

Annual energy bills for school reduced from £55,000 to £27,000 thanks to Priva Blue ID BMS.

- > **Annual energy bills reduced from £55,000 to £27,000**
- > **Gas and electricity consumption cut by 38%**
- > **Greater heating system control and comfort for pupils and staff**

[Chafyn Grove School](#), an independent day and boarding preparatory school in Salisbury, has more than halved its annual costs for gas and electricity. Yearly bills have been reduced from £55,000 to £27,000 following the progressive installation of [Blue ID BMS](#) (building management system) technology from Priva.

Founded in 1879 by Mr WC Bird as an all-boys' school, it became Chafyn Grove in 1916 after being renamed after its first benefactress, Julia Chafyn Grove. In her will, Ms Chafyn Grove left £5,000 to assist education in Salisbury and provide a school that would take the place of the Elizabethan grammar school endowment which the city formerly had. Today, from its 5-hectare site, the school provides education to day, weekly and full-board pupils aged from 3 to 13.



Energy efficiency

Chafyn Grove has an excellent track record. In the past three years its children have won 43 scholarships and awards to senior schools. Moreover, Chafyn has a 90% pass rate to local grammar schools at 11+, while at 13, 100% of its pupils passed CE to move to the school of their choice. Ensuring outstanding results, however, has to be underpinned by a comfortable learning environment, something that the school was keen to start improving around five years ago in the knowledge that the latest BMS technology would also help reduce its carbon footprint and introduce greater levels of energy efficiency.

“The main reason for the BMS upgrade was to renew inefficient boiler controls, to give better user comfort and reduce gas usage,” states Toby White, Estates Bursar, Health and Safety Officer at Chafyn Grove School. “We reached out to local company Novac Control Systems and they recommended Priva Blue ID.”

Very few controls were in place at Chafyn Grove previously. Some room thermostats had been installed, but all were very basic and, consequently, the system was deemed inefficient. Often classrooms were too hot, with windows left open to vent heat.

“While we wanted energy savings, we also wanted better control to ensure the comfort of pupils and staff,” says Mr White. “In addition, it would be great to have a system that was easy enough to operate so that we could shut the heating down over the school holidays.”

Minimum disruption

On the subject of school holidays, a principal stipulation of the project was that all installation work had to take place out of term time. It was therefore scheduled for the work to take place progressively, building by building, over a period of years beginning in 2013 to minimise disruption and avoid placing too much strain on budgets.

Thankfully, Priva Blue ID is particularly easy to install. The system’s hardware consists of a base on which individual functional modules, containing all mission-critical components, can be installed. Wiring takes place on the base, which is robust and insensitive to failures.

“Previously, we had 10 separate gas meters servicing 10 separate buildings,” explains Mr White. “Since July 2013, six of these have been upgraded with Priva controls. We still have more buildings to upgrade, but they are smaller and use less gas, so the priority is lower.”

Impressive energy savings

The results of the upgrade to date have been extremely impressive, with gas and electricity consumption, and overall energy bills, reduced considerably. With regard to gas, usage has reduced from 6,500 kWh/heating degree days in 2012-13, to 4,400 in 2016-17, a 32% reduction. Indeed, the school is on track to improve this percentage even further in 2017-18.

In terms of combined gas and electricity consumption, Chafyn Grove has witnessed a reduction from 1,850,000 kWh in 2012-13, to 1,150,000 in 2016-17, a 38% reduction. Perhaps most impressively of all, with respect to financial savings, the school has seen a reduction from £55,000 per annum, to £27,000 in the period from 2013 to 2017.

“Yes, gas, electricity and waste disposal have all been reduced,” concludes Mr White. “The figures speak for themselves; we are very happy.”

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