



Choosing a Procurement Consultant for Your School

What to Look For and What to Avoid



Introduction

With school budgets tighter than ever, many leaders are turning to procurement consultants for support. Whether it's for catering, cleaning, utilities or facilities management, a strong consultant can **help you unlock cost savings, boost service quality, and reduce the administrative burden** on your staff.

But not all procurement consultants are created equal.

In a sector where every pound saved can directly impact pupil experience, making the wrong choice doesn't just affect the bottom line, it affects the children.

Here's what to consider when choosing a procurement consultant for your school, and how to ensure you're getting true value from the partnership.



1. Beware of Low-Cost Promises & Hidden Costs

A growing number of consultants are offering rock-bottom quotes to win school contracts, only to increase their fees later or add hidden charges once the ink is dry.

This practice is damaging in any sector, but in schools, it's unforgivable. You can't afford financial surprises, especially when every decision affects children's learning, wellbeing, and opportunities.

Ask this:



Is your fee fixed for the duration of the contract?



What's included in the fee and what's not?



Have other schools experienced additional charges after signing?



If the consultant avoids direct answers or offers vague fee structures, walk away.

2. They Should Ask About More Than Just Money

A good consultant will want to understand your school inside out. Not just your budgets and cost targets, but your culture, student needs, community priorities, and non-financial goals.

If they don't ask about your pupils, especially the number on free school meals, dietary needs, cultural sensitivities, or how food and facilities support your wider wellbeing agenda, it's a major red flag. A one-size-fits-all approach might work for a commercial chain, but it doesn't work in education.

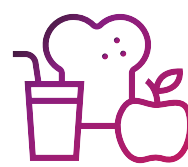
Ask this:



How will you tailor your approach to suit our school community?



What experience do you have working with schools with similar demographics?



How do you factor non-financial objectives into your procurement strategy?



If they don't ask any questions about your school's ethos or your students, they're not truly focused on outcomes that matter.

3. Look for Commercial Experience in the Education Sector

Many consultants come from catering or facilities backgrounds, not procurement. While operational knowledge is useful, schools need commercial thinkers, professionals who understand contracts, negotiation, benchmarking, and long-term cost efficiency.

Ask this:



What's your background? Procurement, education or catering?



Can you show examples of how you've saved schools money without sacrificing quality?



How do you benchmark costs and performance across your school clients?



If the only method they mention for reducing costs is cutting quality or simplifying service, they lack true procurement capability.

4. Evaluate Them Like a Long-Term Partner, Not a Quick Fix

The right procurement consultant is more than just a cost cutter. They're a strategic partner, someone who will help your school stay compliant, improve service delivery, and reinvest savings into areas that benefit students.

Look at their renewal rate. Speak to their other clients. And judge them on whether they're as invested in your outcomes as you are.

Ask this:



What percentage of your clients renew or extend their contracts with you?



Do you offer ongoing support post-procurement?



Can we speak to a current client with similar needs?

Why Procure Is Different

We exist to solve the problems other consultants create.

We're commercial procurement specialists with deep education sector knowledge. We don't sell generic solutions or unrealistic proposals, we deliver tailored strategies that reflect your school's unique challenges and goals.

Our model is simple: fixed fees, full transparency, and a relentless focus on value. And that value extends beyond numbers. We help schools improve quality, remain compliant, and create better environments for staff and pupils alike.

Because in education, a poor procurement decision isn't just bad business, it's bad for children. We believe they deserve better.





**If you're ready to work with
a consultant who puts your
school and your students
first, let's talk.**

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