14		0.14
30g Tomato Puree Growers Harvest	0.08		0.08
1 tsp (2g) Smoked Paprika	0.04	2 tsp (4g) Smoked Paprika	0.08
1 tsp (2g) Turmeric	0.04		0.04
1 x Vegetable stock cube	0.09		0.09
TOTAL COST	4.94		4.06

Prices correct at time of printing and may vary. All items available from leading supermarkets. Please observe the allergen information on the product packaging. Based on a family of four.

View our website

- Dice the onion and pepper, finely chop the garlic and drain the butter beans
- Make up the stock cube with 900ml of boiling water
- In a frying pan or paella pan gently fry the onion, chorizo & pepper together until the onion softens
- Add the garlic & tomato puree and gently fry for 1 to 2 mins

VEGGIE SWITCH
For a great veggie version, add an extra 2 grams of Smoked Paprika, leave out the Chorizo and add Soy Beans at the same time as the butter beans

Good for you
Good for the planet

Aspens FEED YOUR FAMILY FOR £5

BBQ PULLED CHICKEN LOADED CHIPS

Feed your family of four for £5 with these amazing BBQ Pulled Chicken Loaded Chips. You can make it yourself, just scan below to watch the method and get the recipe card.

SCAN ME

TO WATCH

SCAN ME

FOR THE RECIPE CARD



Nutrition & Wellbeing Videos!

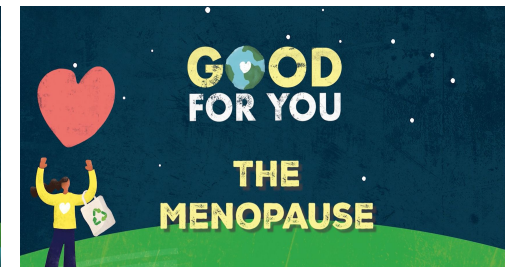
Good For You & Good For The Planet

Danielle Smith (Head of Nutrition) has partnered with the marketing team to create short, informative videos that aim to address the most common nutrition queries asked by our teams.

Behind the scenes, we are creating a valuable catalogue of short, nutrition-based videos that not only benefit our colleagues but can also be shared with parents and students alike!

These resources will really help people understand how nutrition works in school meals and support any requests around special diet advice.

Our first series of videos focused on topics such as: **coffee consumption**, **boosting energy**, **menopause**, **calories** and **vegetarian protein**.



Annual Food Trends Trip Flavours of the future...

We are always looking ahead and finding ways to further innovate our menus and bring excitement to school dining rooms. Recently, the food and marketing team embarked on our annual food trends trip to London to see what food trends are on the horizon.

Our mission? To bring these cutting-edge concepts straight to the plates of our students and cater to their evolving tastes.

During the trip, our food team explored the culinary landscape and unravelled the mysteries behind the upcoming trends by visiting lots of diverse food spots.

We're not just following trends; we're setting them!

Nutrition Educational Added Value

We are continuously expanding our collection of nutrition based resources. We have recently launched our new 'Salt' guide.

This engaging resource is tailored to educate youngsters about the role of salt in their diet, providing insights on foods to steer clear of and recommending healthy practices to embrace.

GOOD FOR YOU & GOOD FOR THE PLANET

Salt

What is it?

Salt (aka sodium chloride) is what we call a mineral. It is the biggest source of sodium in our diets.

TESCO QUALITY & TASTE

Translated Menu Flashcards (Primary)

We are always looking for ways to reduce any barriers that prevents our young customers from eating our school meals.

That is why we have developed Translated Menu Flashcards that show our menu with visual pictures of the meal with translation in **Urdu, Arabic, Romanian and Bangla**.

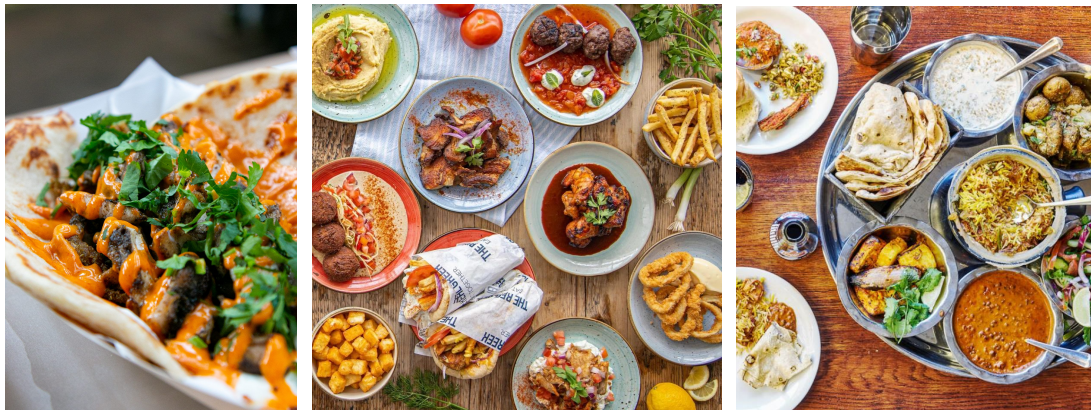
Primary Flashcards
پرائمری فلیش کارڈز
Prāthamika phlyāsakārā
Flashcards primare
الذاتة الأولى

Septemb 2023 Sweet Chilli Vegetable Stir Fry with Whole Grain Rice and Mixed Salad - KS2
Sēptēmb 2023 میٹھی مزج سبزوں کو بول، گزین رانس کے ساتھ بیویوں۔

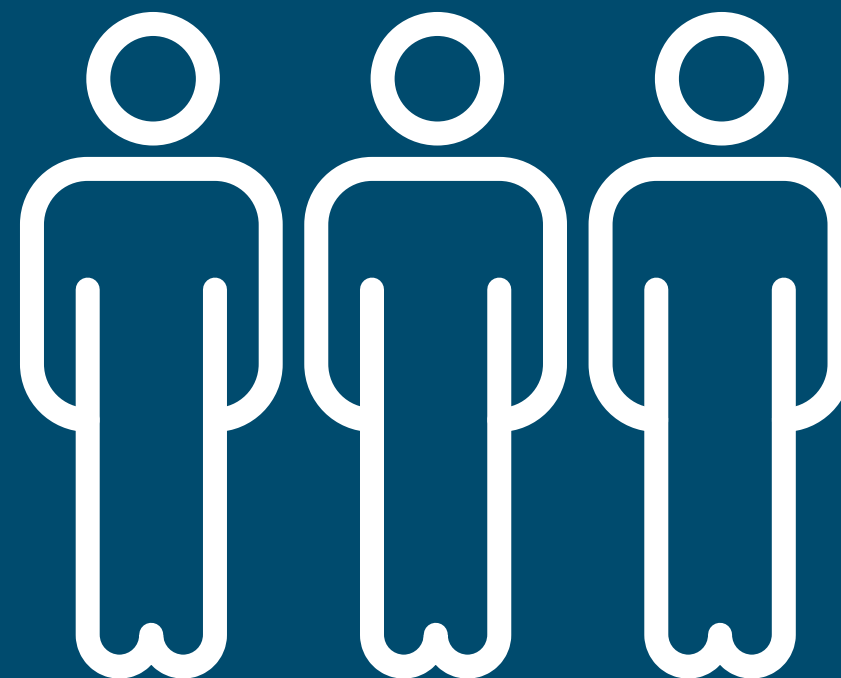
Ardei dulce cu legume cu orez din cereale integrale
الحضار و الفلفل الحلو المقلي مع أرز الحبوب الكاملة

Miști marica sabaji
holia grēna rā'isa diyē
bhājuna

Autumn/Winter 2023



People Update





Our Academy Officially Rated **GOOD** by Ofsted!

Our Academy provides apprenticeships and formal qualifications, for any employee of any age, at any level. Training and qualifications are either delivered in-house by the team or by external training providers. We utilise the levy to fund this training, to ensure we are actively investing in our staff and their careers at Aspens.

We've had our biggest ever application window, with lots of colleagues applying to kickstart their academy journey!

Take a look at what Ofsted has to say:

“

Apprentices concerned about their team's wellbeing and inclusion adapt their written and verbal communications to ensure the team understand tasks, and work effectively together.

”

“

Apprentices enjoy their learning and develop positive attitudes and behaviours about themselves and their colleagues.

”

“

Apprentices become quickly engaged in their learning and apply new knowledge in their workplace.

”

“

Apprentices prioritise and benefit from their monthly one-to-one coaching sessions, helping them to stay on track and manage their personal and work life, including their mental health.

”



TOOLBOX training

TOOLBOX training is exactly what the name suggests, it is a tool box of training resources that our managers can use as they need to, either 1:1 or with your whole team.

All **TOOLBOX** training resources have been designed to be delivered by individuals that are not trained trainers/facilitators. They can last from **10 minutes to 30 minutes** depending on the subject and they come with a handy, easy to follow facilitators guide.

We add new resources each month and so far the toolbox includes:

1. Allergies, Lifestyle and Intolerances
2. Working Well Together
3. Training the Trainer
4. Customer Service
5. Special Educational Needs Awareness (SEN)

TAKE10 is an important coaching tool that shines a spotlight on key topics each month.

We ask each Catering Manager finds 10 minutes during the month to gather their team around and walk through this document.

The topics we covered are:

- Building Strong Relationships
- Keeping Safe
- Safeguarding - Types of Harm
- That's Hot - Burns & Scalds
- Who's got the energy
- Money, Money, Money
- Fire, Fire Safety
- Looking Good - Uniform Standards
- Save your energy - Reducing Energy
- Are you being served? - Customer Service



Thrive Rewards

Our Employee Benefits & Wellbeing hub.



Registered users



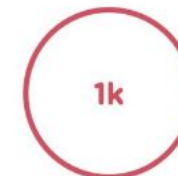
Spent, saving employees £10k!



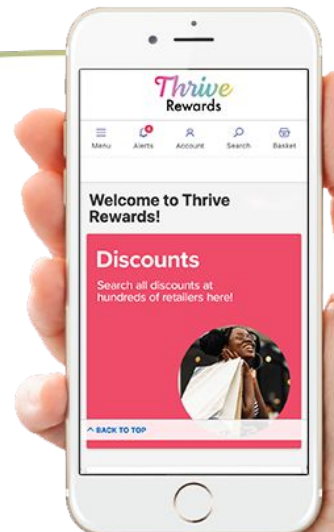
Shopping discounts pages accessed



In-store and Online orders placed



WellbeingCentre™ Views



Training Learning Management System

GrowPRO is our very own dedicated learning hub

GrowPRO has revolutionised the way we approach learning and development across our business.

Our teams have access to custom elearning content as well as **GrowLIVE** events which are our in-person and virtual training courses as featured in our training catalogue.



VIA Leadership Collection & Training Catalogue

We also have our leadership pathways called, **VIA Leadership Collection!** Introducing our internal **VIA Leadership** training collection which is a three-layered leadership development pathway.

Our **training catalogue** boasts over **40** training courses available, and all delivered internally. From Allergen Management to Google and systems, through to Time Management and everything in between!



Grow **LIVE** CPD CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Oh no, I've got to do an investigation!

Are you a people manager that needs to understand effective investigation or looking to brush up your skills in?

Join us and our guest speaker, **Lisa Dimelow** (HR Bus)

An introduction to Investigations!

Thursday 21st March @ 2pm

Learning outcomes:

1. Explore when & why an investigation would need to be conducted
2. Uncover the investigation process from start to finish
3. Identify your role & responsibilities when conducting an investigation
4. Feel confident in completing/ approaching investigations

To sign up for this learning event, search **GrowPRO** for **CPD**, find this course and follow the instructions or scan the QR code.

Grow **LIVE** CPD CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Are you REALLY hungry?

For years, society has told us to **count calories, track our macros, eat more protein, and cut out carbs**... has this reliance on food caused conflict between our brains and body?

The growing research into nutritional psychiatry suggests we are oversimplifying food, nutrition and what our bodies need to thrive.

Join us and our guest speaker, **Danielle Smith** (Head of Nutrition)

An introduction to Nutrition Investigations!

Thursday 14th March @ 2pm

Content includes:

1. The growing disconnect between the body and brain... is it a thing as diet and willpower? Is willpower a myth?
2. How the food industry can sabotage our food choices
3. How food habits form, discovering positive and negative reinforcement
4. Why diets (and measuring) are failing us
5. How to try the hunger test at home!

To sign up for this learning event, search **GrowPRO** for **CPD**, find this course and follow the instructions or scan the QR code.

Grow **LIVE** CPD CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

" I AM DREADING THIS CONVERSATION "

Would you like to feel more comfortable having difficult conversations with your team or clients?

If so, regardless of whether you are a seasoned people manager or just starting your leadership journey, this **60-minute** CPD event could be just the ticket...

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Thursday 22nd February @ 2pm

IN THIS SESSION WE WILL EXPLORE:

- The benefits of having a difficult conversation
- The importance of the what, when, how and where
- Solutions and tools to support your conversations

To sign up for this learning event, search **GrowPRO** for **CPD**, find this course and follow the instructions or scan the QR code.

Grow **LIVE** CPD CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHO'S GOT THE SKILLS?

Want to take your career to the next level? OR Are you struggling to recruit the right skills? OR Want to explore apprenticeships for your children?

...if so;

Let's Talk Apprenticeships!

Wednesday 7th February @ 2pm

IN THIS SESSION WE WILL EXPLORE WHAT APPRENTICESHIPS CAN DO FOR YOU, YOUR TEAM, AND YOUR LOVED ONES!

5-10 FEBRUARY 2024 #NANW2024

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

To sign up for this learning event, search **GrowPRO** for **CPD**, find this course and follow the instructions or scan the QR code.

Monthly Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Events via GrowPRO.

Every month, we provide our colleagues with the opportunity to participate in at least one, if not two, CPD events.

Keeping skills updated is essential for a healthy and successful career, which is why all our CPD events are free, virtual, and only take 60 minutes. Some of our past sessions include:

An Introduction to Nutrition
In Introduction to Investigation
Effective Time Management,

and many more to come!



Supply Chain Partners

We have partnered with the following supply chain partners that can add substantial value to your school.



What is The Academy?

- The Academy provides apprenticeships and formal qualifications, for any employee of any age, at any level.
- Training and qualifications are either delivered in-house by the team or by external training providers.
- We utilise the levy to fund this training, to ensure we are actively investing in our staff and their careers at Aspens.

Why do we have an Academy?

'From Classroom to Boardroom'

We aim to upskill existing staff with high-quality apprenticeship programmes and qualifications to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and behaviours to transcend their role and progress through the business, from classroom to boardroom.

We also support HR to recruit future talent and develop new apprentices to the business with high-quality apprenticeship programmes, which meet our values, expectations and quality standards whilst excelling in their careers in the catering industry.

For more information please liaise with your Operations Manager or email

info@theacademyapprenticeships.com



Join.
Grow.
Thrive.



Looking for your
next step?

Interested in food?

Interested in
business?

Want to learn from
the best?

Find out more here:



If you are interested in The Academy Apprenticeship Programme, please do get in touch for a friendly chat.

Email:
info@theacademyapprenticeships.com

Telephone:
07526 190066





Insuraclean is our go-to company for all cleaning services.

They are a national specialist commercial cleaning company with invaluable expertise in providing deep cleaning services with vast experience including the catering industry.

Their expertise and helpful teams make the process of scheduling and carrying out kitchen deep cleans, duct extraction and supply system cleans for our clients across the country incredibly easy and they provide helpful advice for routine cleaning activities too.

insuraclean.co.uk | office@insuraclean.co.uk



Action
If this is a service you would like to take advantage of, please liaise with your Operations Manager.

Supporting **Information**

Feedback

Let us know what you think of the report so we can continually improve the information we provide.

Contact: marketing@support-services.com



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Aspens Services Ltd.

Supporting Information