

THE PANTRY POST

*Autumn
Edition
'24*



The
Pantry

THE LUKE OUT

with Luke Consiglio

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM EVERY-ONE AT THE PANTRY!

Hello, and welcome to the third edition of The Pantry Post, where we're wrapping up everything that we saw *Fall* into place in Autumn, as well as some things with a very festive flavour!

I'd like to start by extending a very warm welcome to all of the schools within Amadeus Primary Academies Trust and the new kitchen teams that joined us in October - it's a pleasure to welcome you aboard Team Pantry.

As many of you may have seen on our socials, we've been fortunate enough to have been recognised with three more awards at the back-end of the year - with a third successive win at The Growing Business Awards and our very first Catey! The Catey's have an illustrious history, with previous winners including Gordon Ramsay, Fred Sirieix, Tom Kerridge, Heston

Blumenthal, Angela Hartnett, Raymond Blanc, Rick Stein, and Marcus Wareing - so we're keeping very good company! It also completes 'the set' of major awards available in our industry, which for me is immensely satisfying and a reflection of what a beautifully rounded business we've all helped build.

It's the season of giving, so for all our amazing team members within our kitchens, you will all be receiving a golden envelope in the post which contains a handwritten card from all of the central office team, along with the ubiquitous Pantry Christmas chocolate bar. We've also snuck a few Golden Tickets inside the packages, with a range of cash prizes available - so I hope this helps bring even more Christmas cheer to those lucky enough to find them. We haven't left our Head Office team out of the festive fun either - our Christmas Calendar giveaway is currently playing out across our Social Media channels, where prizes ranging from coal and a stick of sprouts, to an iPad and a £500 voucher are up for grabs!

Finally, one of our parents reached out asking for a helping hand over Christmas, with the cost of living crisis biting particularly hard - so we called upon some of our fantastic brand partners to pull together a fantastic food hamper full of store cupboard essentials, healthy treats, snacks and more, and it was heartwarming to see how gratefully this was received when I delivered it to her home.

All that's left for me to say is thank you, and I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas!

Luke



We're used to welcoming new clients, customers and parents to The Pantry in September or January - so there was rather a change of pace when we began as the new catering partner for Amadeus Primary Academies Trust in October, with five new Schools based in Kent and South-East London!

Joining The Pantry fold are *Old Bexley Primary School, St Paulinus Primary School, Castilion Primary School, Hillsgrove Primary School, and Holy Trinity Lamorbey Primary School* - with *St Paul's Cray* due to start with us in the new year!

We're delighted with how well our teams have bedded into The Company, and our way of working - and especially proud that each kitchen has received a 5-star EHO Inspection rating already, a testament to how quickly they've picked up our processes and practices.

Our Senior Area Support Manager, Jo Druce, has been absolutely vital in managing the transition process for the Trust, and she's been fundamental in ensuring each School has started off on such a positive note at The Pantry.

Feedback is always warmly received, but we were blown away by the response of one parent in particular, Maria Bracken, who

took to *LinkedIn* to sing our praises!

"THE PANTRY HAS RECENTLY BEEN APPOINTED AT OLD BEXLEY, KENT, AS THE NEW SCHOOL MEALS PROVIDER. THE FACT MY DAUGHTER NOW OPTS FOR SCHOOL DINNERS OVER A PACKED LUNCH SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT THE SERVICE IT PROVIDES. HAVING WORKED IN FOODSERVICE FOR OVER 18 YEARS, IT IS GREAT TO SEE THE INDUSTRY EVOLVE - NOW OFFERING MORE FLEXIBILITY AND VARIATION ON THE MENUS. THANK YOU TO THE PANTRY FOR MAKING LUNCHTIMES MORE ENJOYABLE FOR MY LITTLE ONES!"





FOODSERVICE
CATEY AWARDS 2024
Education Caterer of the Year
The Pantry
Sponsored by Lolly

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

The Foodservice Cateys 2024

The Catey's have long been considered 'The Oscars of the Catering Industry', so there was a tremendous sense of excitement and anticipation amongst the travelling party of Pantry people as they descended on The Royal Lancaster Hotel, on the 11th October 2024. Nominated alongside a select group of industry peers in the 'Education Caterer of the Year' category, the night took a turn for the spectacular when our name was read out as this year's winner....



"THE FOODSERVICE CATEYS ARE SEEN AS THE HIGH WATERMARK FOR AWARDS IN OUR INDUSTRY – AND IT'S A REAL BADGE OF HONOUR FOR MYSELF AND THE WHOLE OF THE PANTRY TO SAY WE'VE FINALLY GOT ONE OF OUR OWN!"



Surprise and shock quickly gave way to elation, and a mad scramble amongst the assorted Pantry People as to who would be going up to collect the award from the night's compere, comedian Angela Barnes! Luke, his Mum Tracey, and Director Anthony Swaby were the ones to make it through the crush to claim the award on The Pantry's behalf, and Luke was able to string together a few words in between all the hugs and back-slapping.

"The Foodservice Cateys are seen as the high watermark for awards in our industry – and it's a real badge of honour for myself and the whole of The Pantry to say we've finally got one of our own! It's been the thrill of my life to see so many of our innovations – that have often started as ideas scribbled on my notepad – being brought to life by talented, passionate and creative people across our business, and turn The Pantry into what we've always promised to be – More Than Food!"

The judging panel commended The Pantry's 'standout innovation and a culture that genuinely cares' as well as our 'strong customer standards and great commercial evidence'.

From innovative meal ordering systems, a family-style approach to employee and customer care, and comprehensive educational support for clients, to competitive pricing, sustainable sourcing and nutritionally-led menus, all these little aspects that make us unique in our industry helped us stand out in the judges eyes, too.

Now in their 11th year, the Foodservice Cateys are held in especially high-regard across the Catering Industry, recognising innovation and excellence across the U.K's vast Foodservice sector. Previous winners have included Taylor Shaw, Impact Food Group, Holroyd Howe, and Ch&Co – with The Pantry now joining that illustrious roll of honour!

With a black-tie theme and everyone decked out in their Sunday (well, Friday) Best, it was only fitting that our photographer captured the night's festivities in black and white. Check out how the night unfolded for The Pantry in the collage over the page, as we celebrated into the small-ish hours (it was a Friday night, after all!)





CARVING OUT A NICHE!



Halloween is the perfect time for everyone to indulge their creative sides, and the inaugural Pantry Pumpkin Carving competition gave our kitchens the opportunity to swap their chopping knives out for carving ones! And it wasn't just our School Teams getting involved – our Head Office teams took a welcome break from behind their desks to conjure up some truly spooktacular sights!

With over 50 entries from across the business, we were blown away by the skill and imagination from our teams on display, and it soon became clear that trying to pick out a winner was too tall a task for Luke alone – so we turned the responsibility over to our Social Media following to vote for their favourites instead!

The feedback from our audience was enthusiastic and widespread, with every entry receiving votes – there was no nil point in sight – and just four votes covering our three most popular entries.

There was one entry though that proved to be a Graveyard Smash – and that belonged to Zoe and the team at Chesterfield Primary School in Enfield!



The Head Office vote was just as fiercely-contested, and there was one carving that everyone came out to Bat for – this seriously spooky creation from Mandy in Finance!



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Here come the girls goals!

There's plenty of football fans at The Pantry, so when the opportunity came to sponsor a team, we jumped at the chance! The team in question is Aylesford FC Girls' Under-16s, and our Operations Manager, Nathan Ruthven, dedicates much of his hard-earned spare time coaching them.

In their first year in the Junior Premier League, they've faced numerous challenges – not least, having two players cherry-picked by West Ham United on the eve of their first fixture – but they've met them all head-on, thanks to their unwavering commitment to each other and no-ego approach to the game.

Currently sat in 6th position, they've strung together a highly-commendable record of two wins, a draw, and two defeats – and even those defeats came against the top two teams in the league. And they rounded out the month with a comprehensive 12-1 thrashing of Soccer Elite Football Association – so with players returning from injury, things are looking rosy for the Aylesford Girls!

Each Month, the Parents and the Coaches will sit down and select their Player of the Month – so congratulations to *Amber Ruthven*, and *Amelia Roberts*, who picked up the Parents' and Managers' Awards respectively for September!



Parents' Player of the Month

Amber Ruthven was the unanimous pick for the Parents' Award. An absolute rock at the back, she's shone thanks to her excellent recovery pace and strength in her duels.



Managers' Player of the Month

Amelia Roberts has been a standout up-front, already bagging 22 goals this season. A nightmare for defenders, she's been relentless in the press and lethal in front of goal.





We are always striving to support our local communities wherever we can, and our Pantry Prize giveaway, which has been especially well-received across our Schools, was designed to reward our most loyal customers with a gift that was really out of the ordinary for them.

With the cost-of-living crisis showing little sign of abating, however, many of our families have been reaching out for support on a more day-to-day basis, so we've partnered up with some brilliant brands to create seasonal hampers that will keep a family's pantry well-stocked for the weeks and months ahead.

We'd like to extend a very sincere thank you to all of the companies that have donated to the hampers already – without their help, these giveaways simply wouldn't happen! *Boundless, JimJams, Zombie, Pleasee, Burts, Radnor, Proper, Soreen, Wibble, Trek, Bidfood, Tilda, Perkier* and *Weetabix* have all been kind enough to support our December giveaway, and we've got many more partners coming aboard in the new year.



Earlier in the year, one of our clients, St Martin's Primary School, reached out to make us aware of a struggling parent who had been in contact with them to appeal for help over the Christmas period. Finding the cost of supporting four young children during such a financially-taxing time especially difficult, we soon realised that Hayley and her family would be the perfect recipients of our first Community Pantry Giveaway Hamper.

A few phone calls later, and we were headed off to meet her with our Hamper in tow. Not only that, but as a father of three young girls himself, Hayley's story had particularly resonated with Luke, so he purchased a Christmas Tree, decorations, and a few presents for the girls as well, to ensure their big day was a little more special.

When we arrived, Hayley was visibly moved, and it was clear to see how gratefully received everything was,

which was reward enough for us to see what an impact community-minded support still makes. She extended her thanks to everyone who came together to make the giveaway possible for her and her family, and had a particularly poignant message to share at this time of year.

"THERE IS HELP OUT THERE, YOU JUST NEED TO BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO ASK FOR IT."



Christmas seems to come earlier every year, and at The Pantry Head Office, it arrived almost unseasonably soon – the 29th November, to be precise! You’d have never guessed that the festive season had begun before the first door of our advent calendars had been torn open, though, as the entire central team descended on The Pantry Grotto with Christmas Jumpers, Reindeer Antlers and a festive playlist longer than Santa’s naughty list.

There was plenty of ink flowing as the team sat down to hand-write over 800 Christmas Cards for every member of the Pantry Kitchen brigade – a personal touch to thank them for all their hard work this year, and the largest number of cards we’ve ever had the pleasure to send out!

We also brought a fresh twist to one of our favourite Christmas traditions at The Pantry – our Golden Ticket Giveaway! Our elves (well, the admin team to be specific) have hidden three golden tickets, with prizes of up to £500 inside our Pantry Chocolate Bars.

The chocolate bars

CHRISTMAS IN THE PANTRY WORKSHOP!



will be headed out to every member of our kitchen teams in the lead-up to Christmas, so be careful when you’re tearing through that wrapper – there might be a surprise in store!

Finally, a big shout out to the Marketing Team for not only Decking the Halls Unit 5, but also laying on a delicious spread – including Christmas Dinner Yorkshire Pudding Wraps for our hungry helpers. We even had time to squeeze in some video content, with our Christmas Countdown unboxing showing a different team member from Head Office selecting a mystery prize each day – so head on over to our social media channels to see who’s been naughty, and who’s been nice!



GROWING BUSINESS AWARDS 2024

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MAKE OURS A TREBLE!

The Growing Business Awards 2024

The Growing Business Awards have become something of a fixture in The Pantry's social calendar; not just because they host a fabulous awards night, with menus that could vie for a Michelin Star or two, but because they celebrate the success, diversity, and well... growth of the UK's many and varied businesses.



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The Pantry were up for three awards – *Innovator of the Year*, *Entrepreneur of the Year*, and *Growing Business of the Year: £10-25m* – as well as providing the Head Judges (in Dave Power and Luke Consiglio) in a further three categories – *Customer Experience & Loyalty – Small Business*, *Recruitment Firm of the Year*, and *Growing Business of the Year: up to £2.5m*.

A quick glance at their beverages told you Dave and Luke were more nervous about presenting awards than potentially receiving them, but otherwise a bumper congregation from the Head Office and Operations Team were in fine spirits as they revelled in the party atmosphere at the plush Hilton London Bankside locale.

With *Phoenix Nights* alumnus Justin Moorhouse on the mic, any nerves soon dissipated as the crowd relaxed into a thoroughly enjoyable evening, and even missing out on the *Entrepreneur of the Year* trophy was taken in our stride.

Having won *Family Business of the Year* in 2022, and *Growing Business of the Year: £10-15m* in 2023, an award for a third successive year would have been unprecedented for ourselves, and we very much expect for The Growing Business Awards as well, yet incredibly, we were fortunate enough to have our names read out as winners of both the *Innovator of the Year* and *Growing Business of the Year: £10-25m* prizes!

'I feel like Pep Guardiola!' laughed Luke. 'Not only to win for a third year in a row, but to enjoy our most successful awards night in two of the most competitive categories on the night makes me immensely proud.'

"I'LL NEVER TIRE OF REPEATING HOW MUCH THIS IS DOWN TO THE 800-ODD PEOPLE THAT REPRESENT THE PANTRY EVERY DAY IN KITCHENS UP AND DOWN THE COUNTRY, NOT JUST THE 30 OR SO PEOPLE HERE TONIGHT. THIS IS RECOGNITION OF ALL OF YOU WHO MAKE OUR COMPANY WHAT IT IS; INNOVATIVE, GROWING, AND CONSISTENTLY SUCCESSFUL."



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