

Fournier-Maccagnan Architectes

Photographs:
Thomas Jantscher

Sous-Mont Nursery School in Prilly

Prilly, Switzerland

An increased number of students impelled the municipality of Prilly to extend the neighborhood primary school, building 4 extra classrooms a hundred yards away, on a 17,222.24 sqft (1600 m²) site on the corner of Avenue de la Rapille and the Chemin de Sous-Mont.

Placing the new nursery school as close as permitted to the south-east edge, the building is accessible from the Avenue de la Rapille, keeping for the playground a privileged open space facing the lake and a safe distance from the local roads. Particular care has been given to the conservation and improvement of existing vegetation which identifies the location.

The two-floor building's austere and simple geometry holds lightly to the ground. The nucleus of the plan is perceived as a playful box at the north-eastern end, containing the changing rooms, the toilets and utilities. The south-western end contains the classrooms, which all enjoy a good view of the lake. The building has a wooden structure anchored onto a concrete slab which holds the slope of the terrain. The interior is clad in wood-fiber concrete panels lacquered yellow. The exterior is faced with anodized aluminum sheeting, in response to the urban character of the location.

The larger openings strongly define the orientation of the space the child is in (mainly natural light). The small horizontal openings at various heights are « winks » to the outdoor space. The bright interior color is perceived from the outside and gives the building a playful and childish inner glow. On the whole, the color white is replaced here by the interior color that coats all the surfaces. The children experience a particular universe where the dominant yellow base reflects the sunshine. Three other colors coat each area: pink for the changing rooms and bathrooms, green for the first floor and mauve for the mezzanines in each classroom. These mezzanines are conceived as big multifunctional toys. There are racks to put things away, the space below is used as a miniature house; and above is a quiet corner for reading.

