

# Lorentzschool

LOCATION | LEIDEN, NETHERLANDS

ARCHITECTS: <b>atelier PRO architecten (Leon Thier and Sechmet Bötger)</b>
CLIENTS: <b>Gemeente Leiden Dienst Bouw en Wonen en Bureau Openbaar Onderwijs</b>
TYPE OF SCHOOL: <b>Primary</b>
NUMBER OF STUDENTS: <b>850</b>
TYPE OF PROJECT: <b>New school</b>
GROSS SURFACE AREA: <b>4 350m<sup>2</sup></b>
YEAR OF COMPLETION: <b>2008</b>
CONTEXT: <b>City</b>



A

**A:** Open playgrounds surround the school building on all sides.

**B:** The auditorium can be used for meetings, assemblies and performances.

Lorentzschool's 38 classrooms make it a large primary school by Dutch standards. To make this school work in a single, relatively compact, three-storey building has required thoughtful planning and an imaginative use of space.

The input of school users and the local community was sought during the design process. The consultative process covered a variety of aspects ranging from the

colour scheme and use of materials to the organisation of working areas and classrooms. This helped to fashion the interior appearance of the school.

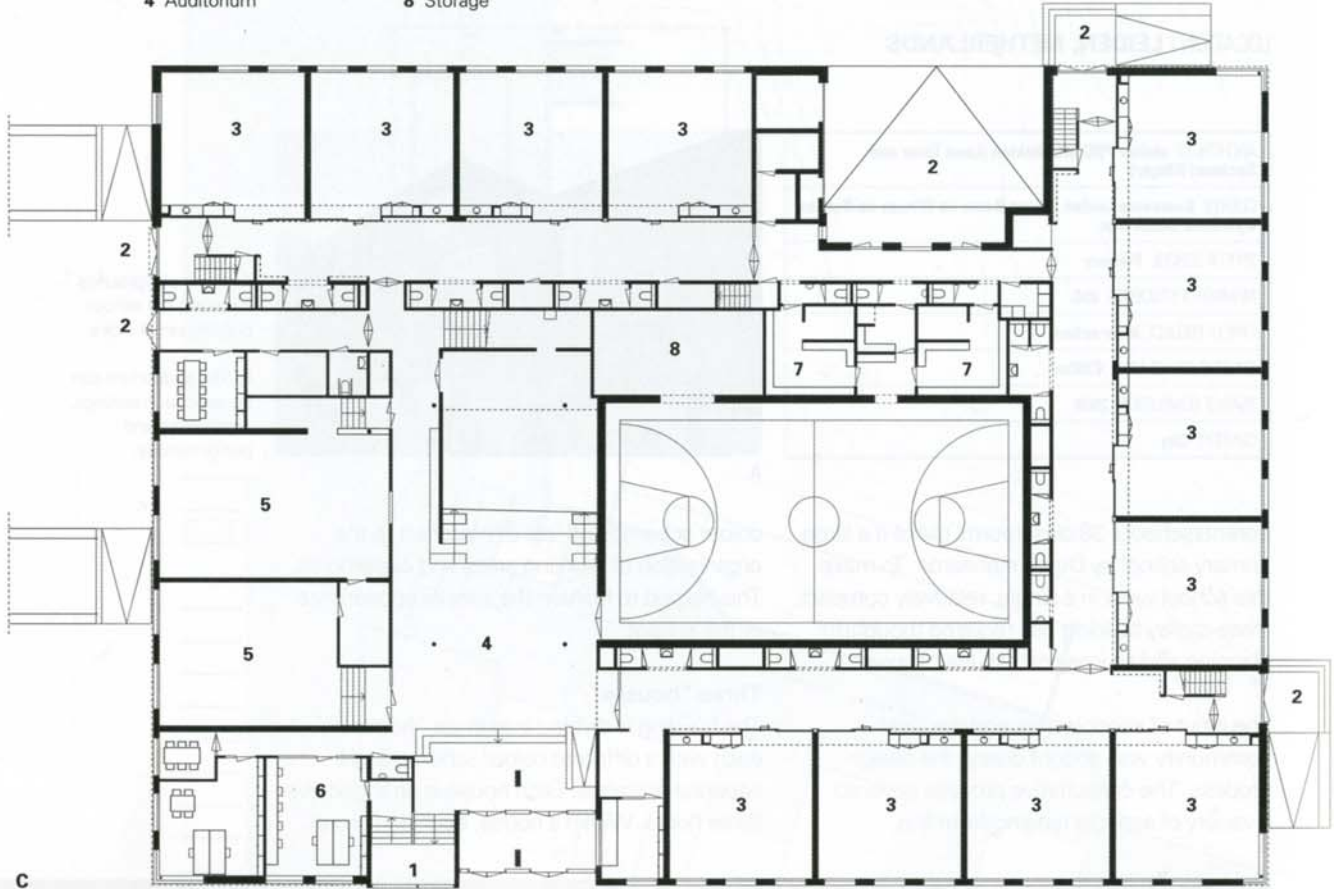
### Three "houses"

The building is divided into three "houses", each with a different colour scheme and a separate entrance. Each house is arranged over three floors. Within a house, each age group



B

- |                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Main entrance | 5 Play room             |
| 2 Side entrance | 6 Administration office |
| 3 Classroom     | 7 Cloakroom             |
| 4 Auditorium    | 8 Storage               |



**C:** The ground floor plan. There is a suite of four classrooms for the junior students in each house, each with its own entrance.

**D:** The documentation centre and library – every seat has a workstation.

**E:** Wide corridors and sliding glass doors allow the space outside classrooms to be used for extension activities.

**F:** The layout of the documentation centre allows it to be used for computer lessons.

**G:** Cross section through the documentation centre.

has its own storey. This divides the school into well-defined spaces that are finely scaled and easy to navigate. Vertical connections via stairs and landings encourage interaction between all age groups, the objective being to create the feeling of a small school despite the size of the institution.

Centrally positioned in the block, an open playground surrounds the building on all sides. The youngest children, the juniors, have three separate points of entry to their suite of classrooms on the ground floor. From here, they can explore the rest of the school. The middle and senior students have their own recreation areas, and entrances lead them into the heart of the school to their separate floors.

All classrooms are located towards the outside of the building. This allows the main teaching spaces to make full use of natural light. Outside each classroom is a wide corridor, which has been designed to provide room for computer workstations and allow a space for independent work.

### Shared facilities

At the heart of the school, easily accessible to all, are the gymnasium, an auditorium, and a documentation centre and library. Inspired by the Donner bookshop in Rotterdam and a school in Sweden, the architects have interwoven stairs, terraces and landings. This has created a variety of spaces around the gymnasium that can enhance teaching and learning. These spaces link all the floors together.

The auditorium is a multipurpose space that can be used for meetings. The main stairs leading down to the auditorium can seat 100 people. For the monthly stage performances at the school, this space is transformed into a festive hall with a foyer, seating and a stage. There is plenty of space for parents and others to attend children's musical events and plays. Stairs lead from the auditorium to the documentation centre and library. This is organised over two floors, with bookcases positioned on the wide treads on either side of a flight of stairs. There are workstations





D



E

installed throughout. This layout allows the documentation centre to be used for computer lessons and other classes.

### Community use

The school is becoming an important community resource. It is used by several organisations in the evenings, including a chess club, a music school and several sport clubs. It is also used to provide childcare outside school hours and in the school holidays.



F



G