

## The new building of Karin Dom Foundation:

- Defines a clear, effective and compact building volume in order to preserve the maximum amount of the natural bio diversity ( c.a. 70 % of the existing trees ) and to assure cost efficiency and sustainability.
- Creates a clear recognizable entrance hall ,set back from the road, located on a small square, to allow students to enter and exit the school and wait for their parents, in conditions of complete safety.
- Defines a large green courtyard, orientated towards south, that encourages outdoor activities. By preserving many of the existing trees, the courtyard can be used both in hot and cooler weather, therefore learning classes and play time can often take place outside.
- Has a functional organization that achieves innovative and quality teaching environment, while immersed in nature.
- Transforms the circulation areas into communication spaces for interaction between teachers, students and parents, with lots of natural light and opportunities to sit, lay, rest, discuss and learn together.

## URBAN APPROACH AND LANDSCAPE

The compact building, designed on a square footprint 25x25m is placed in the northwest side of the plot, creating an intimate front square at the entrance side and a large green courtyard towards southeast. With its three floors the building fits harmonically between the trees and its surrounding having a rather gentle presence.

The courtyard is defined by a path that serves to separate the natural greenery from the rest and has the concept of a "continuous walk" that creates a training/learning course. Around this path are organized various areas: the wild flowers garden, the playground, the gardening area, a gazebo and a small wooden terrace that could be used as an open stage. In the northeast side of the building there is a quiet garden, providing space for quiet observation or just to enjoy your lunch break in the nature.

## ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT

In the new Karin Dom building *nature* is seen as a pedagogical element, providing close connection to it not only outdoor, but also inside the building. Thanks to an open ground-floor and wide openings on the upper levels, a constant visual connection with the outside is provided, creating immersive views and bringing the feeling of nature inside the building.

Another central theme in the new Karin Dom building is *interaction spaces*. In order to transform the horizontal circulation area into quality interaction spaces, there is a large atrium that connects visually the different floors and at the same time allows a lot of natural light inside. A large staircase connects the different levels and additionally works as a meeting point. Furthermore integrated in the walls there are comfortable niches, where to sit, lay, share and rest. The niches are placed on each floor in order to enhance interaction and communication between children, teachers and parents.

## FUNCTIONAL PROGRAMM

In the organisation of the functional program, the project refers to an innovative approach in the interpretation of spaces and follows perceptual quality and functional fluidity. Based on these concepts, the spaces of the new Karin Dom building are designed to be *simple* and *rational*, seeking the balance between defined spaces and adaptable, flexible rooms and taking into consideration that the needs could differ in the lifespan of the building.

On the ground floor there is a large, welcoming reception area, where the users are welcomed by the staff from a central desk and can sit and wait their turn in an open comfortable waiting area. Close to the waiting space there is a play area for children. The toy library and conversation nooks for parents and therapists are also designed as an open space part of the reception area.

On the ground floor there are also the physiotherapy and the hydrotherapy, where through the large glazing a feeling of exercising “outdoors” is created. Closely connected are also the early intervention center and with a separate entrance from the front square, there is the medical centre.

On the first floor is positioned the Montessori school. Three large classrooms that can be opened to each other are designed as flexible spaces that can adapt to the needs of the users and change quickly with mobile, sliding walls. Additionally on that floor there are the block of the center for family-mediated intervention and the center with diagnostic and therapy.

On the last floor there are the administration spaces and the associated common area, with a view towards the front square. The training center with the auditorium is also placed here, designed in a direct connection to the cafeteria, offering a charming view towards the courtyard.

From the last floor it is possible to access the large rooftop: a big recreational space with equipped areas for children and adults.

## CONSTRUCTION, MATERIALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The chosen construction system is a reinforced concrete frame, ensuring the maximum functional flexibility. The facade structural material is wood, providing high sustainable performance. Timber cladding with a ventilation from behind is chosen as a the facade material. Inside the friendly atmosphere is enriched by gently colored walls and wooden ceilings.

The total value for the implementation of the project is estimated to be 600 euros per square meter excluding VAT.