



# Shirley Boys' High School & Avonside Girls' High School

Intelligent access control and simplified site management to safeguard students, staff, and assets



During New Zealand's devastating Christchurch earthquakes, two local schools – Shirley Boys' High School and Avonside Girls' High School – suffered irreparable damage and were forced to look for new locations. In a New Zealand first, the government elected to create a state-of-the-art campus that the two secondary schools would share. With brand new facilities, it was vital to select an intelligent security system to simplify site management and ensure the protection of students, staff, and valuable assets.

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Shirley Boys' and Avonside Girls' new "super campus" is an 11.5 hectare (28.4 acre) site that caters for 2,500 students and 500 staff. Facilities include a performing arts centre with a 750-seat theatre and a second smaller 200-seat theatre, four sports fields, three indoor gymnasiums, a library, café, and fully equipped commercial teaching kitchen.

"There's been a huge investment in the facilities and equipment for these high schools," says Bharti Uppal, Operations Manager for Spotless Group, the school's facility management team. "It's an important part of my team's responsibility to ensure that we effectively manage site access. Being able to automate this with schedules, helps us to do this efficiently across such an expansive campus."

Recently, the schools' security procedures were put to the test when the campus experienced an attempted

burglary and vandalism incident, following the theft of a teacher's access control card which was used to enter the campus after hours. Gallagher's Command Centre security software activated alarms quickly, alerting the facility management team, and within 10-minutes a security guard was on site to investigate. Fortunately, nothing was stolen or damaged due to the rapid security response.

Utilizing Command Centre's extensive reporting functionality, a detailed account of the stolen card's activity was available to aid the investigation. "The next day we were able to pull reports from Command Centre to identify which card was used, where, and at what time," says Bharti. "By tracking the card's activity, we discovered it was used six days earlier by the same offenders on another building. We could then match this activity with our integrated CCTV footage and provide it to authorities, which was incredibly helpful."

## Emergency response solutions to protect students and staff

A key requirement for Shirley Boys' and Avonside Girls' was a security system that enabled rapid lockdown and evacuation for the safety of students and staff. Gallagher's Command Centre provides this functionality – allowing the schools to respond swiftly and accurately in an emergency.

Should a panic button be pressed from one of four locations across the campus, Gallagher's Command Centre platform initiates access-controlled doors to automatically lock. Through using Gallagher's Broadcast Notifications solution, a push notification is automatically sent out to school staff and facility management, advising which doors are locked and which remain open. Distinct lockdown music automatically plays to notify students and a lockdown warden manages the closure of manual doors.

"The lockdown notification is brilliant as it means the warden is immediately notified of which doors need closing, without needing to check each door in the area. I have worked with other security systems in the past, and this lockdown notification feature wasn't available – it's a game-changer for us," says Bharti.

As part of the schools' lockdown planning, they faced a challenge with students closing access controlled double doors incorrectly – one door must close first, then the other to create a seal. This meant in the event of a lockdown, staff would need to check every door, putting them at considerable risk.

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"By using the existing features within our Gallagher solution, the schools have achieved considerable cost-savings and have removed the need to purchase a separate system to support lockdown operations," says Bharti.

## Simplified operations and building automation

Describing the schools' security operations, Bharti explains how the Gallagher solution has been integrated with BACnet to streamline site operations and building automation, as well as FollowMePrinting which is linked to student and staff DESFire fobs for seamless print management.

"When a system is this good, you start to take it for granted. We use Gallagher Command Centre almost every day, in a thousand different ways across the campus, pushing the software to its limits to get great results," says Bharti.

"I have used various security solutions for educational facilities, and the Gallagher system is by far the best on the market, in my opinion. What you get from Gallagher, you don't get elsewhere – it's highly-customizable, cost-viable, and durable. When you invest, once, in a good quality security system, you don't have to consider spending again."

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