



**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council



**Industry:**

Public Sector



**Project Type:**

Productivity and  
Cost Control



**Duration:**

20 Weeks



**Location:**

Warrington

**MCA  
AWARDS  
2025  
FINALIST**

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“The Managementors project was essential in making the school meals service economically viable. We were at risk of outsourcing the service, which could have put many jobs at risk. As a council, we were determined to continue to provide over 6,000 pupils with school meals, many of which depend on the service. Managementors engaged well with our team and helped us to meet both short term needs and plan effectively for the longer term. They have supported a positive cultural shift in the kitchens, addressing engrained behaviours and successfully navigating challenges like moving staff between kitchens. We are thankful for the support they’ve provided.”

**Steven Broomhead MBE,**  
Chief Executive – Warrington Borough Council

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## The Challenge

Warrington Borough Council’s (WBC) school meals service supplies school meals to sixty-seven out of the seventy-two primary schools within the area, serving over 6000 pupils every day. Various factors, including rising food costs, have put significant pressure on the service in recent years. The council needed to make the service cash flow neutral to be able to keep this vital community service in-house. Our initial analysis uncovered the following:

- Absence of scientific resourcing models to determine the required staffing hours to meet demand
- A reactive approach to the planning of resource and high levels of long-term sickness, incurring high costs
- Limited technical knowledge of kitchen management software, leading to a mistrust in data, preventing it from being used to manage effectively
- Management tended to backfill front-line roles, rather than actively managing the service
- Systemic use of overtime and lack of controls driving surplus resourcing and costs
- Little visibility of financial and operational performance, masking opportunities to realise efficiencies

## Featured Results

During the project lifetime, **£340k** annualised benefit achieved, with a further **£94k** of annualised savings identified to be realised throughout 2025. This included:



**10%**

increase in the  
Meals per Hour



**23%**

reduction in  
Overtime



**3%**

reduction in  
food spend



**2.4:1**

ROI

**m<sup>2</sup>**

# Our Solution



Developed and rolled out a comprehensive resource planning solution incorporating a sickness tracker to assist office staff in knowing where to send spare resources. This allowed for a shift in mindset amongst management with regards to backfilling of front-line roles – rather, focusing on dispersing resource across the service more evenly



Implemented a standardised procedure for overtime approval, with a strict cadence of review. This ensured full awareness of overtime hours and incurred costs across the service



Built and implemented a review structure allowing kitchens to record and escalate issues to the central office. The issue log encouraged actions and allowed for themes to be identified across schools, promoting standardised solutions where appropriate



Designed and rolled out a reporting solution, allowing for the Warrington Borough Council school meals leadership to see operational and financial performance at a glance. Weekly supplier reviews were also set up to provide an effective feedback loop and improve supplier relations



Supported and facilitated the training of both office and kitchen staff on the Kitchen Management software, ensuring a standardised approach to its use and improving its accuracy

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"For me, it's all about a sustainable solution. **Managementors were able to effectively get to the root causes of our unique service**, and picking up on overtime controls was a key area for me. The solutions were embedded, followed by a great effort to work with the unions through consultation to help ensure our kitchens were the right size. Extra time was given to help ensure key managers were fully confident with the new elements of the management framework developed and implemented, giving them the support to continue on this positive trajectory."

**Louise Atkin,**  
Deputy Director Education and Inclusion

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## Who did we work with?

- Service Management
- Kitchen Assistants and Supervisors
- Compliance
- Finance



## Key Benefits

- ⊕ Empowered Account Managers to make resource decisions based on fact rather than feeling, helping to remove stress and frustration from daily planning
- ⊕ Improved communication between the school meals team and wider council functions, including Finance and HR, enabling a more streamlined workflow within the council
- ⊕ Developed KPIs for use in the reporting solution to show school performance and cost at a glance, taking a proactive approach to management
- ⊕ Strengthened relationship with key external suppliers, allowing greater collaboration and quick resolution of issues



Managementors works in partnership with our clients to deliver customised solutions that resolve their most significant performance challenges and leave a lasting legacy of performance improvement. Whether it's tackling operational or change issues head on, or improving output across the service delivery organisation, we provide the insights, techniques and skills transfer that make a sustainable step-change in productivity possible.

