

Construction and Design Manual Childcare Facilities

Edited by Natascha Meuser



DOM
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Photo: Xia Zhi

Education has traditionally been given a high profile in China. Early education is still mostly conducted by grandparents, albeit increasingly by private and public educational institutions too. The latter includes the Family Box Play and Learning Centre which has branches in Beijing, Shanghai and the port city of Qingdao, located in the eastern Chinese province of Shandong.

Boxes are used for storage. The Family Box also protects children, albeit within an inspirational environment that promises security and wellbeing. Located on the fringes of a shopping centre, Family Box opens up towards the general public. It attracts potential customers with a library, a shop and taster courses introducing the concept behind the facility. From the semi-public reception area members may access the interior: accommodated on two floors covering more than 4,400 m² are diverse group-learning rooms, multi-purpose rooms for play and learning, a swimming pool, VIP areas, and a café. The primary colours of yellow, blue and green not only represent the city of Qingdao, but also pay tribute to the intensity of the spatial settings. Floors and stairs as features of user navigation blaze a trail in rich

yellow, whereas multi-purpose rooms are predominantly blue. Individual elements in green, on the other hand, emphasise the malleable design of surfaces and compounds, e.g. tunnels, incisions, offset levels and ramps. Several areas are designed so that children can climb, crawl and run independently, with only small square windows or glass walls safeguarding visibility for supervisors. Other areas are explicitly at the disposal of adults who can always be close to their offspring. Stairs with seating areas or other recreational spaces for parents are scattered around in lieu of a separate waiting area.

The floor plan is a dynamically structured set-up which not only guides children through colour but also intensifies in places using physical and large-scale features. It comes up with some startling zoned areas which entice visitors with ever newer qualities. Rooms and play areas may be separated using flexible walls for classes or group activities. The library thus becomes a narrative space or a stage. Stairs may be scaled and at other times will serve as a grandstand, upon the steps of which the public may be seated comfortably. The objective, in any case, is independent and creative play.

Family Box Play and Learning Centre Qingdao, China Crossboundaries

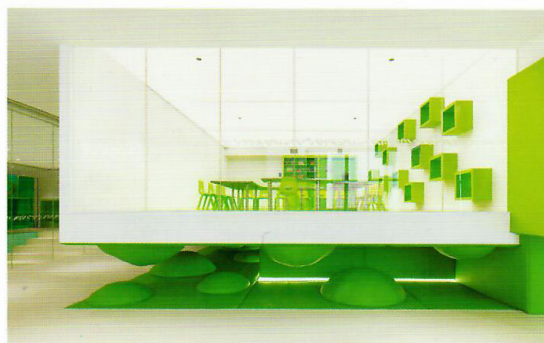
Architect: Crossboundaries, Peking | Binke Lenhardt, Dong Hao (Management)
Collaborators: Cynthia Cui, Tracey Loontjens, Gao Yang

Location: Qingdao, Shinan Qu, Shandong Province, China
Client: Children Enterprise (UK) Ltd.

Facility type: Play and learning centre

Usable area: 4,400 square metres

Completion: 2015



Photos: Xia Zhi

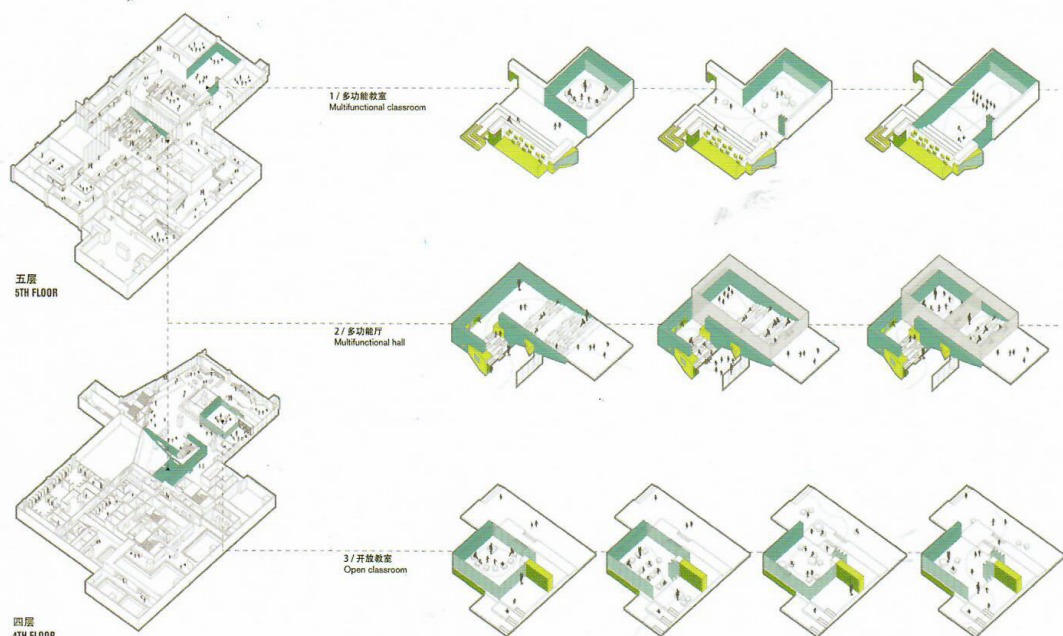




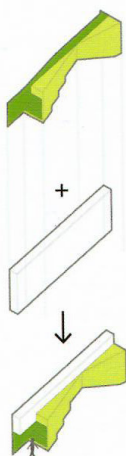
Photo: Xia Zhi



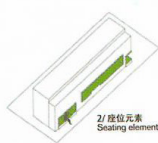
五层
5TH FLOOR



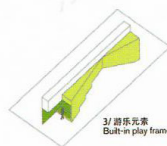
四层
4TH FLOOR



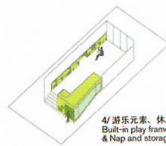
1/ 植物墙、座位元素
Green wall & Seating element



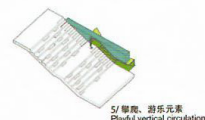
2/ 座位元素
Seating element



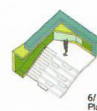
3/ 游乐元素
Built-in play frame



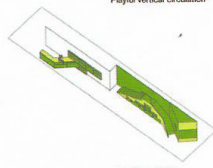
4/ 游乐元素、休息、储物
Built-in play frames
& Nap and storage area



5/ 垂直、游乐元素
Playful vertical circulation



6/ 垂直、游乐元素
Playful vertical circulation



7/ 商店、绘本馆
Shop & Library



8/ 游乐元素
Built-in play frame