

IP-Surveillance from Axis creates secure environment for joint school venture.

Axis network cameras help new city academy modify pupil behavior.



Organization:
Excelsior Academy

Location:
Newcastle upon Tyne,
UK

Industry segment:
Education

Application:
Safety and security

Axis partner:
2020 Vision Technology

Mission

Newcastle-based Excelsior Academy is a new concept in secondary education. It is made up of four individual secondary schools and a sixth form college, and pupils share certain communal areas within the academy. When it was in its planning stages there was some concern over how pupils from each of the schools would interact with each other in the shared areas. With vandalism also a problem in many of today's secondary schools, the academy was keen to ensure the safety and security of its staff and pupils at all times.

Solution

The academy initially considered deploying an analog CCTV system to secure its public and communal areas. However, on the advice of security installer and Axis partner, 2020 Vision Technology, it was decided that an IP-based surveillance system would best suit the academy's needs; this would enable images to be shared across the network and offer excellent image quality and usability.

2020 Vision Technology deployed AXIS 216FD Network Cameras in many of the academy's shared areas. In the event of an incident, the academy's staff can log on to the network to view the footage and get a clear view of what has taken place and who was responsible.

Result

The IP-based surveillance system has helped completely modify the pupils' behavior at the academy. There are now very few incidents of vandalism or disruptive behavior and when they do occur, the academy has the evidence it needs to address the situation with the individuals responsible. The surveillance system has delivered a clear return on investment, creating a safe and secure environment for both staff and pupils.

"Without doubt the camera presence has helped modify behavior in the school and helps create a safe environment for all staff and pupils. Although difficult to quantify we have definitely received an excellent return on investment from our surveillance equipment by preventing a lot of unnecessary damage and inconvenience."

Peter Snowdon, Business Manager, Excelsior Academy.

Excelsior Academy is an exciting new concept in secondary education situated in the West End of Newcastle. With a model that is the first of its kind in the UK, the academy will play a major role in the regeneration of the West End of the city. It is made up of five 'schools within a school' and delivers education and learning opportunities to a capacity of 1,800 students aged 11-18.

Excelsior Academy is committed to providing the best possible learning opportunities for all students through high quality teaching and a wide curriculum. It is also committed to offering a safe and secure environment for its staff and pupils.

A secure environment

When the original concept for Excelsior Academy was conceived, one of the primary concerns raised was how the pupils from the individual schools would interact with each other in the communal areas such as the dining and sporting facilities. With as many as one in three schools in the UK subjected to some form of vandalism, the new academy was determined to monitor behavior and maintain its attractive surroundings by trying to prevent any damage being done to its buildings.

For the pupils' own safety, they are not permitted to leave the site during the day and must remain in the academy during their lunch break. The academy's dining facilities enable all pupils to sit down to eat lunch together as a school. With the safety and security of all staff and pupils of paramount importance to the academy, it was initially decided that an analog CCTV system should be rolled out throughout the organization. The academy's consulting engineers Cundall brought in security integrators 2020 Vision Technology to advise on this decision:

"We recommended IP-based surveillance as it offers a host of benefits that will help create a secure and safe learning environment at the academy. The flexibility offered by network cameras allows staff to log on to the system from the office or remotely and for footage to be shared across the academy's network," said Peter Houllis, managing director, 2020 Vision Technology.

Modifying behavior

2020 Vision Technology rolled out AXIS 216FD fixed dome cameras throughout all areas of Excelsior Academy except the classrooms. The AXIS 216FD is a discreet, compact and cost-efficient solution that offers effective protection against tampering. It is an ideal solution for indoor environments which could potentially be exposed to vandalism. With a high quality and progressive scan sensor and advanced image processing the camera gives clear and crisp images even in low light conditions. It also has built-in two-way audio capabilities including an audio detection alarm which allows for real-time communication with visitors and intruders.

The academy wanted to ensure that any inappropriate actions by pupils could be followed up and the network cameras give staff the opportunity to analyze footage once an incident has occurred and identify the culprits. Peter Snowdon, the academy's Business Manager, explains how he believes the system has helped curtail inappropriate behavior: "When the academy first opened, our pupils weren't really aware of our cameras and the impact they could have on their actions."

"However, this soon changed. On numerous occasions we have been able to positively identify the instigators of inappropriate conduct due to the image quality the cameras provide. And, because we had the evidence, on more than one occasion, one of our pupils was reported to the police and charged with criminal damage. The pupils have seen that we take such incidents seriously and due to the widespread camera coverage, they know that there is nowhere to hide. As a result, less incidents of vandalism or other inappropriate behavior have been reported."

The network cameras are situated in public areas of the academy and with the exception of the classrooms, there are very few areas not monitored. The cameras are not manned, so if an incident occurs, staff log on to the system from the office or remotely and play back the footage to establish what has actually taken place and who was responsible. The system is operated from an easy-to-use command center that allows images to be analyzed in detail.

