

To parents who request that their children join them in Italy

In Italy, school is open to everyone. Also foreign children have the right and duty **to attend school from the age of 6 years**. Indeed, when children reach this age, their parents must enrol them in Primary School and later, in Junior High School, and must ensure that they attend lessons. If children continue to study after Junior High School, they have to choose between schools which differ according to specialization and duration. Those who do not continue studying must attend professional training programmes or begin working, with a contract which ensures participation in training activities. In fact, youth **training** must continue **until the age of 18**.

ITALIAN SCHOOLS

Nursery up to 3 years old

Kindergarten from 3 to 6 years

Primary School from 6 to 11 years

Junior High School from 11 years to 14 years

High School over 14 years

STARTING SCHOOL

The school year begins in mid-September and finishes in mid-June. Children who arrive in Italy can be enrolled at any moment during the school year. However, as soon as you know when your children are arriving, it is a good idea to start looking for a school for them.

When you enrol your child, the school will ask you for some documents:

- the child's permit of stay or birth certificate
- a vaccinations certificate
- documents from the school attended in the country of provenance

If you do not already have the documents, this will not impede enrolment and you can obtain them when your children join you.

Also, try to bring some books and notebooks from the school which your child previously attended. These will greatly help the Italian school teachers to understand what your child studied and what he or she can do. In addition, your child will be happy to have them with him or her in the new country.

LEARNING ITALIAN AT SCHOOL

Even if they do not speak Italian, pupils are enrolled in the class corresponding to their age or in the previous year. In many schools there are teachers who help pupils to learn Italian and in Florence, Primary School and Junior High School pupils can attend specific second-language learning centers. To learn Italian it is not necessary to forget your mother tongue. On the contrary, a greater command of the native language can help with the acquisition of a second language.