

## 16. Nursery School

This is a competition proposal for a nursery school on an empty lot in the northern outskirts of Prato, Italy. The program calls for spaces for initially three and eventually six groups of thirty children in the ages 5-7.

The design proposes an open and multi-sensorial but scalable world of enhanced environments in which children can explore, discover and play, but also feel safe, identify and reflect. The incremental use of scale (class, group of classes, building, world) is considered both on a spatial as well as on an experiential level. Every space is part of a larger whole.

Nature is an integral and crucial part of the projects proposition. The design fuses use and environment, making it a central part of the educational program. The creation of a microclimate through natural life emphasizes at an early age that one is part of a larger world, in which balanced cycles generate life. A large *pergola* ties the various programs together. It both filters the climate as well as amplifies the environmental conditions. It reduces the impact of harsh summer days and protects from rain and wind. An opening in the pergola emphasizes the working of the elements. Sun rays fall through and collected rain drops down like a waterfall. It further holds swings and slides and can be climbed in.

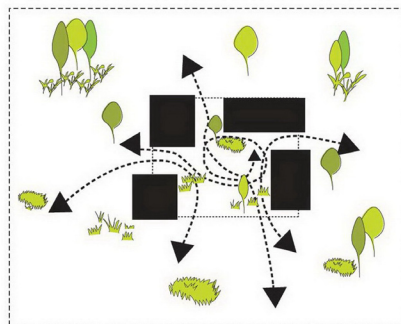
The roof will be planted with regional plants, allowing for more biological diversity which provides an experimental site for the children to view the natural process of sustainable design. In spring the building blossoms.



Axonometric



Pergola



Organizational concept



Environmental concept



Communal space



Rest space



West elevation



Entrance



South elevation