

# 10.09.2015 Plans for villa on Zurichberg to be turned into music school

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An old villa in Hottingen on the Zurichberg could be made into an exclusive school for pupils specialising in music, if sufficient funding is forthcoming.

The villa, known as Haus Sonnenberg, was built in 1911 and originally used as an orphanage. Until earlier this year it was used as a children's and young people's home by a Zurich foundation. When the city, which owns the property, advertised it for further use, five parties applied but in the end it has gone to the Cantaleum Zürich project proposed by Maja Coradi Vellacott and Konrad von Aarburg.

As mentioned, it is their intention to use this large house with its 39 rooms set amid extensive grounds initially as a day school for between 50 and 120 two-to-sixteen-year-old pupils concentrating on music but following the Zurich syllabus. Lessons would be conducted both in German and in English.

Speaking in an interview with a journalist of the Tages-Anzeiger newspaper, Maya Coradi Vellacott (second photograph), the president of the Cantaleum Zurich project, said that they were very much taken in by the house when they first saw it as the perfect place for a school of this type.

When the journalist put it to her that neighbours in the near vicinity might not approve of the sounds of music being practised, Coradi Vellacott said she would certainly listen to their concerns and react accordingly, adding that it was fortunate the school stood in the middle of a 11,745-square-metre site but she would consider putting in sound-proof windows.

As to what would make this school stand out from other music schools in Zurich, the sociologist said that they would be providing children in the aforementioned age range with the opportunity of following the usual syllabus while at the same time having music and singing lessons integrated into the time table, with all pupils becoming members of the choir and those who wished receiving tuition in how to play a musical instrument.

At present the pair do not have the financial means needed to set up the project but they are hoping to find funding from a number of cultural institutions in the city. Naturally, without this, they would not be able to open the school for some 100 pupils as planned in 2017.

As for the school fees, these would be expected to be in the region of CHF 2,200 per month. "In the future we hope to be able to provide grants to enable as many pupils interested to attend," added Coradi Vellacott. "Naturally, in the long run we want the school to be able to finance itself."

As to the structure of the building, the music enthusiast said that as it was in a very good condition with little work needed, though they were planning to make it more easily accessible to people with mobility difficulties.

When asked whether it might become a boarding school, Coradi Vellacott said there was indeed the possibility of converting rooms on the second and attic floors into accommodation for pupils.

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