

## Sodexo retains contract with Twyford School for another three years

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Independents by Sodexo has retained its catering contract with Twyford School, one of the UK's oldest preparatory schools, for another three years.

The contract, valued at approximately £1.6 million, reflects the successful and enduring partnership that began in 1989 between Sodexo and the esteemed educational institution.

Situated in the picturesque South Downs National Park, Twyford School currently educates 435 pupils and provides comprehensive flexi boarding for 100 pupils.

For over 35 years, Sodexo has been committed to delivering nutritious and delicious meals, fostering healthy eating habits among students. Led by catering manager Dean Wilkins, Sodexo's dedicated culinary team of 14 provides everything from breakfast to lunch, supper, and evening snacks.

Twice a week during term time, Sodexo also serves match teas, catering for between 100 and 150 parents and 200 children each time, with offerings ranging from freshly made sandwiches and wraps to cakes, cookies, and brownies.

The collaboration between Sodexo and Twyford School is rooted in a mutual commitment to creating an environment where children can explore and enjoy a variety of flavours from an early age. From the youngest pupils in the nursery to those in the prep school, Sodexo's culinary team ensures that every meal is prepared with care and creativity using the freshest ingredients.

Engaging with students and staff is a key component of Sodexo's approach. Dean maintains a visible presence in the dining hall, gathering feedback and refining the menu as well as checking the washing-up

area to see what's being wasted, so he can tweak the menus accordingly.

Twyford's Food Council, comprising of student representatives, meets with Dean twice a year to discuss new ideas and menu changes, ensuring the catering service evolves with the students' tastes and preferences. This responsiveness led to popular initiatives like allowing boarders to make their own pizzas.

Sodexo's involvement at Twyford extends beyond daily meals. The team caters for various events, including annual cookery days with Year 8 pupils, Old Twyfordian reunions, formal drinks parties for parents, the summer ball, and fine dining evenings for staff and governors.

Despite the challenges of significant food inflation in 2022/23, Sodexo managed to stay within budget while maintaining high standards of quality and taste.

Simon Knight, Managing Director for Independent Schools, said: "We are thrilled to continue our longstanding relationship with Twyford School. Our ability to stay within budget, provide a diverse selection of delicious meals, and maintain a committed team is the reason Twyford School decided to renew our contract. This fruitful partnership is a testament to our shared vision of nurturing children's wellbeing and promoting a healthy relationship with food."

Twyford's rich history with food dates back to when the school operated its own dairy farm until 1978. Today, this legacy continues with a walled garden producing fruits used in school meals, including eight varieties of apples made into juice.

In November 2018, in collaboration with Sodexo, "The Twyfoodian" cookbook was published. The book features 75 of Dean's most popular recipes and has become a treasured item within the school community. A 2024 updated version of the book will go on sale in autumn term to coincide with the school's opening of its new cookery school.

Sodexo's commitment to the area extends to the local community, catering for events hosted by the parish council and Women's Institute at Twyford School.

Kathryn Pillar, Bursar at Twyford Schools, added: "We are thrilled to renew our longstanding relationship with Sodexo. The Sodexo team is an integral part of the Twyford family, and we eagerly anticipate continuing our collaboration. Together with Sodexo's talented team, we are proud to provide meal options that are not only delicious but also nutritious, balanced, and diverse."