

FTL Secure Solutions provide centralised Access Control on a multi-site Campus



The Project: Monkton Combe School

Type of Site: School campus with multiple sites.

Number of Users / Doors: Approximately 120 doors across several sites.

Solution Required: To centralise access control on a multi-site campus and secure access to the school premises.

Products used: EXgarde Pro software, MICROgarde 1 and MICROgarde 2 controllers.

Monkton Combe School is an independent boarding and day school near Bath, England. The Senior School is in the village of Monkton Combe, whilst the Prep School, Pre-Prep and Nursery are in Combe Down on the southern outskirts of Bath.

Monkton Combe School provides children from the age of two with a rich education that combines academic excellence with a lively Christian ethos, outstanding facilities and exceptional pastoral care.

Prior to the project, all doors across the sites were locked by key. At the end of each day a member of staff would have to manually lock all external doors, which was time-consuming and left room for errors and the possibility that doors could inadvertently be left unlocked.



The Requirements

Monkton Combe School wanted to update its access control solution to protect people and property, especially the boarding houses and the students staying in the facilities. As well as preventing external threats, the school was also concerned about the security and whereabouts of boarder students out of school time.

A spokesperson for Monkton Combe School commented, *"We have a very open site which has both cycle paths and foot paths going through the grounds. The campus is a mixture of buildings and open fields that covers an area of approximately 100 acres. Prior to the installation of the access control, we used a mobile foot patrol to secure the site at a given time. As both security and safeguarding has changed within the education world, we had to rethink our security policy. To do this we decided to install a networked access control system."*

Another important issue that the school has to consider is lock down in the event of an intruder. The school looked at a few options and chose to create inner barriers that are safe areas within the school campus. By controlling access, no employees or students are inadvertently locked outside of a safe area in the event of a lock down. Also, by having the buildings locked 24/7 it is more difficult for an intruder to get access to the school, despite the campus grounds being very open.

The Solution

For assistance with the project, Monkton Combe School turned to expert installer FTL Secure Solutions to design and install the right access control solution. Having examined the requirements and discussed the specific needs and criteria with the school, FTL Secure Solutions specified TDSi's powerful EXgarde PRO security management software to manage the networked access control. Each access door is controlled using a TDSi MICROgarde 1 (for a single door) or MICROgarde 2 (for two linked doors) access controller. These deliver cost-effective networkable performance that is robust and reliable and can be easily connected to the corporate LAN. Initially the project incorporated 30 doors on the senior school, but has now extended to the Prep, Pre-Prep and boarding houses, with 120 doors across all the sites.

The Benefits

By connecting all the secured doors to EXgarde PRO via the MICROgarde controllers, Monkton Combe School now has a centralised access control system that provides multiple levels of access for staff and students along with a centralised lockdown facility with safe areas. Three campuses can be controlled from a single location, removing the requirement for a member of staff to spend hours each day physically locking doors. As well as securing against external threats, the solution now also shows the security and teaching staff if students have entered or left secure areas, in case they need to be located. The project has been rolled out over a number of years to incorporate further doors as required, from the initial 30 to 120 over a four-year period, with plans to expand over a further two sites. The school's spokesperson commented, *"We are looking forward to using the landlord/tenant functionality to effectively manage multiple sites from a single location, which gives us a powerful overview of the campus and people in it."*

Monkton Combe School has been impressed with the installation expertise of the project, as well as the inherent suitability of the TDSi systems for the needs of the campus, as the school's spokesperson added, *"We have used FTL Secure Solutions throughout the access control system roll out and they have been a key advisor and reliable technology partner throughout the development of the system. I am familiar with a number of access control systems; however, my thoughts are that many are not robust enough for what the school requires – so we have been very impressed with the project results."*

The school has also praised the flexibility of the TDSi solution, as the school's spokesperson concluded, *"We also have a large number of authorised external users who all have different needs, but the TDSi EXgarde system is very flexible to our needs and well placed to manage these requirements."*

