



Special day care centre concept promotes health, mindfulness and closeness to nature

IMAGE SOURCE: LAMILUX

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Glass architecture connects the outside with the inside

A large tree sits enthroned in the middle of the light-flooded entrance hall of a day care centre in Rehau. It is the heart of the LamiKita. The LamiKita day care centre in Rehau is a special kind of day care centre. The educational concept and the architecture of the day care centre promote health, mindfulness and closeness to nature in equal measure. Large glass surfaces and skylights bring nature from outside to the little ones indoors, connecting you with your environment in all directions.

2 years of planning, 1.5 years of construction and 74 happy children's faces: The LamiKita in Rehau was taken over by its kids for the first time in September 2020. Since then, the day care centre has been a place for discoveries, experiences and adventures for crèche and nursery children. Large rooms connected by glass surfaces, round flat roof windows and a glass roof give the little ones the opportunity to observe nature, follow the course of the sun or watch the clouds move.

The special feature of the LamiKita: The foundation of all architectural planning was the special pedagogy of the day care centre.

A special day care concept

The unique educational concept of the LamiKita is based on four pillars: Mindfulness, cooperation, nutrition and digitalisation. The social and emotional competences of the little ones, but also their natural curiosity, urge to discover, the urge to understand things and their desire to experience their own strengths, their own possibilities, their own creativity – all this is promoted in the best possible way at the LamiKita. The focus is on the children learning to be mindful of themselves, their counterparts and nature in order to be able to master challenges more easily in later life.

Connecting the outdoors and indoors

The entire area of the LamiKita is also designed with this special philosophy in mind. An open concept is lived out in the light-flooded, spacious new building. Almost all rooms are connected by glass elements and visual axes, thus enabling exchange across rooms and giving the LamiKita a special atmosphere of expansiveness, transparency, openness and closeness to nature. Through windows at the children's viewing height, they always have a view of the outdoors; even when lying down, they can observe the weather conditions through round flat roof windows. So the little ones can look outside from every possible perspective and discover the bright colours of nature.



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This special combination of indoors and outdoors is also reflected in the preparation of the food. Every day, the day care centre children support the centre's own kitchen staff in the kitchen with the meal preparations. They also grow some of the ingredients themselves in their own vegetable, fruit and herb gardens. This is directly adjacent to the explorer's paradise with a huge sandpit, a water play area and much more.

Skylights support the philosophy

Probably the biggest unique selling point of the LamiKita: First the pedagogy of the day care centre was determined, then the architecture of the building was adapted to the special concept. Glass, light and daylight are deliberately placed elements in the LamiKita. For, based on Reggio pedagogy, the room becomes the third educator and educates the children as well.

A total of 8 round, one-and-a-half metre LAMILUX Glass Skylights F100 and a LAMILUX Glass Roof PR60 with additional shading elements create a pleasant daylight atmosphere in the LamiKita. For the LamiKita, even extra sloping round flat roof windows were developed. Joachim Hessemer, Technical Director of LAMILUX Skylights recalls: "The challenge was to model a round base, i.e. the fibre-reinforced upstand, three-dimensionally in such a way that you don't create an ellipse-like surface, but that the upstand remains circular even at the top if you cut it off at an angle at the upper end." The big advantage of this is now: Due to its 5° inclination, the round flat roof window creates a certain self-cleaning effect and is easy for the roofer to install.



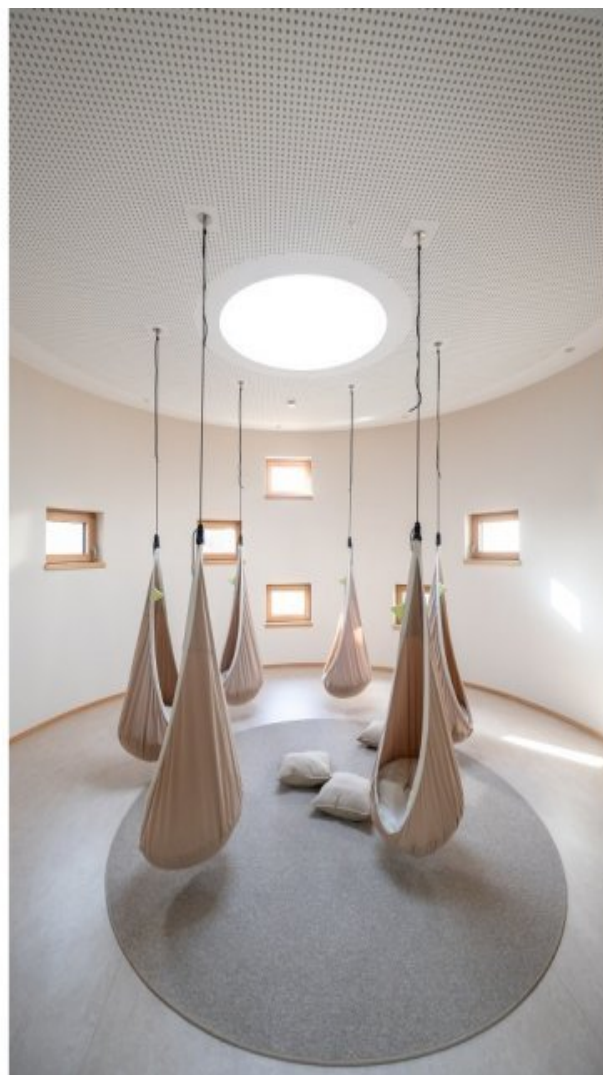
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Playing with daylight

The round flat roof windows integrate perfectly into the concept, which uses round elements in all rooms, such as the relaxation room, which is flooded with daylight from above through the LAMILUX Glass Skylights Circular, but can also be darkened at any time with shading elements. Because children explore the rooms with all their senses, the brightness or the warmth of the sun also play a role.

Shadow does not necessarily mean darkness. In fact, the elements of light and shadow are great playmates for children. "What does it look like when light hits a certain material? How do reflections arise? Why is my shadow small now and why is it big now? Why can't light and shade be touched? All these questions awaken the children's spirit of research and help them to better understand nature and its physical laws. That's why daylight plays a central role in raising children," explains day care centre director Manuel Wohlrab.



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Idea behind LamiKita

A day care centre where children grow up to be happy, self-confident people with a strong heart has always been a heartfelt wish of Dr Dorothee Strunz. With the establishment of a company day care centre, which is also open to all children in the region, the initiator has fulfilled a childhood dream.



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The project is financially supported by the Strunz Foundation, which was set up in 2009 by the LAMILUX family of owners. Their goal: to sustainably support and promote the region and its people. The family business LAMILUX is thus the first company in Upper Franconia to invest in the education and upbringing of pre-school children in this way.

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