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## CASE STUDY

# HERSCHEL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SLOUGH, BERKSHIRE

THE SCIENCE OF CLEANING,  
THE ART OF CARING

**W**e commenced service delivery at Herschel Grammar School on 04/01/13. The existing cleaning operation was 'in house' and there were a number of challenges:

- Sickness and absenteeism rates were unacceptably high within the incumbent team.
- Standards of cleaning were poor. Examples included build-up of limescale in hygiene areas, no dressing on vinyl hard floors, build-up of old seal and dirt on the edges of floors and poor attention to detail.
- Productivity rates within the existing team were low. Some of the cleaning operatives were cleaning very small areas.
- The cleaning operatives had enhanced and relatively complex terms and conditions of employment. These included LGPS pensions, full sick pay and large holiday entitlements. Some of the team had length of service in excess of ten years.
- Cleaning was taking place at 15:30 but this was impractical because of the busyness of the School. The client wished to move the cleaning window to post 18:00.
- The Sports Centre was being cleaned by a contractor and was contracted until 31/03/13. The budgeted hours were not being delivered and standards were very poor.
- The site comprises a large main block and then a number of outbuildings, each of which needed to be secured. We were to be responsible for securing the building after the cleaning operation was completed.

**Our Operations Director, Del Simpson, took the Project Manager role for this contract. Del was supported by Gary Broadhurst, our Operations Manager.**

**The following actions were undertaken before the contract commencement date:**

- A series of Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) or TUPE meetings were held with the existing operatives to explain the proposed transfer and discuss any potential changes. The meetings were supplemented by letters to all employees.
- Working with Herschel Grammar School we were rapidly able to effect a change in shift time because of an Economic, Technical or Organisational (ETO) reason and all of the operatives switched to commencing cleaning at 18:00.
- New operatives were recruited and trained to supplement the existing workforce.
- Del and Gary met with the client at Herschel Grammar to establish the main concerns and priorities going forward.
- New equipment and materials were delivered to the site, including a scrubber dryer and a high speed inline burnishing machine for the vinyl corridors and wooden reception floor.

**In the eight weeks after contract commencement we were able to:**

- Induct and retrain the whole team in proper cleaning techniques.
- Reset the cleaning areas to ensure an equitable and efficient division of work.
- Uplift cleaning standards across the site by improving the performance of the incumbent operatives and using additional labour supplied by our Mobile Technicians. For example, we used the Mobile Technicians to strip and redress vinyl corridors and then trained the site operatives how care for them properly using maintainer and a high speed inline burnishing machine.
- Establish discipline with respect to attendance times and the operatives devoting all of their working time to their duties.

- Motivate the team by showing them that improvements could be made and providing them with support and training.
- Appoint a new Site Supervisor, implement and document a locking up procedure.

**The contract was handed over from the project management team to the operations team in April 2013. Since then the contract has continued to progress in a number of ways:**


- A hard core of the TUPE operatives continued to display a poor attitude to work and to be persistently absent from work. We worked hard with the School and our employment law consultants to eventually remove these operatives from site. This was a complex operation because some of them had very long standing service.
- The Sports Centre was added to contract as a morning clean and cleaning standards improved.
- A proper programme of periodic cleaning has been instituted and is being followed and this has had a significant impact on standards
- We gained Admitted Body Status to the LGPS in order to satisfy our TUPE obligations. This is a complex and often time consuming process but something that we are always prepared to do in order to meet our obligations to the existing workforce.
- There have been further changes to the Site Supervisor post but the current Supervisor is doing well and was a member of the incumbent team in January 2013.

In January 2014, at the anniversary of contract commencement, we were able to write to the School regarding an annual increment.

Rather than requesting an inflationary increment, we were actually able to offer a significant reduction in contract charge because of the efficiencies that had been made during the first year of contract operation.

The School is now much cleaner than it was when we commenced service delivery and the cost of this service has been reduced.



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