

# Focus on... Free School Meals

**BGL Rieber**

Issue 4



*Thermoport 50 can take a variety of inserts from the full 1/4 GN to 1/2, 1/3, 1/4 or even a mix of 2/3 GN and 3 x 1/6 GN – whatever it takes to suit the menu.*

## Time to act...

■ “Schools need to get on top of this issue,” says June Taylor, Primary School Manager, **North Yorkshire County Caterers**. “Some are definitely more switched on than others.”

North Yorkshire is particularly challenged because it is geographically the largest county in England and Wales and some 55% of its 305 primary schools have fewer than 100 pupils and only 20% have over 200 pupils. Some 30 schools feature dining centres using food transport systems. Uptake in 2013 was around 47% and it is potentially looking at an additional 8,000 meals per day.

Dealing with the increased demand inevitably involves looking at transport solutions but a half dozen schools are on the list for possible kitchen conversion thanks to the extra funding, depending upon planning permission. But can the kitchens cope with the increased demand?

“We are currently visiting all schools to see what is required in

**The changes to primary school meals are putting huge pressure on schools caterers nationwide.**

terms of equipment and extra staff to serve the meals,” says Taylor.

“We have had a very mixed response so far. The schools have not quite got the measure of the impact of what will happen on a day to day basis. Can they be more flexible? Will they need to extend or stagger the lunchtimes? School halls can be very tight for space and in some cases they will need another service point to cope with the extra numbers. What if the school needs the hall back for lessons?”

“Our site visits should be finished by Easter, when we will then be able to place orders for the extra equipment required. We will be recruiting the extra staff needed in

June and July, in time for September.

“There is some funding set aside for equipment, but it is not a bottomless pit. The heads and school managers need to look at what they need.”

Sonya Smith, Catering & Service Engineers Supervisor at **Norse Commercial Services**, which supplies meals to 200 schools in Norfolk said, “We are now doing our research as to what will be needed, how to allocate the budget etc., but the situation is not as straightforward as the government might like to think.”

Increasing food transport provision will be an obvious choice, but raises issues such as, “Will there be enough space to put the extra boxes?”

*Continued on page 4*

**32,000,000 PLUS MEALS PER YEAR SERVED BY RIEBER THERMOPORTS AND COUNTING!**

■ BGL Rieber has supplied enough Thermoport food transport boxes and containers to UK schools to feed half the entire country safely and hygienically at one sitting!

We know about food transportation. For more information on Rieber's range of insulated containers and how school meals caterers are benefitting from using them, visit

[www.bgriber.co.uk](http://www.bgriber.co.uk)

## Thermoport food transport boxes and GN containers

# “Good for handling”

**Allan Doig, Manager of the School Catering Services at Aberdeenshire Council, is busy planning “to make sure we are in the right position to provide the service required for September.”**

■ Younger pupils take longest to eat and need the most assistance. Information on school meals is already translated into Polish, Latvian, Russian and Lithuanian and the Council has now added Arabic and Urdu. Web pages will also need updating and direct mail will also be carried out, with all parents of P1-3 children being mailed in August to gauge the response to the Scottish free meals offer.

Ian Sandison, Business Support Officer at Aberdeenshire Council has more than 15 years' experience of Rieber Thermoport containers; more than 400 are in use.

“They are easy to stack and transport; they hold their temperature and you can serve straight out of them. They are also robust, we have not had to replace any due to wear and tear, not bad as some are 20 years old.

“With regard to packing, it is all about maintaining the quality of the food that goes in the first place. We try not to pack more than an hour before they are due to be served; in fact we aim for

30 minutes between packing and service.”

Knowing what foods to choose is key. “When we look at new menus or new food products, we make sure to try them out in the food transport containers first. Certain foods, such as chips, might be very good straight out of the oven, but after one hour in the container, you realise they do not travel well.

### **10,000 MEALS DAILY**

“We are currently trying to work out the impact of the changes to Scottish schools meals provision. Aberdeen Council provides almost 10,000 meals daily and we reckon that the changes will increase this by one third.

“But it is not just about numbers. Years 1-3 are the slowest to serve, take more time to choose and need the most assistance, with cutting up the food, for example. There will also be an impact on seating and school dining halls.”

Fortunately, for Della Murray, Quality Assurance & Business Development Manager at the **London Borough of Tower**

**Hamlets**, the change will not have as major impact as the rest of England. Tower Hamlets pre-empted the government by launching free school meals in the Borough for the youngest schoolchildren in September 2013.

Key to meal delivery, says Murray, “is training. Rieber have been very helpful and we have done a lot of work training the staff to pack boxes correctly.”

Jim Hodgens, Services Development Officer, **Belfast Education and Libraries Board (BELB)**: “Rieber Thermoport food transport containers have been in use here for years; very handy for transport, good for manual handling and they do seem to hold temperature.”

Belfast has more than 300 boxes in use and, well aware that correct packing procedure is critical to the success of the system – “it’s all about temperature retention” – has recently revised its documentation to increase the emphasis on not opening the transport containers until ready for service. “Training is key and BGL Rieber has helped there.”



*Thermoport 50 insulated food transport boxes; easy to stack and handle.*

# you can trust

FIND OUT  
MORE AT  
[www.bglrieber.co.uk](http://www.bglrieber.co.uk)



# Food transport solutions

**THERMOPORT**  
food transport  
boxes deliver  
hot and cold  
foods in the  
best possible  
condition.

■ Many tens of thousands of Rieber Thermoports are in use and most are in the famous orange colour which has come to symbolize a food delivery service that can be trusted.

Wherever food needs to be transported Thermoport offers an economic, hygienic and safe solution.

On offer in the Thermoport range are containers for individual meal transport, bulk and plated meals and there are even Thermoports with built in heating or refrigeration, to keep food hot or cold as desired.



Thermoports packed and ready for despatch. A full breakdown of the options is on our website: [www.bglrieber.co.uk](http://www.bglrieber.co.uk)

Rieber Thermoport is a range of products backed up by the most experienced staff in the UK...but don't take our word for it. Read the

positioning when the boxes are stacked on top of each other. All Rieber Thermoports can be combined and stacked with each other or loaded onto a transport-serving trolley, allowing caterers to organise food packages to meet varying requirements.

The use of insulated dividers means Thermoport boxes can also be easily converted into multi-zone appliances. By inserting the dividers, different temperature zones for hot, cold and frozen food can be created. This means that complete meals can be stored in two or three temperature zones.

The Thermoport 1000 K/KB and 6000 K/KB containers are available in ambient models to transport hot food, or with a cooling pellet to transport cold

food. They can also come as an 'active' version with circulating air heating up to 100 degC.

## Thermoport Hybrid Kitchens

deliver hot meals wherever required and even over rough ground. Robin Hood Primary in Nottingham is using Rieber's Hybrid Kitchen version because it is smaller than a trolley, moves easily over rough ground and fits into a small goods lift.

"It keeps good temperature and has really suited our needs," said Julie Mayhew, Training and Development Officer, Catering and Facilities, Nottingham City Council Catering Service.



Above left: Thermoport plastic and stainless steel insulated boxes are easy to handle even when full and are very tough.

Far right: Thermoport Hybrid Kitchen manufactured in rugged stainless steel.

News stories on the website or contact us for a current list of reference sites so you can get independent views on how we perform.

Rieber Thermoports are known for well-designed solutions which make food transportation light and safe. For example, the Rieber stacking system: Moulded grooves on the top and bottom of the Thermoports ensure secure

## RIEBER STAFF TRAIN SCHOOL MEALS CATERERS

## BGL Rieber is here to help



BGL Rieber's Lee Cogger working with caterers in Tower Hamlets, London.

■ Wherever food and beverages have to be transported safely, BGL Rieber has the right solution, tried and tested to make sure it works!

Rieber's team of dedicated regionally-based staff each have many years' experience and expertise in food transport issues, from training staff and helping choose the right size and type of container, to the provision of meal delivery systems for everything from satellite kitchens

to draughty classrooms down long corridors or at the wrong end of a bumpy and rough footpath.

We are proud to offer our expertise in food transportation and you can depend on us for the right answers. But this is only part of the service we provide. BGL Rieber supplies much more than food transport solutions to schools caterers, visit [www.bglrieber.co.uk](http://www.bglrieber.co.uk) to find out more.

# Praiseworthy Training

■ Delivering school meals in Gloucestershire, Edwards and Ward Contracts Manager Jane Woolf has praised the training provided by BGL Rieber.

“To achieve high quality standards, we have taken total control of the delivered meals process. We use our own staff to pack, deliver and serve the food and that ‘ownership’ ensures we get the very best service.

“Staff are trained how to pack the Thermoport boxes. BGL Rieber gave us the initial training which showed, for example, that it is imperative to use the correct size containers for food.

“Meals leave the kitchen as late as possible, so they are not hanging around unnecessarily. We also manage the recipes for the boxes, undercooking vegetables slightly, for example, as they will continue cooking in their own heat.”



*Thermoport 50 and Thermoport 50 KB, also available in black and as a heated version. Max achievable temperature +95degC, volume 11.7 litres. Max GN container depth 100mm.*

## GLoucestershire IS USING BLACK THERMOPORTS

The Council originally bought 400 orange Thermoports 20 years ago and has now replaced these with the black model, produced on special order in Germany. Fourteen of these have built-in heating, to maintain food temperature: “These are ideal for use at the smaller primaries and in big draughty halls – they have been quite a success,” says the Council’s Stephen Haywood.

“The original boxes were date stamped 20 years ago; they do take a battering and lids do get left on oven tops. We have absolutely no complaints.”

# LACA chooses Thermoport

## to serve school lunch to MP’s and Peers in the House of Commons



*Food was freshly prepared in school kitchens throughout London, packed into the Thermoports and transported to the House of Commons by van.*

■ Using meals transported in Rieber’s Thermoport insulated food transport containers, some 60 Members of the House of Commons plus a number of Peers recently sampled the quality of food currently served in school restaurants across England and Wales (pictures taken from video shot on the day).

The Members were both surprised and very impressed with what was on offer.

The lunch took place as part of the build-up to the launch of National School Meals Week (NSMW) 2013. Many willing supporters from across the school catering industry pulled together to create an impressive event overcoming many logistical issues.

“Unfortunately, however, it is still the case that many people base their current perceptions on historical

memories and addressing this issue is key to the future success of the school food industry,” says LACA.

“By encouraging MP’s to attend the event at the House of Commons, they could see first-hand just how great school food is.”

### THE MENU:

- English Lamb Tagine with Roast Vegetable Cous Cous
- Vegetable Curry with Boiled Rice
- Chocolate and Beetroot Sponge with Custard
- Carrot Cake
- A Selection of Cold Drinks

More on this story at the LACA website at [www.laca.co.uk](http://www.laca.co.uk)



*School dinner ladies serving MP’s and guests. Watch the LACA video in the news section at [www.bglriber.co.uk](http://www.bglriber.co.uk)*

“This was a great initiative and congratulations to LACA for highlighting this important issue,” says BGL Rieber MD Gareth Newton. “The event showed that a delivered meals service can be of the highest quality and we are glad that our Thermoport containers played their part in the proceedings.”

## Time to act... Continued from page 1

**Local Food Links** is a Dorset-based not-for-profit organisation supplying meals for 29 local schools from locally-sourced ingredients.

“The impact of the changes will depend upon what’s going on in each school,” said Catering Manager Gillian Reynolds. “We do anticipate problems in schools where they are already operating to maximum capacity; some schools may have to extend the lunch period but this could be

problematic if it affects the use of the dining area outside the lunch period, where it may be required for lessons or sports.”

## BGL Rieber

BGL-Rieber Ltd  
Unit 6 Lancaster Park Industrial Estate,  
Bowerhill, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 6TT  
Te: +44 (0) 1225 704470  
Fax: +44 (0) 1225 705927  
E-mail: [sales@bglriber.co.uk](mailto:sales@bglriber.co.uk)  
[www.bglriber.co.uk](http://www.bglriber.co.uk)