

THE PANTRY

Summer
Edition
'24

POST



THE PRINCE & THE PANTRY

WE GIVE YOU THE LOWDOWN ON ONE OF THE MOST (ROYALLY) EXCITING PARTNERSHIPS WE'VE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO BE A PART OF

ALL IS REVEALED ON PAGE 3

EYES ON THE PRIZE

THE PANTRY PRIZE IS ALL ABOUT TAKING CARE OF THE PUPILS THAT HAVE BEEN TUCKING INTO THEIR LUNCHES - SO WHAT HAVE OUR WONDERFUL WINNERS BEEN WALKING AWAY WITH?

**FIND OUT
ON PAGE 8**



THE LUKE OUT

with Luke Consiglio



WHAT A SUMMER ISSUE WE HAVE IN STORE!

HELLO, and welcome to the summer edition of The Pantry Post. We've never been busier, both inside and outside of the business, so it's been a job just sitting down and finding the time to tell you all about it!

Part of our commitment to our clients, our customers, and our colleagues is not just to provide the best of the Pantry on our pupils' plates every day, but to be **More Than Food**. Whether this means supporting our teams to deliver a stand-out service, creating an engagement hub so our clients can deliver our free-to-use healthy eating sessions themselves, or delivering a monthly rewards scheme for our customers, we want everyone to feel that they're getting real value out of their partnership with The Pantry.

Funding and support from the Government is one of the most pressing issues within our industry at present – whilst inflation has caused food and beverage prices to spiral, the central support has not kept pace, with England lagging behind Scotland and Wales when it comes to per-meal-funding. We've been using our platform to lobby those in power to ensure this is rectified as soon as possible, as our Schools deserve the same level of support as our neighbours either side of the border.

We're not in this business for outside recognition, but it's always a heart-warming moment to receive it, and we've been fortunate enough to pick up a trophy or two in the past few months as well – and as you can see, Team Pantry does scrub up rather well when we have time to make an effort!

Since we last spoke, we've also welcomed over 60 new members of staff into Team Pantry, as well as 10 new clients – so a very warm welcome to the clients and kitchen brigades at Benfield Primary School, Hangleton Primary School, Harvey Road Primary School, Kennel Lane School, St Ignatius College, Chartridge Combined School, Barham Primary School, Pippins School and Woolwich Polytechnic Boys' and Girls' Schools. Before I sign off, I'd just like to thank everyone who is a part of The Pantry for all their continued support, and I hope you're all having a fantastic summer break – you've earned it!

*Yours,
Luke*





The Prince's Trust is one of the most prestigious, well-patronised and diverse youth support projects in the United Kingdom, so it was an honour for Luke to attend their 2024 Awards at the Theatre Royal in May.

With attendance limited to a carefully-selected guest list, we were lucky enough to not only witness first-hand the incredible achievements of some remarkable young people who hadn't enjoyed the best of starts to life, but also get a sense of what it took for the adults who had mentored them for months, and sometimes years, to get them to where they are today.

And it was especially insightful as Luke is on the pathway to gaining formal approval to join the Trust's Mentorship Programme later in the year, as The Pantry's representative!

We'll have more details on how he'll be supporting them in the issues ahead, so follow The Pantry Post to see how this fantastic story unfolds!

FUNDING SUPPORT

WHERE HAS IT BEN?

There are a number of issues and obstacles for our industry as a whole to navigate, and The Pantry have been proud to help lead the charge in trying to convince those in power that the current funding and support we all receive through central government, is not proportionate to the costs that we are incurring.

The Pantry were part of a delegation led by LACA to the Houses of Parliament, to lobby MPs to urgently review the funding they are currently providing for Education Catering in England. Standing at £2.53 currently per pupil (due to lift slightly in September), per meal, this represents around a 3% increase in Free School Meal funding support in the last few years.

In the meantime, the UK Living Wage has increased by 10% in the same time period, and some food prices have spiralled to nearly 60% of where they were in 2020 – which is clearly an unsustainable balancing act for Caterers and Schools.

We held some constructive conversations with Members of Parliament, and can only hope that these will lead to meaningful and tangible changes to the funding providing for Schools in England.

We were also delighted to take part in The Big School Meals Debate at Bidfood's Slough Headquarters, where industry leaders came together to discuss the most pressing matters facing our sector.

Luke was joined by Pat Fellowes MBE, Andy Kemp MBE, Gavin Squires from Bidfood and LACA's Judith Gregory amongst many others, as they sought to create sector-wide solutions to issues such as staffing shortages, improving food quality, budgeting struggles and funding!





GIVE IT UP FOR GLEBE

In each edition of The Pantry Post, we'll be spotlighting the special people that make up Team Pantry, delivering delicious across our 150 Schools up and down England.

And there's no better place to start than the Famous Five that make up our kitchen brigade at Glebe Primary School, in Southwick – **Kayleigh, Kelly, Kerrie, Katie and Amy!** The ladies have been the absolute stars of the show since we took over the reins at the School back in 2021; they helped triple meal sales in the first few weeks, and sustain that uptake too – to the extent that the School decided to open up a second servery to cope with demand.

The quality of the meals and the service is a shining example of what we are trying to achieve at every School, and their efforts haven't gone unnoticed amongst the School staff either – or LACA!



Our kitchen team are very kind and caring toward all of the children and they go out of their way to make sure children are happy with their meal each day, They work with us really well and are part of the school family. We have a happy kitchen and you can often walk past and hear laughter and a great working atmosphere.

Karen Crutchfield, Headteacher, Glebe Primary School

The team were shortlisted for the **Local Authority Catering Association Primary School Catering Team of the Year Award** – a nationwide award where they were nominated alongside the best Primary School Teams in the whole country – a worthy achievement for a very worthy team.



During 2023, it sometimes felt like The Pantry were picking up prizes at every Awards Nights we turned up to – but there's an old saying in business that you always remember your failures more than your triumphs, and we can certainly recall coming home from the 2023 Contract Catering Awards having had fantastic fun, but with no trophies in tow!

So, we were delighted to make it second time lucky at the 2024 Awards, where we walked away with the **Marketing Award** – and were commended by the judging panel for the quality of our communications with our customers, and how we've marketed our offer both internally and externally.

CONTRACT Catering Awards

With a healthy turnout of tuxedos and glamorous dresses from Head Office, there were plenty of Pantry People there to take their turns with the trophy, and it was incredibly satisfying to be recognised for an area of our business where we've really invested time, effort, and ingenuity to make our services as attractive to our customers as possible.

The Winning Post





EYES ON THE PRIZE

Our *Pantry Prize* scheme has been one of the most well-received marketing schemes we've ever created, and it's so rewarding to be able to give something back to pupils who are picking Pantry Meals every day of the month.

We've been particularly lucky that every prize-we've drawn this year has gone to some really deserving winners.

The smiles on faces are reward enough for us, and there's been plenty of smiles over the past 4 months to keep us stocked up all the way through the summer - including our April Winner, Nancy at Harefield Junior School, who rode away with a brand-new Mountain Bike!

And she wasn't the only winner this term

...

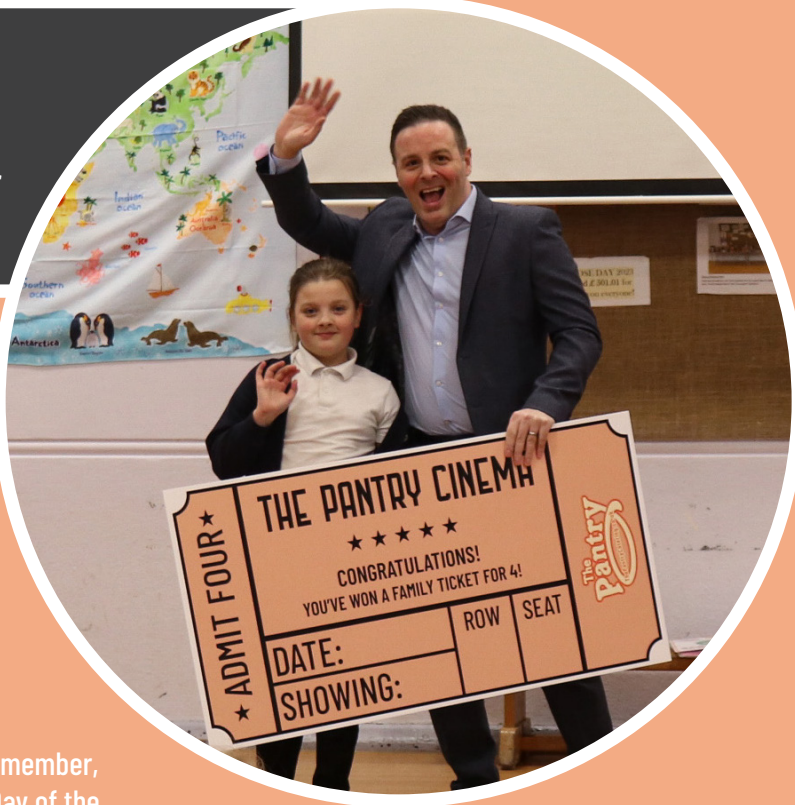


We kicked off the Spring Term with February's Pantry prize award in early March, when we took a trip down to the seaside to visit Glebe Primary School in Southwick to present Lilly with her reward – a Family Cinema Ticket for Four at Cineworld!

For March's Pantry Prize, we headed over to The Royal School to crown our lucky winner, Edward. He'll be our most well-read winner, too, as he went home with a Book Hamper containing the complete series of stories by Roald Dahl, Liz Pichon and J.K Rowling!

And whilst Football didnt come home for England at this year's European Championship, a brand-new England shirt and football did for Andrew at Frithwood Primary School!

We're delighted to confirm that the scheme will be running for 2024/25, and hope to see as many pupils as possible enter. Remember, any Primary School pupil that orders a meal for every School Day of the month will be automatically entered into the following month's competition, and will be in with a chance of winning some fabulous prizes, just like Nancy, Lilly, Edward and Andrew!



Book ahead! Our March Pantry Prize Winner celebrated World Book Day in style!



We're very proud of the family roots and ethos of our business - it's no secret that several of Luke's immediate and extended family members hold important positions within Team Pantry - and there's perhaps no greater advocate for businesses like ours anywhere in the country than Paul Andrews of Family Business United.

And when we say anywhere in the country, we really do mean it - as part of his annual Family Business Road Trip, Paul hops in his FBU-emblazoned car and drives to the farthest corners of the British Isles to meet some of best, brightest and boldest Family Businesses out there, so we were delighted to see him parking up at The Pantry for a pit stop!

Luke and Anthony Swaby spent the afternoon discussing our passion for the Catering Industry, and how we see our role as being about more than food, whether it's through our community support projects, social and leisure outreach, social media strategies, workplace initiatives and more. He even had time for a tour of our brand-new, purpose-built Demonstration Kitchen, which was built and installed in the Easter break, right underneath our Head office! The kitchen will enable us to film a huge range of food-based content to support our customers and clients - including how-to recipes vlogs of every recipe we serve in our Schools, so parents and pupils can learn how to make their favourite Pantry meals from the comfort of their own kitchens.



Paul Andrews, Family Business United

'I meet incredible family business owners and their teams each and every day, especially during the Family Business Road Trip but this is an exceptional business, doing incredible things that go way beyond just being a business.'

'They are innovative, pioneering and influencing in a way that is special. It was a pleasure to visit today, to hear their exciting plans for the future, and to witness, again, their passion, pride and determination to change minds, influence a generation and make an incredible societal impact too.'



Keeping it in the Family



And this wasn't the only time we ran into Paul recently – a bumper delegation of Pantry People descended on the Family Business United Awards in late June, as over 100 family business from across the United Kingdom were recognised for their contributions to the industry this past year.

It was with an equal measure of excitement and surprise that Paul called us forward to accept the **Entrepreneurship Award** for 2024, one of just eight National Awards across the entire show!



'To be recognised at the Family Business Awards is a huge honour for myself and The Pantry. We've always been a family business, and the Family Business Awards really are the flagship for companies like ours all over the country – so we're truly humbled!', reflected Luke.

'At a time when the Contract Catering Industry is facing a number of challenges to stay viable and relevant, we're determined to show that we're leading a new way forward at The Pantry – not just with a fantastic food offer, but with the kind of company support and engagement that shows that we're More Than Food.'



FIND US IN THE CLUB



As Spring has sprung, we've relished getting into many of our Schools to help them brush up on all the brilliant things we have to teach them - and there's too many to squeeze into these pages! But we've summarised some of our best sessions below - all delivered completely free of charge as part of our *Pantry Club* Engagement Sessions!

Our first stop is **Melcombe Primary School** in West London, where we delivered a bumper package of activities with two Knife & Fork Sessions, for the Reception and Year 1 Children, before rounding out the day with an Eat Around the World Assembly for the Year 4s. The Knife & Fork sessions are a great practical learning tool for our youngest pupils, helping to give them the core skills, and the confidence, to use their cutlery safely and sensibly at lunchtime.

We returned to the very same neck of the woods soon after at **Kensington Wade School**, where the pupils learnt how to be savvy with their sugar, and mindful of their meals, with our Eco-Friendly and Sugar Smart sessions. These subjects are especially topical at the moment as we all try to move towards more sustainable, healthy diets, and the pupils took away lots of useful learnings that will help them to make more informed choices in the future.

We popped over to **Peareswood Primary School**, near Dartford, for a pair of sessions - Fruit Tasting and Eco-Friendly - and delivered an Eat The Rainbow Assembly for the whole of Key Stage 2 at their Sister School within the Woodland Academy Trust, **Northumberland Heath Primary School**.

Winging over to Windsor, we dropped by at **Alexander First School** and **Hilltop First School**, where our Eat Around The World and Eco-Friendly lessons went down a treat.

It's especially rewarding to be able to provide our pupils with experiences they haven't had before, and to see the joy on their faces when they discover something new. Our Fruit Tasting session delivered just that for the Year 2 children at **Whitehouse Primary School** in Milton Keynes, as they tackled tastes and textures they hadn't enjoyed before, such as Red Grapefruit, Cantaloupe Melon, Pineapple and Passion Fruit.



There were clean plates and happy faces all round, and Whitehouse's Year 2 Teacher, Mrs Collings thanked us afterwards:

'There was a great range of fruit available for the children to taste, and it was a great session. The children thoroughly enjoyed it - Thank You to The Pantry staff!'

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

IN FOCUS

We're stepping up our Secondary School offer with our Sizzling Street Food brands - bringing *The Peri Pantry*, *Curry Club*, *Roast*, *Pantori*, and *Chip Shop Friday* in with a bang to our serveries from September!





Peri Pantry

Peri Pantry has been the firmest of favourites across our Secondary School business – and now it gets its own dedicated slot on the menu! Wings, Burgers, Filled Pittas and Halloumi Sticks, served up alongside a selection of sauces from soothing to sizzling, and sumptuous sides including machos peas, spicy rice, peri wedges and more!

Curry Club

Join our Club! Your favourite curries from across South Asia will be taking up permanent residence on Tuesdays. Cooling Kormas, marvellous Masalas and fragrant Thai Curries all form part of the Club, amongst many more, together with an assortment of accompaniments that no self-discerning curry fan could do without!



Roast

The midweek Roast Dinner has been a staple of the service since we began, and it will continue to take centre stage on a Wednesday. We'll showcase a different Roast each week, and we'll come with the full supporting cast of trimmings and trappings that turn a Roast into a feast!



Pantori

Eastern Asian cuisine has a huge presence across every High Street in the country, and after two years in development we've brought our take on the coolest cuisine from Japan and China, to Thursday lunchtimes! From Kung Pao Chicken that packs a punch, to Vietnamese-style stir fries, and the creamiest Katsu Curry, this really is the Feast from the East!



Chip Shop Friday

The ubiquitous Friday Fish Supper will round out the week's service, with a series of specially-designed Chip Shop Specials – Fish Fillets enrobed in a crisp batter, fabulous Fishcakes or Battered Veggie Sausages will have diners feeling all nostalgic, and a healthy serving of chips and peas will always be on hand to round out the week in style!

