Schools Are Asking For More Choice When It Comes To Facility Management

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The education sector is under increasing pressure to maintain safe, compliant, and efficient environments for learning. From day-to-day cleaning and maintenance to long-term energy planning and compliance with health and safety standards, facility management (FM) has become mission-critical for schools, colleges, and multi-academy trusts.

Yet despite this growing demand, many schools report that they are not being approached by enough FM providers—especially those offering innovation, flexibility, or cost efficiency. In fact, some school business managers and trust leaders have openly stated they want to hear from new suppliers because there's too little competition and not enough visibility of alternatives.

For FM companies, this presents a valuable and largely untapped opportunity.

Schools Need More Than Just Cleaners

Today's educational facilities demand far more than just basic cleaning or maintenance contracts. Many schools are now looking for FM partners who can:

- Deliver planned and reactive maintenance
- Manage compliance with building regulations and health and safety

- Provide energy management and sustainability services
- Offer grounds maintenance, security, and waste management
- Support capital works and refurbishment projects

In short, they want joined-up, professional services that reduce risk, save time, and help schools focus on teaching and learning—not chasing contractors or juggling multiple service providers.

A Lack of Competition—and a Willingness to Listen

One of the most consistent frustrations among education leaders is the limited number of FM companies who actively market to them. In many regions, schools are still tied into outdated contracts or working with providers who have failed to evolve.

Many school leaders say that even when they want to change suppliers, they struggle to find credible alternatives—particularly those who understand the nuances of working in an education environment. This includes safeguarding requirements, working around term times, and meeting tight public-sector budgets.

The result? A real appetite for new conversations, better solutions, and fresh thinking—from companies willing to engage.

A Sector with Long-Term Potential

Schools are not short-term clients. They need continuity, compliance, and reliability over time. FM companies that prove themselves often become trusted partners, managing multiple aspects of school estates and even expanding into multi-site arrangements across academy trusts.

The education sector also offers:

- Recurring contracts and budgeted annual spend
- Opportunities for framework participation and preferred supplier status
- A strong incentive to improve buildings, energy efficiency, and sustainability
- A genuine desire to find value without compromising standards

What’s more, many schools are increasingly held accountable for estate

performance by Ofsted, local authorities, or their trust boards—making it even more important for them to partner with dependable FM providers.

What FM Companies Can Offer

Facility management companies that understand the challenges of education—tight budgets, regulatory scrutiny, the need for minimal disruption—can offer real value by:

- Bundling services for better value and consistency
- Offering flexible, term-time-sensitive scheduling
- Providing transparency in reporting and compliance logs
- Helping schools achieve carbon reduction targets
- Supporting grant or capital funding bids for improvements

Even small or mid-sized FM companies can compete, especially if they provide local service, a strong track record, and clear communication.

A Market That's Open for Engagement

The message from schools is clear: they want to hear from more FM suppliers. They're not just open to new ideas—they're actively searching for better service, better value, and more strategic partnerships.

If your FM business is capable, credible, and ready to meet the unique needs of education providers, now is the time to reach out. Because in a sector where trust matters and long-term relationships are valued, the first conversation could lead to a contract—and the right contract could lead to years of repeat business.