



Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle: Façade Refurbishment

Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle school in South Kensington sought a contractor capable of refurbishing the external façade of its building, to create an aesthetic that would be in keeping with the prestigious calibre of the school and its neighbouring properties, which include the French Consulate and Natural History Museum.

The solution

The project was awarded to Building Solutions (the specialist building and refurbishment arm of VINCI Facilities), due to its track record of success conducting similar restoration works for clients including the Institution of Civil Engineers and Parliamentary Estates.

Now complete, the following aspects proved crucial to the successful completion of the £1.58m 53-week project:

Ensuring efficient logistics

As the school is located on a busy street and was required to remain operational throughout the works, Building Solutions introduced the following initiatives to ensure an efficient operation that would minimise disruption:

- » All works were scheduled to accommodate the school's timetable of lessons, including various works being scheduled over the Christmas and Easter holidays.
- » All materials and waste were stored off the road in the rear car park and accessed via scaffolding with a linking bridge over the roof, along with a hoist and a Haki staircase.
- » Welfare facilities were positioned nearby off site.
- » All team members commuted via public transport to reduce congestion on site.

Supply chain management

Building Solutions utilised 15 sub-contractors from its network of approved partners, and provided asbestos and lead awareness training to all parties, along with ensuring all the necessary DBS/CRB checks were conducted.

Minimising lead-related H&S risks

A key element of the works required the removal of c.16 tonnes of lead paint from the façade. While the design stipulated that the paint be removed via torc cleaning, Building Solutions challenged the brief due to the risks associated with creating airborne lead particles, and instead recommended poultice stripping. The revised approach ensured that the paint could be stripped in a controlled manner and disposed of safely.

The project also required Building Solutions to prepare and sand lead paint as part of restoration works to the school's sash windows and patio doors. To minimise dust migration within the building, the team erected floor-to-ceiling dust-proof enclosures, installed dust extractors on all power tools, and conducted rigorous environmental cleaning following the completion of works.

To ensure the safe containment of all lead waste from the project, Building Solutions utilised 20 secure Intermediate Bulk Containers situated at the rear of the property.

SCOPE OF WORKS

- » Scaffold to front and rear, with a linking bridge over the roof, including hoist and Haki staircase.
- » Poultice stripping of lead paint from façade.
- » Lead testing, monitoring and protection.
- » Repairs and conservation to sash windows, joinery, stone, render, brickwork and cornice.
- » Structural repairs to balconies.
- » Repairs of metal railings and finial.
- » Decoration to windows, façade, metalwork, sign-writing and signage.
- » Roof covering replacements.
- » Rainwater goods.

KEY RESULTS

- » The project achieved zero RIDDORs and zero environmental incidents – no mean feat considering the risks associated with the lead removal works.
- » A purchasing policy ensured that circa £1.19m was spent with suppliers from the local area.
- » Lycée Français' advisors rated Building Solutions highly in a post-project survey, including scoring the organisation a full 10/10 for areas including Health and Safety, Environment, Compliance, Professionalism and Attitude.



BUILDING SOLUTIONS



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