



CHECKLIST

How to Issue A Call for Tenders for Hot Meals

(for contract value less than €50,000)

School Meals Scheme 2025/26

Hot Meals Procurement Checklist – Summary

1. First Steps

2. Seek Tenders

3. Evaluation Process

4. Post-Award Process

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First Steps

- ☐ Identify your school's preferred Hot Meals delivery mechanism
- ☐ Contact your insurance provider
- ☐ Estimate the contract value
- ☐ Prepare the procurement suite of document

Further information available at:
www.spu.ie/hot-meals

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Seek Tenders

- ☐ Seek a minimum of 3 tenders:
 - Email companies of your choice

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Evaluation Process

- ☐ Evaluate the received submissions
- ☐ Draft and issue result letters

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Contract Award Process

- ☐ Sign the Contract and related documents

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Hot Meals Procurement Checklist –

1. First Steps

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Process

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Award Process

Step 1: Identify your school's preferred Hot Meals delivery mechanism

 Review the SDG02 TN-06 Guidance for Existing Primary Schools in Relation to Facilities for Provision of School Meals ([link](#))

Define the scope of your School's requirements:

- ☐ Meals Prepared Off-site and Delivered Ready
- ☐ Meals Prepared Off-site and Heated in the School's Designated Preparation and/or Servery Area
- ☐ Meals Prepared Off-site and Heated in the School by use of an External Pod or Mobile Catering Unit
- ☐ Meals Fully Prepared On-site

Step 2: Contact your insurance provider

 Once you have identified the most suitable Hot Meals delivery mechanism for your school, you should contact your school insurance provider to discuss your preferred option and to ensure there are no insurance implications.

Step 3: Estimate the contract value

 Download the Hot Meals Calculator for Primary Schools ([link](#)) and insert the number of students to obtain your estimated contract value to a maximum 3-year term.

Step 4: Prepare the procurement suite of documents

 Download and complete the Call for Tender (CFT) document ([link](#))

 Download and complete the Tender Response Document (TRD) ([link](#))

 Watch the Video Guide: How to Complete the Hot Meals Procurement Documents ([link](#))

You can save your school's CFT and TRD using the following file naming convention:

CFT Hot Meals – [School Name] [School Roll Number]

TRD Hot Meals – [School Name] [School Roll Number]

Example: CFT Hot Meals - St. Mary's Dublin 12345A

You can also add the date at the end.

 **Where Hot Meals are to be prepared or heated in the school's facilities, the school must also add to their procurement suite of documents the following documents**

 Download the appropriate Draft Property Licence Template to be included in the school's procurement suite of documents ([link](#))

 Download the Deed of Renunciation Template to be included in the school's procurement suite of documents ([link](#))

Hot Meals Procurement Checklist –

2. Seek Tenders

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Email at least 3 service providers of your choice, with the procurement suite of documents attached to the e-mail

- You can use the e-mail template available below
- All emails must be issued at the same time to allow all service providers the same time to respond
- Allow service providers a minimum of 3 weeks to respond to your request
- Mandatory site visits must be between day 7 and day 13 after the CFT issuing date

E-mail template:

Dear [insert contact name],

Your organisation is invited to submit a tender for the provision of Hot Meals to [insert school name and roll number].

Attached are:

- CFT (Call for Tender)
- TRD (Tender Response Document)
- Draft Property Licence Template *[delete if not applicable]*
- Draft Deed of Renunciation Template *[delete if not applicable]*

Please read the CFT carefully. Failure to comply with the requirements and timelines will invalidate your tender, which must be returned by the date and time given below.

Please note that a site visit is mandatory. You can request a site visit appointment by contacting us at ([insert your e-mail address]) before the site visit date indicated in the CFT.

Your Tender Response Document must be submitted via e-mail, addressed to [insert point of contact name] ([insert your e-mail address]), **no later than 15:00hrs, on [DD MONTH YYYY]**.
Late submissions will not be considered.

If having read the CFT you decide not to submit a tender, I would be grateful if you could send your reasons (though you are under no obligation to do so) to the above-mentioned contact, marked "No submission".

Do not hesitate to contact [insert point of contact name] ([insert your e-mail address]) if you have any queries about this request.

I look forward to your response.

Hot Meals Procurement Checklist –

3. Evaluation Process

1. First Steps

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Before proceeding to the guidance available below, schools must understand these critical factors for consideration to prevent legal challenges:

If public procurement competitions are not carried out appropriately, they can lead to legal challenge and reputational damage to the school and staff.

For schools who are in the process of tendering for Hot School Meals, it is critical to understand that they must follow the procurement rules of confidentiality, fairness, equal treatment and transparency. This means that schools **can not:**

1) share any information or engage in any way with any Hot School Meals service provider outside of the formal procurement process.

In the event a school does engage in any way with a Hot School Meals service provider outside of the formal procurement process, it will jeopardise the school's procurement process and possibly lead to its collapse, resulting in the need to retender, and open the school and its staff to legal risk and challenge;

2) discuss any details of the competition, the tenderers and/or their tenders with anyone outside of the school's tender evaluation team, as the procurement process is strictly confidential.

Step 1: Access Submissions



It is best practice to wait until the tender deadline passes to open all the submission files received.

Step 2: Set up your Evaluation Team



Review the recommended composition of an Evaluation Team ([link](#))

Step 3: Evaluation Team members to sign Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration



Download the Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration, which must be read and signed by all members of the Evaluation Team ([link](#))

Step 4: Conduct the Compliance Check and Evaluation of the Qualitative Award Criteria



Download and complete the Evaluation Spreadsheet ([link](#))

This document is for the school's records only, for registering the compliance check, and scores and feedback for the qualitative award criteria. Please ensure to read guidance notes within this file.



Watch the video guide: How to Complete the Hot Meals Evaluation Spreadsheet ([link](#))



Download and complete the Evaluation Report ([link](#))

This document is for the school's records only.

Step 5: Draft, finalise and issue result letters to tenderers, according to your findings



Download the required letter templates for your procurement process:

- [Letter to non-compliant Tenderer template](#)
- [Letter to unsuccessful Tenderer template](#)
- [Letter to preferred Tenderer template](#)

Hot Meals Procurement Checklist –

4. Contract Award Process



Contract Award

Once the required standstill period has elapsed without challenge, and upon receipt of all required final documentation from the successful service provider, the school must complete the contract documents and print two original copies of each. These two copies are then sent to the Service Provider for their signature and return. Once both fully signed copies are returned, the school representative will countersign them, ensuring one fully executed original remains with the school and the other is returned to the service provider. Please note that the below documents must be completed and signed by both parties.

- Services Contract (see Appendix 5 of your published CFT document), including all schedules.
- Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix 6 of your published CFT document).
- Data Processing Agreement – DPA (see Appendix 8 of your published CFT document).
- Property Licence and Deed of Renunciation, as published in your competition, ***if applicable***.