



CASE STUDY – VICTORIA SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM

SOLARDOME® Vega helps Victoria School win Eco Award for its inspiring 'Greenspaces' project

Victoria School and Specialist Arts College is the largest special school in Birmingham for children aged between 2 and 19 with physical disabilities and complex learning difficulties. When the school became a creative partnerships' 'Change School' in 2009 its Eco Committee launched 'Greenspaces' - a vision for the school to become greener and develop pupils' outdoor learning opportunities. In 2010, Greenspaces won funding of £50,000 from the Big Lottery 'People's Millions' and was rewarded with the Bronze Eco Award shortly after its opening in June 2011.



Greenspaces is an Eden-style outdoor learning space centred on a SOLARDOME® Vega. The glasshouse is surrounded by lawns, flower and vegetable gardens, paved terraces and pathways, artwork, willow sculptures and a dramatic stone circle.



Assistant Head Sandra Kallitsakis said: "The SOLARDOME® Vega is visually stunning and forms the central focal point of the new Greenspaces project. The dome provides a very different environment where children with complex needs can be sheltered from the elements, yet experience different seasons and participate in outdoor learning activities all year round. Children use the dome for everything from socialising at lunchtime and horticulture to dance and singing circle games."



The children and staff are now developing exciting ideas for using and developing the space in the future; both for learning and for leisure. The children have been working with an organic gardener to grow vegetables and have planted a willow dome with artist Tom Hares. Victoria has now also completed and opened Greenspaces Phase 2 and 3 – a 'beach' themed play area for the lower school, and wheelchair accessible play area and sculpture trail. The school is also working towards becoming a Forest School.

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