

# Japanese Preschool Designed to Collect Rainwater to Delight Puddle Jumping Kids

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by [Ana Lisa](#)

Kids all over the world go mad about puddles, while the adults are often overly concerned their children might get wet, cold and eventually fall ill. But this unique school in [Japan](#) encourages kids to [play with the elements](#), with an internal courtyard that allows a small pond to form after it rains.

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And when the patio is dry, it makes a wonderful badminton or softball court. Then, during winter, it turns into an [ice skating rink](#).

The whole school plan, as well as its curriculum, is happy, flexible and [unconstrained](#), with plenty of glass walls and natural light. Also, to teach kids to look after their own stuff, their parents are required to purchase individual desks and chairs, which the children keep until graduation. We wish all kids could have a school like this.

[Splish-splashing in puddles](#) after a good rain is a favorite pastime of children the world over. But what if the fun could happen inside school? Architect [Hibino Sekkei](#) brought the freedom of puddle-jumping inside when designing the [Dai-Ichi Preschool](#) in Kumamoto, Japan.

The [innovative preschool](#)'s interior courtyard was designed to collect rainwater, so kids could jump and play in a giant pool puddle after every downpour.

Rain can be a real bummer when it thwarts [playtime](#) activities outdoors. Rather than force the children of the Dai-ichi Yochien Preschool to have to stay indoors on rainy days, Hibino Sekkei designed a way for the rain to add to the fun.

On dry days, the courtyard, which is exposed to the sky, can be used for sports like softball, badminton or volleyball, as well as a meeting place or [outdoor classroom](#).

But when the rain comes, the magic happens. The floor of the courtyard was design with a slight dip toward the center of the space, which collects rainwater during big downpours. Kids can then play in the puddle-pool without getting muddy or dirty, inside the confines of the preschool. In winter, the courtyard can undergo even more magic, and be turned into an interior ice rink!

The entirety of the preschool was designed to foster creativity and play, in an open floor plan that allows for flexibility and out of the box fun. Partitions rather than walls allow socialization and sharing between classes, and kids bring their own furniture, which can change up the look of the school throughout the years.

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