

# 5 Step Guide:

## Undertaking Due Diligence on School Retrofit Lighting Suppliers



### THE CASE FOR RETROFIT

The case for energy efficient retrofit lighting upgrades in schools and academies is a compelling one: not only can lighting account for over half of a school's electricity use, but the installation process is fast and simple, and offers a rapid return on investment – typically 2 or 3 years.

Lighting is also one of the easiest things a school can do to improve the comfort of the learning environment, with the latest LED and T5 retrofit technologies providing excellent, glare-free light quality.

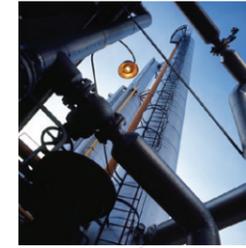
However, the market is flooded with lighting suppliers promising big savings on energy costs and carbon emissions. So what should schools factor into their due diligence and supplier selection process to ensure that these promises aren't 'too good to be true'?

**At Energyys Group, we believe that forewarned is forearmed. Which is why we have prepared this 5 step guide to undertaking due diligence and selection of retrofit lighting suppliers.**

**If you are an estates director, property manager or bursar in a school or academy – this handy guide will help you through the early stages of the supplier selection process. And, with experience of delivering successful retrofit lighting upgrades at hundreds of schools across the UK, we think we're in a good position to offer advice...**

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# 1

### BUILD THE BUSINESS CASE

Every energy efficiency strategy needs advocates. Of course, there may be resistance. For head teachers, governors and board members who are not convinced by your plans to implement energy-saving technology, it may seem more prudent to simply do nothing. However, the rising cost of energy cannot be ignored.

#### OUR ADVICE:

Work with a supplier that is capable of helping you – at a strategic level – to build the business case – and demonstrate (in clear, non-technical terms) how maximum ROI will be achieved.

# 2

### SEEK REFERENCES, AND FOLLOW THEM UP

Now you've made your case, and found what look like 'the right solutions', you need to be sure of your choice. The process often starts with a set of calculations, which show how much energy and carbon can be saved (as well as providing promises on product lifetime).

#### OUR ADVICE:

It's a good idea to back these figures up: Our advice is to make sure you get references, preferably from sector peers. Find out just how accurate these 'promises' have been for other schools.

### Case Study

**Energys recently provided these calculations for a number of schools within the Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust (BEMAT). Ian Kite, BEMAT Head of Capital and Projects, presented the proposal to senior management, and was met with a level of skepticism. "There was a feeling that the energy savings and projected outcomes looked 'too good to be true'", says Mr. Kite. So he looked to his sector peers - and received an enthusiastic reference from Hertfordshire County Council which will see Energys supply and install low carbon retrofit solutions at up to 475 of its schools. This provided his colleagues with the reassurance they needed to give the go ahead.**



# 3

### ASK ABOUT PRODUCT WARRANTIES

For additional peace of mind it pays to ensure that the supplier offers a robust warranty on its lighting. Not only does it show that the supplier is confident that their product won't fail, it also takes the risk out of the decision.

#### OUR ADVICE:

Energys offers a 5-year warranty on its lighting products. However there are many companies that don't offer this length of time, so it's worth shopping around for those who do. It is also worth checking the financial stability and trading history of your prospective supplier – a long warranty is not especially helpful if the supplier is unlikely to be around to honour it.

#### TOP TIP:

For further reassurance, schools could also consider suppliers that include an ongoing maintenance service as part of their package.

# 4

### GET HELP WITH PROJECT FUNDING

Many academies and universities are turning to suppliers to help access funding for energy-efficiency projects. Schemes like SALIX are popular (and your technology supplier should help you to identify the right funding pot to apply for). However, there are other options out there.

#### OUR ADVICE:

If you chose to work with Energys Group – we are able to provide access to a risk-free lease arrangement. Right from day one, our own plan is 'cash positive - monthly payments on the lease are completely covered by the financial savings that result from lower bills. The remaining savings go straight to the school – and all without the requirement for any capital expenditure.





# 5

## SECTOR EXPERIENCE IS KEY

And finally... Never underestimate the importance of sector experience. Schools and educational establishments face specific challenges – and your chosen supplier must have both experience and awareness in this regard.

### OUR ADVICE:

- Installation – a good supplier will work out of hours or during the school holidays.
- DBS-checked engineers – onsite engineers should have already undergone DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks – so they can get on with the job straight away.
- Minimise disruption – schools don't need or want any disruption to teaching time (or space). Make sure you opt for a supplier that understands this.



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