

Watford Grammar School for Girls



At a glance

Location

Watford Grammar School for Girls
Hertfordshire, England

The challenge

To nurture and inspire female scientists to study science successfully in the UK's most respected higher education institutions.

The solution

SOLARDOME[®] PRO 7.2m

Dome specification

Diameter	7.2m / 23'7"
Height	3.6m / 11'8"
Area	41m ² / 438ft ²

How do you inspire the next generation to study sciences through to A-Level and beyond? One way is to create an inspiring space in which to study science subjects.

This was the reasoning behind Watford Grammar School for Girls' plan to create a new 21st Century science lab that would "bring science alive" and inspire its students to take on original research projects. After considerable investigation, the school chose a geodesic dome.

A fully equipped laboratory

Today, the school's SOLARDOME[®] PRO dome stands out as a landmark feature that grabs the attention of students, staff and visitors alike. Positioned on the rooftop of the science building, its very location is an intelligent use of space in a school where ground floor space is already limited.

Fully equipped with laboratory workstations for up to twelve students, the dome functions as a multi-research facility, used primarily for small group work and science-based projects that might take considerably longer than the normal timetabled science sessions.

A dome for all seasons

The school chose Solardome, primarily because we were the only dome manufacturer that could design a habitable, temperature-controlled space. The school's dome is made of a combination of insulated panels and double glazing. Fitted with two doorways and an electric air-source heat pump, it can be heated and cooled, making it a timetabled lab for year round use.

All in the timing

Scheduling the work around the school was crucial. Work on the dome's construction started over the Easter holidays so the frame could be erected safely while the students were away. Further works were coordinated to fit around the school timetable, and glazing of the dome took place after the exam season was over. Fitted out in the autumn of 2015 the dome was officially opened on 3 October by science writer and TV personality Professor Lord Robert Winston.

Fulfilling its vision

The dome allows the school to manifest its vision for inspirational learning through its physical environment. In a symbolic as well as practical sense, it engenders an atmosphere of excitement and wonder at the possibilities of science that crosses subject boundaries.

As Headmistress Dame Helen Hyde DBE explains, "Within the science department at Watford Girls we have a wealth of expertise in carrying out and publishing scientific research. This science dome will allow our best science students to apply for a chance to investigate their own ideas, to develop and



test hypotheses and to improve their knowledge and experience."

"Although the research carried out inside the science dome will of course have a science focus, we see the existence of the dome as an addition to enrich the whole curriculum."

"It opens access to the higher levels of academic study and will motivate all our students to think beyond the stipulations of an advanced level syllabus."

More information

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

