

SEPTEMBER 2014

TPM⁴ Schools Newsletter

Inside This Issue

1. Welcome from Peter Ballard
2. How to reduce your management fee
3. Planning for the coming year
4. Five year fixed wiring tests
5. New faces at DBE Services
6. Building Consultants
7. When you need a quote for maintenance work
8. Boiler servicing
9. Help us to be even better



Contact details

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All requests or enquiries

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8am – 5pm Monday to Friday
Job requests during office hours

Email

info@dbeservices.co.uk

Job requests during office hours.
At other times please use the
emergency number

Emergencies

01254 584699

Outside office hours and Bank
Holidays

New school year – new challenges

We hope you had a good summer break and found time for yourself, your family and friends.

Those who have not worked in a school sometimes find it difficult to understand the constant pressure that staff are under during term time and no doubt many of you will have spent time in school over the summer. It is of course not helped by the desire of all governments to constantly have “good ideas” and initiatives which they are convinced will revolutionise the education system. During this school year we will have a general election and, whatever the result, there will be new challenges emanating from those who seek sanctuary in Sanctuary House.

The primary task remains the same; to provide the young people in our care with the best possible education experience. Whatever the joys and pains the coming year may bring, let us be thankful that children in our care can play and learn without the fear of unseen horror coming out of the sky. As we mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War it is difficult to comprehend how we continue to live in a world where our news is dominated by stories of children being killed playing on a beach, or on an Xbox in their home.

Politicians are keen to tell us of the importance of teaching children about our history but they themselves seem incapable of using that knowledge to make the world a safer place for today’s children.

We hope you have a very successful term and if there is anything we can do to help make life easier, you only have to ask. In this newsletter you will see some of the things we are doing as part of our continual drive to improve our service.

Best wishes

Peter

How to reduce your management fee!

TPM4 Schools is an independent advisory service supporting schools in the management, maintenance and development of the buildings. It is provided by DBE Services Ltd a company wholly owned by six educational charities.

We are always happy to speak to, or meet with, any school interested in using our services. If you recommend a school, which subsequently joins, you *and* the joining school will receive a 25% discount on the management fee for that year. Recommend more than one school and your management fee will be reduced by a further 25% for each school. Recommend 4 schools you would not have a management fee for the whole year.

Planning for the year ahead

Schools working on an April to March financial year – key dates

By the end of October 2014 we will send interim statements showing how much your regular servicing has cost so far this year.

During the February 2015 half term break we will send a further interim statement and a projection of full year costs, which can be used for your end of year figures. This will also include any suggestion for cost savings in the following year. You will also receive a draft Annual Service Contract (ASC) for the following year so you can indicate any changes you require.

Whilst we very much hope you will want to continue with us for a further year, if you do wish to withdraw from the TPM service we needed to know **by Friday 27th February 2015**.

By 5th May 2015 we will send final statements for 2014/15, invoices or credit notes as appropriate and interim invoices for 2015/16.

Academies and Schools working on a September to August financial year – key dates

You have already received the projection of full year costs for use in your end of year figures and a draft ASC for the coming year. If you wish to make any changes please let us know by **15th September 2014**.

By the end of October 2014 we will send final statements for 2013/14, invoices or credit notes as appropriate and interim invoices for 2014/15.

During the February 2015 half term break we will send an interim statement showing how much your regular servicing has cost so far in the financial year.

Whilst we very much hope you will want to continue with us in to 2015/16, if you do wish to withdraw from the TPM service we need to know by **Friday 17th July 2015**.

By early August 2015 we will send a further interim statement and a projection of full year costs which can be used for your end of year figures. This will also include any suggestion for cost savings in the following year. You will also receive a draft ASC for the following year so you can indicate any changes you require.



Satisfaction Survey

In the second half of the autumn term we will once again be surveying all schools to ask you about the service and judge our performance. This will be sent electronically and we would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete it. Following the survey we will circulate a report detailing your comments and any actions we plan to take in response to them. Obviously we welcome feedback at any time. After every reactive job you should receive a short survey form, which helps us to constantly monitor our performance and that of the contractors.

Five year fixed wiring tests – when was yours last done?



We are now collecting information on the due dates for the 5yr fixed wiring test. These are shown on your ASC. If your ASC does not contain the month and year the next test is due, it would be helpful to have the information so that we can arrange to get quotes for the work at the appropriate time. The date of your last test should be on the front of your main electrical distribution board. Please email this information to nicole@dbeservices.co.uk

New faces at DBE Services



Meet the Team

From left to right: Oliver Storr, Anne Beenham, Sarah Shorrocks, Sharman Walmsley, Debbie Johnson, Nicole Onslow, Peter Ballard.

Since our last newsletter we have had some changes within our team. As you may recall from our last newsletter, Noel Curry has now left us to manage his own company 'Schoolsafe'.

In July we were delighted to welcome Anne Beenham to her new role as Director of Operations. Anne brings with her a vast amount of experience in business and facilities management gained in organisations that include, the police, Ofsted, Myerscough College and more recently, the award winning FM department at Edge Hill University. Anne has a passion for customer service excellence and is looking forward to putting her skills and experience to good use as we continue to develop our services.

Also in July, we were delighted that Debbie Johnson came on board, taking up her post as Reactive Administrator. Debbie has quickly established herself as a valuable addition to the team organising contractors and arranging call-outs. With Debbie's bright personality and telephone manner you can be assured of a friendly 'listening ear' whenever she takes your call.

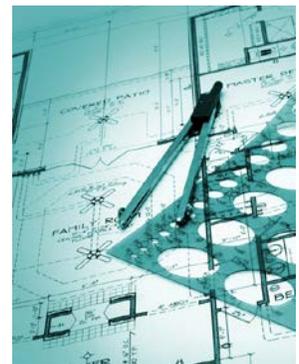
Building Consultants

As part of the TPM package, we encourage schools to have a named building consultant who will work with the head and governors on developing and delivering plans for the building. This can be anything from small refurbishment or repair to major build. For most projects above £2000 it is difficult to compare quotes unless the work has been clearly specified. The cheapest quote may well be the best value but unless you are clear what each quote is providing, including the quality of any materials, it is difficult to know if you are comparing "apples with apples".

The other major role for the building consultant is to ensure that when a project is being carried out you are compliant with all the necessary regulations and health and safety requirements. We understand that school budgets are very tight and that many schools have governors who are willing to give freely of their expertise but unless you are paying a professional who has the necessary insurances for the advice they are providing, there is no come back if things go wrong.

It is of course, like anything in life, always cheaper to do it yourself; if things go smoothly and everything works. When they don't the time and money needed to put things right almost always outweighs any saving. Every year we get requests from schools for help with sorting out self-managed projects which have gone wrong for a variety of reasons. Most of them can be sorted quickly but sometimes, particularly in the summer they can affect the ability of the school to open in September and in some instances have potential for fairly serious consequences especially if the HSE have been involved.

If you don't have a consultant and would like one; you can't remember who it is; you would like to change your consultant; or need any information about the consultant role, please contact Peter at peter@dbeservices.co.uk



When you need a quote for maintenance work...

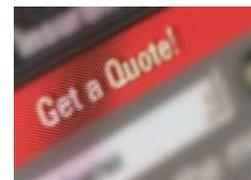
We are often asked to supply quotes for maintenance work, and we insist upon it from our contractors, if their costs for reactive maintenance are likely to exceed £400. We require our contractors to provide these quotes free of charge, unless of course significant investigatory work is required in order to provide the quote.

For costs that are likely to exceed £2000, we will refer this to the building consultant to ensure that the specification for the work is fully appropriate and meets the needs of the school.

We assess all quotes. If, in our experience, the quote does not represent best value we will send it to the school and let you know that we are seeking another quote and recommend you do nothing until we have received it and forwarded it to you.

School financial regulations will specify an amount above which competitive quotes must be obtained. In most cases this will be below the level at which we refer to your building consultant. If you wish us to obtain more than one quote, please inform us at the time. Sometimes schools come back to us when they receive a quote and ask for additional quotes to be provided, which we are happy to obtain but this inevitably lengthens the time it takes.

For most jobs in excess of £2000 where a school does not have a building consultant, or does not wish to use the consultant for whatever reason, we will obtain one quote so that the school can assess the scale of the work required. If you then wish to proceed, we will happily obtain further quotes in conjunction with your building consultant or against a specification you provide us with.



Boiler servicing

Over the last few months we have been made aware that some boiler manufacturers are now recommending that a boiler service kit is used at every annual service. We have had conversations with all the companies who service boilers for us and it is clear that new boilers have been designed in a way that it is difficult to do a complete service without the kit. It is hard not to conclude that there is an element in the design of new boilers which is aimed at ensuring ongoing revenue for the manufacturer/supplier. It is probably not dissimilar to the way new cars are designed so that they have to be serviced by a dealer.

We are aware that service kits are required on some of the commercial condensing boilers including Broag, Remeha and Quinta ranges. However, they are not generally required on old atmospheric and forced draft burner and boilers. Service kits generally consist of seals, insulation and sometimes probes and electrodes.

If you are considering new boilers, one question that you need the consultant to address is the ongoing maintenance costs.

A number of schools have now taken the opportunity to install a biomass boiler which comes with 20 years free servicing. If you are considering new boilers and would like more information about this offer please contact Peter at peter@dbeservices.co.uk

And lastly...help us to be even better

One of our primary objectives within DBE Services is always to consider how we can improve your experience and, as you might expect, we have had many an interesting and productive debate on this subject. We do, of course, recognise that the best information of all comes from you, so we would like to extend the question, 'How can we improve DBE Services?' to all our member schools.

If at any time you have ideas or suggestions that you would like to put forward, or perhaps services that you 'wish DBE Services could deal with' please send your thoughts to anne@dbeservices.co.uk

Did you know?

- ❖ *Our target is for all reactive maintenance calls to be dealt with and placed with a contractor within 30 minutes.*
- ❖ *DBE Services does not add any charge for arranging reactive call-outs – What the contractor charges is what you pay.*
- ❖ *If something goes wrong and you need urgent assistance after 5pm just call 01254 584699 and you will be able to speak to our 'Out of Hours Service'.*
- ❖ *In our last full survey (Dec. 2013) 90% of schools surveyed said they would recommend our service.*
- ❖ *97% of schools surveyed said our staff were always helpful.*