

Lydlynch Infant School



At a glance

Location

Lydlynch Infant School
 Hampshire, England

The challenge

To provide a structure for a small disused courtyard area that would allow teachers to conduct small group work in all weathers.

The solution

SOLARDOME[®] Haven

Dome specification

Diameter	4.6m / 15' 1"
Height	3m / 10' 1"
Area	14.9m ² / 161ft ²

A Hampshire school has transformed what was once a problematic, wasted area into a striking outdoor classroom which now provides a much-needed learning space with added 'wow' factor.

Lydlynch Infant School was facing an issue many schools share: a lack of available learning space. On any particular day, small groups gather for sessions on phonics, handwriting, storytelling, pastoral care, and much more. Accommodating these activities was proving a significant challenge.

Working with a 'problem' space

The school wanted to create a new, flexible space and its courtyard offered an ideal site. However, this came with its own issues. One former Headteacher had tried installing a gazebo there, but it broke in severe weather after just one term. Roofing over the courtyard wasn't an option, since kitchen vents open onto it and the necessary planning permission was by no means guaranteed.

Now overgrown, the courtyard was crying out to be used – but how?

A standalone outdoor classroom

The school initially considered installing a wooden summer house, but when a future parent at the school introduced the Solardome glasshouse design, they could see its clear advantages.

Firstly, its futuristic look complemented the 'space'-themed classroom that it would be adjacent to. But more importantly, the fact that teachers could easily see in meant it could be used much more freely. And, as Headteacher Kate Lane explains:

"the dome would be a strong, permanent structure to fill the space and could be used in all weathers."

Making the right choice

The Headteacher and members of the Governing Board visited the Solardome showroom to view the various models and ask questions – something that Miss Lane remarked was "particularly useful". Lydlynch bought a SOLARDOME® Haven, which had featured in the gold medal winning garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2013 and it fitted the space perfectly.

A 'really exciting addition'

Since it opened, the dome has hosted small group sessions, meetings and even became a polling



station for Lydlynch Election Day. It acts as a beautiful display space for sculptures and artwork, and future plans are for it to host timetabled activities as well. The reaction has been overwhelmingly positive, from staff, parents and pupils alike. As Miss Lane explains:

"Generally, people say 'WOW' and think it is a really exciting addition to the school."

More information

Discover how you can make the most of the space at your school by calling us for a brochure today.

