Minami Yamashiro Primary School

Kyoto

Place
Kyoto, Japan

Date
1995-2003

Client
Minami-Yamashiro Village

Cost
¥2,262,750,000/£11.8 million

Site Area
24,400 m²

Total Building Area
10,200 m²
Cost/m²
¥218,735/£1,100

Structural Engineer
Umezawa Structural Engineers

Electrical Engineer
Media Creations

Mechanical Engineer
Setsubi-Sekkei 21

Contractor
Asanuma Corporation

Electrical Engineer
Kyo Sekkei

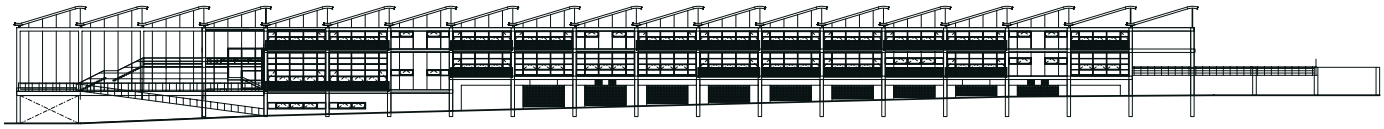
Landscape Architect
Equipe Espace

Awards

2004
RIBA Worldwide Award
RIEF (Research Institute of Educational Facilities) Chairman Award

We are delighted with the elegance of the design

Yoichi Hashimoto, Mayor, Minami Yamashiro Village



The design for Minami Yamashiro School was not only to provide teaching facilities for young children but also provide community centre facilities - a radical departure from the Japanese norm. The new building has been conceived as 'a big house', offering not only day-time schooling but evening classes and life-long learning for the community's increasing adult population.

The heart of the school is a large common hall that mediates between the outdoor playing fields and two levels of flexible classroom spaces arranged within a repetitive framed grid of 8.1m x 8.1m. This multi-level top-lit space is similarly organised within the expressed structural grid and contains all circulation and classroom breakout spaces. Specific spaces for art, science and music classes are grouped at the lower level. An adjacent gymnasium/village hall building frames the approach to the school and a swimming pool is provided as well. The stainless steel clad roof consists of a row of North-facing skylights which are designed to bring as much indirect sunlight as possible into the interior spaces. The wall colours express circulation and the 'character' of various internal spaces, defining different areas and functions.

Detailed and implemented by RSHP's Tokyo office, this project uses simple, durable, low maintenance materials to achieve elegant results. The building has a strength of its own, yet can be read within the classic Japanese constructional tradition which has long inspired modern architects.