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Project Sheet

One hat over all children

Children's day care centre Emma-Schwab-Haus, Stuttgart

#Education



Project Panel

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| Clients | Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, Hochbauamt Stuttgart, on behalf of Amt für Liegenschaft und Wohnen |
| User | Kinder- und Familienzentrum Rilkeweg |
| Effective Area | 886 qm |
| Floor Area | 2402 qm |
| Floor Volume | 2402 cbm |
| Completion | 2010 |

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Photos

Wolf-Dieter Gericke

The children's day care centre, Emma-Schwab-Haus, lies in the middle of a green 1960's residential estate in Stuttgart-Freiberg, in a large playing garden filled with old chestnut trees. The new building replaces two pavilions which had been built with the help of donations by Stuttgart resident Emma Schwab. The immediate surroundings of the centre are dominated by 30 and 90 m high residential towers. In this building, eight groups with up to 200 children between three months and 14 years of age come together. The educational concept and the way the rooms are arranged follow the principles of "Einstein in der KITA" (Einstein in Children's Day Care, a concept which was developed in Stuttgart). This paradigm shift in pre-school education, which aims to understand and support the child in her/his curiosity, felt to us like a new beginning. Consequently we asked ourselves how the building could support a child's elemental drive to gather knowledge and find orientation. We tried to find simple, pictorial signals in the building's components which would trigger the child's very own "researcher's questions".

Its gestalt draws on the image of a hat, a cap a little too large – "oversized" and casually tipped back.

Nils Krause, Architect

Under this "cool", colourful cap, pulled right down to the ground on the north side, lie the spaces for the children. Sheltered and made of a delicate wooden construct, the spaces open wide to the garden and to the south. In this way, the "cap" provides protection against the rain and the sun while establishing a "fifth" façade. In every weather it provides additional playing spaces between the inside and the outside.

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Within the functional structure, places giving orientation were created, which provide room for special purposes. For instance, there are a children's kitchen, two giant skylights for observing the sky, a drinking fountain, a stair resembling an organ, the school bag rack, or kiosk-like sliding windows.



In both storeys there are two different types of group spaces along the wide playing corridor. Facing south and opening towards the garden are the high playing rooms and the multipurpose room. On the opposite side, facing north,

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the sleeping rooms, workshops, kitchen as well as staff and utility rooms are slipped under the cap, receiving light from skylights. Structured by corners, recesses and various opportunities to sit, the corridor offers space for many different activities.



The toddlers and younger children inhabit the ground-level spaces which give, via terraces, immediate access to the playing zones in the garden. The older children and school children who come to afternoon care have their spaces in the upper storey. Each room has a door leading onto the wide and generously roofed balcony, which is connected to the garden by a bridge and a stair.

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A full-height dormer covers the main entrance. Large glass panes open the view from the footpath into the garden. This is the “market place”. It serves as a central meeting point for parents, children and pedagogical staff.

Here you will find very large, high, mighty houses. If you don't want to see them, you must cut them out, draw the cap tightly around your face, thus protecting yourself a little.

Nils Krause, Architect

The leading idea for the design is: “everything under one cap” – a protecting cap under which all of the rooms find their place. The large eaves create dry spaces in the exterior playing zones, which can also be used in bad weather. Against the residential buildings in the immediate neighbourhood, some of them 10 to 30 storeys high, the new Emma-Schwab-Haus creates an unmistakable signal with a high recognition factor, helping to find orientation within the quarter. Here is a building offering all opportunities for the children to positively identify themselves with their house, in which they spend a large part of their days.



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Location

Children's day care centre Emma-Schwab-Haus, Stuttgart

Rilkeweg 17
70437 Stuttgart
Deutschland