Project 464: New School Kitchen and Dinning Hall

Client: TKAT - Drapers Mill Primary Academy

Programme: 14 Weeks

Construction Details: Aluminium Doors, Brickwork, Building Control, Carpentry, Decorating, Decorations, Double Glazed, Drainage, Dry Lining, Electrical Works, Floor Coverings, Flooring, Kitchen, Partitioning, Plastering, Plumbing, Rainwater Goods, Refurbishment, Sanitary Ware, School Improvement, Suspended Ceilings, Toilet Refurbishment

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New School Kitchen and Dining Hall
Change of Use and Comprehensive Refurbishment – Project Overview

We secured the contract to transform an existing toilet and classroom block into a new school kitchen and dining hall through a comprehensive change-of-use and refurbishment project.

The school's existing kitchen and dining facilities occupied an ageing building that no longer met its needs, while the kitchen required significant investment to bring it up to modern standards. The original proposal involved constructing an entirely new kitchen and dining block, but the costs proved prohibitive.

TKAT developed a more cost-effective solution that would deliver the required facilities without the expense of a new-build development. An underused part of the school estate was identified which proposed transforming an existing block. The block comprised of two classrooms and separate boys' and girls' toilet facilities. The answer was to convert this into a purpose-designed kitchen and dining environment.

The Transformation

We completely stripped out the existing building and removed internal walls to create a spacious, open-plan dining hall capable of accommodating the school's pupils.

The building's inadequate electrical supply presented one of the project's main challenges. To meet the demands of a fully operational commercial kitchen, we installed a new electrical supply, involving an approximately 212-metre cable run from the opposite end of the school building.

We also installed a new gas main and central heating system, alongside suspended ceilings throughout the building.

Within the new layout, we created a dedicated commercial kitchen area and worked with a specialist kitchen contractor to coordinate the supply and installation of the commercial catering equipment. We also installed a fire shutter to provide the required separation between the kitchen and dining areas.

Creating a Fully Functional Dining Environment

The transformation was completed with new flooring throughout, selecting a durable and practical finish suited to the demands of a busy school environment.

To give the school greater flexibility, we sourced folding tables and chairs that allow staff to adapt the dining space for different activities and uses. This also created a need for practical, secure storage, so a dedicated furniture store was incorporated into the refurbishment, providing a convenient place to keep the tables and chairs when not in use.

A Cost-Effective Solution for the Education Sector

This project demonstrates how schools and academy trusts can make better use of their existing buildings to deliver modern, fit-for-purpose facilities without the significant costs associated with new-build construction.

By identifying an alternative use for an underutilised building, the Trust achieve its objective of providing improved kitchen and dining facilities while making effective use of its existing estate.

The completed transformation has given the school a practical, flexible and modern dining environment, significantly improving its catering provision and creating a more suitable space for pupils and staff.

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