



**Politecnico
di Torino**

Honors Thesis

Master's degree Science in Sustainable Architecture

Abstract

**SCHOOL AT THE PARK. OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION
FOR SCHOOLS**

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The present study is outlined around the theme of Outdoor Education, a teaching methodology which, in its numerous declinations, has its roots on experiential learning and the contact with the external natural environment.

Recent historical and cultural events, marked by the pandemic experience and characterized by long periods of distance learning and lockdown, have highlighted even more the need for renewal of the current school system, based on a passive and unstimulating approach.

Considering the daily context of children's lives and the effectiveness of different experiences in the experimental field, the study is focused on the specific declination of outdoor education linked to urban context, identifying cities as a setting solution full of potential in terms of space, time and didactics. By defining the concept of Urban Outdoor Education, attention is, therefore, paid to the opportunities that urban space can offer for carrying out a renewed and active integrated teaching, more attentive to the educational needs of children and to the space in which it is introduced.

It is in these terms that parks and squares emerge as preferential settings, rich in inputs and stimulations, capable of activating interactions, on a deeper level, between humans and with the surrounding environment.

The multidisciplinary that characterizes the topic places in the design field the attention towards these spaces and their adaptation, set-up, design and management for safe, sustainable and correct use in relation to educational projects.

Through a meta-design approach it was possible to define general guidelines for the correct design, implementation and management of city parks and squares suitable for hosting Outdoor Education activities, with the aim of supporting planners, designers, decision makers and school industry professionals.

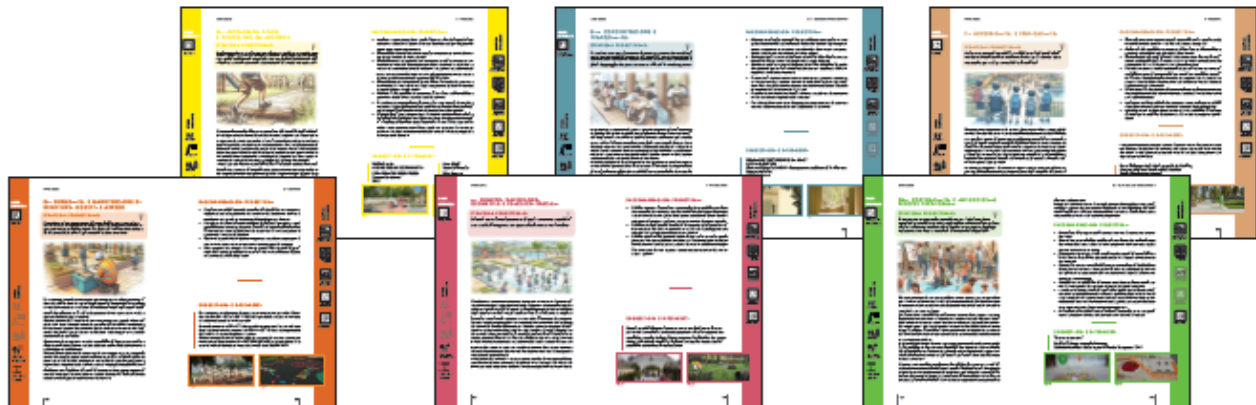
In particular, the drafting was possible starting from an analysis of the users - focused on primary school children (6-11 years old) and their needs - with the consequent definition of the spatial requirements for carrying out specific educational activities.

The analysis was based on the study of indirect sources such as the literature on the subject and on direct experiences in the field. To provide a coherent and orderly organisation, the classification of the guidelines is based on the UNI8289:1981 standard and is accompanied by exemplary references and design suggestions, related to identified functional areas.

Finally, to verify their reliability and demonstrate their application, a concept was briefly developed on a area chosen as a case study which attempted to

condense, at a qualitative level, what was expressed in the guidelines with the aim of underlining how they must be integrated with a correct evaluation of the characteristics of the reference area and its environmental, social and economic factors.

The underlying perspective that permeates the work brings together different points of view to give a framework of the topic that considers sustainability, integrated in all its nuances, as a fixed point in the research presented.



Examples of design guidelines.