

SCHOOL LIFE in ITALY

by Camilla, Erica, Fatima, Ginevra, Ibtisama,
Ilaria, Martina, Martina, Maryia, Nicole,
Rabab, Serena and Talia (2nd E)
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How is the school system structured in Italy?

The Italian school system includes:

- Pre-school
- Primary education
- High school
- University

Pre-School	3 months old to 2 years old	Creche
	3 to 5 years old	Kindergarten
Primary Education	6 to 10 years old	Elementary School
	11 to 13 years old	«Scuola Media» Lower secondary school
Upper Secondary School	14 to 18 years old	Lycée, Technical and Vocational Schools
University	19 onward	

PRE-SCHOOL

Creche «Asilo nido» and Kindergarten «scuola materna» are for children starting from the age of 6 months up to the age of 5 years. The children can stay at school morning and afternoon. They spend the day playing, they have lunch at about 12.30 p.m. and at around 2.00 p.m. they have a nap and at 4.00 they take a snack. Usually the children have to wear a smock.



PRIMARY EDUCATION

Elementary school lasts 5 years, from 6 to 10 years old. The children are in classes of about 25 pupils, they study Maths, Italian, History, Science, Geography, Physic Education and a bit of English. They have 32 hours in a week. In some schools they attend classes from Monday to Saturday; in other schools they don't go on Saturday but they stay longer at school also in the afternoon. In some schools the children still have to wear the smock.



LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

«Scuola Media»

Junior high school or middle school lasts 3 years, from 11 to 13 years old. The kids are still divided in classes and on average the number is of about 25 – 28 pupils. They study subjects which are all compulsory: Italian, Maths, English, History and Geography, Technology, Art, Music, a second language which can be Spanish,

French or Germany and Physical Education, Religion. They still have 32 hours per week and they go at school from Monday to Saturday. There is no uniform to wear.



UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Upper secondary school lasts 5 years, from 14 to 18 years old.

The pupils have a choice:

- Lycées (Grammar School) Scientific, Lycée specializing in classical studies and Lycée specializing in modern languages
- Technical Schools (there are different kind according to the subjects)
- Vocational schools (different kind according to subjects)

In all the high schools pupils studies Italian, English, History, and Physical Education. Then there are the subjects which characterize the school.

The only optional subject is Religion.

UNIVERSITY

After attending the first three years at university you get your bachelor. Then there are two more years for what we call «Laurea Magistrale». As long as you have a leaving certificate you can apply to any university providing you pass the admission test which most of the faculties require. Some courses have a large crowd of students.



What is the compulsory attendance?

Young people are expected to attend school up to the age of 16 that is to attend the second year at high school.

How are students evaluated in different stages of Education?

In Italy pupils are evaluated according to their learning, behavior and school performances.

Pupils have written class test nearly every month for the subjects requiring the written skills and at least two oral tests per term for each subject.

They get a report at half term (at the end of January) and the year final report in June.

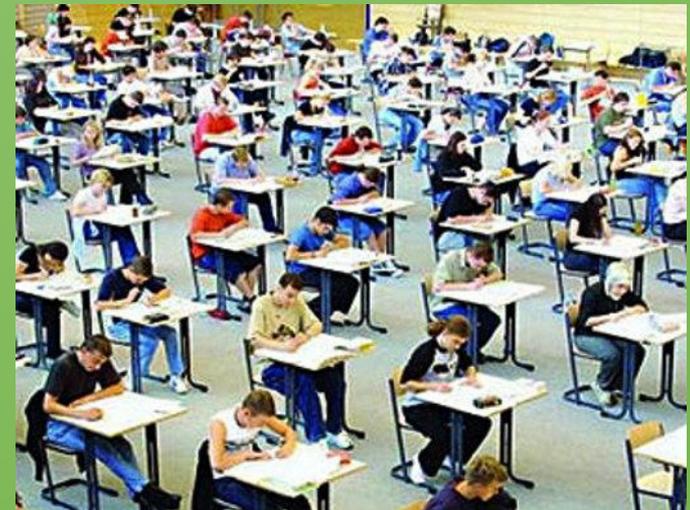


How are students evaluated in different stages of Education?

The first exam is on the third year of middle school. This exam allows us to attend high school. If pupils fail it, they have to attend another year at middle school.

The second exam that pupils must face is the graduation exam, which is a national exam, at the end of high school.

You sit for two written tests on two subjects (Italian for everybody and the second depends on the kind of school as it is a characterising subject), then there is a third written test for some other subjects. The exam ends with an oral test on all subjects



How are students evaluated in different stages of Education?

Pupils get marks and evaluation in grades 10 being the highest and 1 the lowest. 6 to 10 are the positive ones 1 to 5 are negative.

The mid-term and final reports are approved by all the teachers of the class.

The same grades are used also for the evaluation of the pupil's behaviour.

How to be admitted to the following class/form?

To be admitted to the next class/form, your year report must have grades from 6 to 10. If in some subjects (usually not more than three) you get a grade between 1 – 5 you have to study during summer and in September, before the beginning of the school year, you sit for an exam testing your improvement on those not successful subjects in June.

Are there special schools for extremely gifted students and for those who need special help?

The Italian school system doesn't foresee any special classes. There can be some support for pupils with specific needs, but they are still in class with everybody else.

At university level there are universities which are recognised to be particularly selective as for example «La normale di Pisa», the Polytechnic in Milan.





Do pupils like school?

Why yes/no?

What's interesting about it?

Most of the pupils don't like going to school because, above all, they don't like waking up early and they don't like to stay in a classroom for about five hours listening to lessons that may be boring. Besides there is homework that sometimes take all our afternoon.

But some pupils like it and they are glad to learn and improve their knowledge. Pupils like alternative lessons, where teachers involve them in projects and other activities, especially if they are divided into groups to work.

They also enjoy school trips and going out for cultural purposes with all the class, going to the theatre or visiting museums.

Are different projects offered to pupils?

Yes there are, according to the level of school. In junior high school pupils may be offered lessons to learn musical instruments, sport and singing lessons. At high school as for example ours, we are offered courses for performances on stage, extra sport activity and language courses. Anyway it always depends on the teachers and if the school can afford with extra money. For gifted students there are «Olimpic games for Mathematics, Scienze, Chemistry and English.

Are there after school activities / clubs organized by the school?

In our school there are different after-school activities. For example there is a club for the theater that every year organizes for a show or a musical. There are activities for the charity project to support long-distance school adoption, a group to practise singing «the gospel choir».

There are courses to prepare pupils for language certification for English, French and Spanish.

There are also courses of languages (Chinese and Russian) which are not taught at school in the morning.

State and private schools

STATE SCHOOLS: State schools in Italy are free, even for foreigners living in Italy who aren't formal residents. There is only a little fee to pay.

This applies to primary schools, secondary schools.

State sponsored schools always teach in Italian, nowadays at high school a subject should be taught in a foreign language (CLIL = Content and Language Integrated Learning).

English is often taught as a second language.

Italian state schools operate according to a centralised system, which controls school curricula and final examinations.

Despite attempts at uniformity, however, it is widely acknowledged that education is not at the same level.

State and private schools

PRIVATE SCHOOLS: In Italy private schools have had great diffusion beginning from the year 2003. Around 1 Italian pupil out of 10 attends a private school. These schools aren't administered by the State and they have total freedom about subjects and teachers. The straight lines paid by the students are necessary funds to the ordinary management of the school. Private schools can release equivalent titles to the diplomas released from the government schools, but of course the curricula must be the same. Part of private schools are run by nuns/priests, therefore they are Catholic schools.