Sedbergh School, Cumbria, UK

Case Study

CLIENT:
Sedbergh School, Cumbria, UK

CHALLENGE:
As part of a wider sustainability and energy management strategy, the school aimed to reduce its carbon footprint while improving internal learning environments.

The challenge was introducing natural daylight into flat-roof classroom spaces without significant structural disruption, while maintaining flexibility for teaching activities requiring controlled lighting.

RESULTS:
The classrooms now benefit from improved natural daylight, creating brighter and more comfortable learning spaces while contributing to reduced daytime energy use.

The installation supports the school's sustainability objectives and provides a flexible lighting environment suited to a variety of teaching activities.

PRODUCT:
Solatube SolaMaster® series
5 Solatube 330 DS (530 diameter system)

SOLATUBE DISTRIBUTOR:
Solalighting Limited

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
Solalighting Limited

BACKGROUND: Sedbergh School, founded in 1525, has a long-standing reputation for academic excellence, sporting achievement and innovation in education. Situated on the edge of both the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District National Parks, the school benefits from a unique setting that supports both academic development and outdoor learning opportunities.

Alongside its strong heritage, the school is committed to modern sustainability initiatives, including energy reduction strategies and environmental responsibility. As part of this commitment, the school has actively explored ways to retrofit energy-efficient technologies that enhance both environmental performance and the quality of student learning spaces.

CHALLENGE: Improving access to natural daylight within classroom environments was a key objective, both to enhance student wellbeing and to reduce reliance on artificial lighting. However, the flat roof construction of several teaching areas limited conventional daylighting options such as windows or skylights.

The solution also needed to support modern teaching methods. Classrooms required consistent daylight for general use while still allowing light levels to be adjusted during presentations, multimedia lessons or examinations. Achieving this balance between daylight performance, flexibility and sustainability formed the core challenge of the project.

SOLUTION: Solatube Daylighting Systems were selected due to their proven ability to efficiently deliver natural daylight into interior spaces while supporting energy efficiency goals. The project incorporated five Solatube 330 DS installed directly into the flat roof by the school's in- house maintenance team, demonstrating the practicality and ease of installation of the systems.

Square prismatic diffusers were specified to integrate seamlessly with existing suspended ceiling fittings, maintaining a consistent aesthetic within the classrooms. To provide additional flexibility, electric daylight dimmers were installed, allowing teachers to control daylight levels during audiovisual presentations or other classroom activities where reduced light was required.

RESULTS: The introduction of natural daylight has significantly improved the quality of classroom environments, creating brighter, more comfortable spaces that support student focus and wellbeing. Reduced reliance on artificial lighting contributes to lower energy consumption, supporting the school's broader sustainability objectives.

Staff feedback highlighted both the effectiveness of the daylight delivery and the simplicity of installation, with many commenting on the impressive amount of natural light transmitted through the systems. The ability to control light levels has also ensured the classrooms remain adaptable to a wide range of teaching activities.

CONCLUSION: This project demonstrates how Solatube daylighting solutions can support educational institutions in achieving sustainability goals while enhancing learning environments.

By delivering controllable natural daylight into classroom spaces, the installation balances environmental responsibility with practical teaching requirements.

The project reinforces the value of daylighting in modern education design, supporting wellbeing, energy efficiency and adaptable learning spaces.

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