

Box Hill School in Surrey becomes first venue for Host's 'Chef's Table' initiative



Host], the national contract catering company now run by former Aramark chief executive Bill Toner, has this week launched a premium dining facility at Box Hill School in Surrey, designed to showcase the quality of its food and service.

Diners can book the Chef's Table in advance and will be served a five-course lunch including an amuse bouche, starter and choice of four main courses from the school dining room menu, as well as a palate cleansing pre-dessert and a dessert. Appropriate wines will accompany the food with front-of-house service provided by a specially-trained member of the Host catering team.

'The Chef's Table is primarily for the use of governors, trustees, staff and guests of the school but will also be a useful training facility for our chefs,' said Box Hill School catering manager Des del Frate, who has masterminded the project.

The dining room is situated in a former storage room off the main kitchen, which was given an eight-week makeover by an interior designer. The transformed room now features oak-panelled walls, atmospheric lighting and a CCTV screen giving diners a view of the working kitchen. The Chef's Table seats six and will operate for lunch twice a week during term-time.

'Each Chef's Table sitting will be run by myself or our head chef Ben Gardiner, along with one of the junior chefs. We have re-organised our kitchen so that it operates much more along the lines of a commercial restaurant kitchen. Each chef has his own section - whether it be pastry, cold, mains or sauces - and we have created a pass where we can oversee the plating up,' added Des.

Host chief executive Bill Toner said: 'This is the first Chef's Table in the education sector and will give the team at Box Hill School a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate their cooking and service skills. In time we hope to roll the concept out to our other independent school contracts.'

The launch of the Chef's Table is part of new emphasis on food quality at Host. Earlier this year the company launched its Food Academy initiative to provide a central focus for training, recipe development, ideas for special promotions and best practice across the business. Former Baxter Storey head chef Stephen England joins Host on 20 June as the company's Food Academy Executive Chef.

Host has also entered an agreement with Gleneagles' Michelin-starred chef Andrew Fairlie in which Fairlie will act as trainer and mentor to Host chefs. Host chefs will visit Gleneagles for three-day training courses, spending time in the kitchens to improve their cooking skills and food knowledge.

For further information, interviews or comment please contact Linda Pettit at Tilburstow Media Partners on 01737 823721/07973 789853 or email linda@tilburstowmedia.co.uk.

A high resolution photograph of the Chef's Table at Box Hill School, Surrey, can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

EDITOR'S NOTE

ABOUT HOST

Host is an independent, nationally based, environmentally friendly contract catering company, founded in 2004 by Jerry Brand. Bill Toner was appointed CEO of the business in May 2011.

Host has contracts in Scotland, Wales and mainland England including business & industry, directors and partners dining rooms, conference facilities, independent (prep, senior and 6th form) schools, Beacon state schools, further and higher education, and the healthcare industry in care homes, hospices and hospitals. The Host organisation looks after 85 contracts and employs over 550 staff.

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