

**Delegates:**

2205 feedback responses

Thank you to everyone who completed the feedback form from last year's Main Event. There were some common themes from the feedback which we have considered as part of the planning for The School Food People Show & Forum 2026.

**Workshop timings:**

We are looking at the schedule for next year to start these later in the day to allow for travel to the show. These are a popular feature so we are also looking at increasing the number of these and making them more practical in nature.

**Lunch provision for delegates:**

We are in consultation with the exhibitors to assess the feasibility of lunch on Tuesday being made available from the exhibition stands and not from the hotel.

**Icebreaker evening:**

We will work with the hotel to improve signage for the buffet stations. We will put a wristband or similar process in place to make sure that only people who have booked the evening in their package are allowed in.

**Event app:**

We had comments that it would be good if the app delivered notifications on upcoming sessions – delegates can sync the app with their calendar in the settings to allow this to happen. We are speaking with the app company we currently use on badge scanning for lead generation which also came up in the feedback.

**Room very hot for sessions and dinner:**

This was a problem with the hotel air con which we weren't made aware of until after the event.

**After-party in Brightsmiths:**

Very positive feedback on this new addition to the end of the awards evening, will keep this in for next year.

However there are also some common themes that we are unable to implement:

**Awards dinner:**

As School Chef of the Year is now held at The School Food Show & Forum, we have to start the awards dinner with the announcement of the winner. The 12 competitors have already had a nervous wait to find out the results and this gives them the recognition they deserve for taking part which is a year-long process from registration to final.

If we were to split the awards between the courses, the evening would actually finish later as the hotel have to stop service between each course and start again. The way we manage the evening currently allows for a rolling serve and clear process for the meal.

**Booking high profile speakers:**

Certain speaker suggestions come up often; they tend to be people who would be very expensive to book (£30k plus for a 30 minute session) so The School Food People feel it's a better use of the budget available to book speakers and demonstrators who would be as relevant to the delegates and visitors without attracting the high price tag.

### **Additional points for Exhibitors:**

#### **Parking:**

There is a free parking option available – we hire space from the NEC for this. Detail is included in the exhibition manual and exhibition joining instructions – please make sure that all exhibitor personnel attending are aware of the free option ahead of the exhibition.

#### **Exhibitors providing lunch, not the hotel:**

We have sent a questionnaire to exhibitors to assess the feasibility of lunch on Tuesday being made available from the exhibition stands and not from the hotel. The initial response has been positive so we are hopeful this will be in place for this year.

#### **Traffic congestion during build up and breakdown:**

We will make sure the hotel know to move vehicles on as soon as they are unloaded. It would be helpful if exhibitors could communicate to all drivers on-site that they should move their vehicle as soon as possible after unloading and before starting to build stands, the lorryway is not intended to be used for parking.

#### **Event app:**

Using the app for lead generation – unfortunately this isn't something we can put in place for 2026 but we are hopeful that we can implement that for 2027.