



ASILO SANT'ELIA (SANT'ELIA NURSERY SCHOOL)

You can find this point of interest in Como - Path 5 - Stage 1

INFORMATION

Location: Sant'Elia Nursery School is located in Como, via Alciato 15

Paving: the pavement next to the entrance is made of porphyry cubes. A large pathway paved with stone slabs ends in three granulated-concrete steps which lead to the landing that gives access to the building

Architectural barriers: at the beginning of the pathway, on the left, please mind the iron totem sign placed by the Council of Architects of Como to draw attention to the Rationalist structure. Three steps lead to the landing at the entrance of the building; both sides are bordered by low iron handrails

Access: access is from the entrance at via Alciato 15, preceded by a strip of grass enclosed by a low evergreen border and crossed by a pathway

Services: parking available in adjacent areas

Leisure and Food: bars and cafes in the area; municipal garden

Other information: the structure is used as a school building. Visits are possible after requiring the relevant authorization from the "Ufficio Politiche Educative (Bureau for Educational Policies)" c/o the Municipality of Como (Tel. 031.252681; email: careddu.grazia@comune.como.it)

DESCRIPTION

The "Asilo Sant'Elia" (Sant'Elia Nursery School) was designed in 1936-1937 by the architect Giuseppe Terragni. The nursery school was commissioned by the Congregazione di Carità (Congregation of Charity) of Como, and erected near a large working-class quarter built by the Società Cooperativa Edificatrice (Cooperative Building Society).

The nursery school is a one-storey structure; the height, never more than five metres, contrasts with the extremely long façades.

«As in some other interventions (e.g. the first ideas for the Casa del Fascio), and following a consolidated tradition, Terragni arranged his rooms around a courtyard opening onto it on one side, so choosing a close involvement between interior and exterior, a choice which would find further expression in the series of pilasters and curtains which - from the outside - "bring" the classrooms, only seemingly isolated by the large windows, directly into the garden.

This straining towards liberty and towards a new approach to pedagogical problems (still modern today) is fully felt in the articulation of the internal spaces which do not limit one another (moveable walls separate one classroom from the other) but tend to flow together, one into the other». (L. Cavadini, *Architettura razionalista nel territorio comasco*, Provincia di Como, Como 2004).

The restoration work carried out by the Studio Terragni architectural firm in recent years has brought the building back to its original state.