



AMERICAN OVERSEAS
SCHOOL OF ROME

Parent -Teacher Organization (PTO)

Newcomers' Handbook 2018-2019

American Overseas school of Rome Parent-Teacher Organization

Newcomers' Handbook

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DISCLAIMER: The AOSR PTO offers this booklet as a reference and first-step guide for parents unfamiliar with Rome and AOSR. We intend the information as a supplement to, not a replacement for, the [AOSR Parent/Student Handbook](#) and other official rules and regulations of the school, PTO, and government organizations. References made to books, businesses, web addresses, or procedures are not intended to be all-inclusive endorsements, but rather, are offered as examples of the types of information and services available to families who have recently moved to Rome.

Table of Contents

A Word of Welcome from the PTO	4
Emergency Numbers	5
Chapter 1 The School	6
The AOSR Website, Facebook & Instagram	6
Access to School and Parking Rules	6
AOSR School Buses	7
Lost and Found	8
The Bar and The Cafeteria	8
After School Activities	9
Chapter 2 The PTO	10
The Booster Bar	10
The Boutique	10
Mayfair Festival	10
Parent Liaisons	11
Family Picnic	12
Holiday Bazaar	12
Chapter 3 Living in Italy	13
Paper Work	13
Language Acquisition	14
Cell Phones	14
Telephone and Internet Set Up	14
Recommended Reading	15
<u>Internet Resources:</u>	16
Finding An Apartment	17
Areas of Rome	17
Security	18
Shops	19
Pharmacy (Farmacia)	20
Eating Out	21
Transportation	21
Public Bus, Tram and Train	21
Driving in Rome	21
Helping Your House	22
Electricity/Appliances	22
VCR, TV ,DVD	22
Dryers (Asciugatrice)	22
Calcare/Lime Scale	22

Mommy, how do you say notebook in Italian?	23
Library Resources	23
AOSR High School and Elementary	
School Libraries	24
St Patrick's Lending Library	24
The British Council	24
Other Libraries and Resources	24
Bookstores	24
Board of Trustees	25
Board of Trustees Committees	26

A WORD OF WELCOME FROM THE PTO

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at the American Overseas School of Rome (AOSR) extends a warm welcome to all newcomers to our school!

The PTO is a non-profit organization, with membership open to all AOSR families and faculty. Our main purpose is to provide an opportunity for parents to get involved in supporting school-wide events and activities. We work together, along with teachers and the school's administration to provide support for student programs, social activities and fundraising events.

The PTO designs its activities and events to enhance the educational experience of all our students. We invite you to join us as we work together to enrich the education of our students and strengthen the connection between school and home. We depend on you as a volunteer to make these events a success.

This handbook has been put together to provide you with basic information to ease your transition to AOSR and to Rome. The ancient city of Rome has been a delight and inspiration to travelers and tourists for centuries.

We have also inserted a check-box () for you in sections of this booklet that we think require special attention and possible action.

Rome is waiting! We're glad you're here, and we look forward to getting to know you better as a member of the AOSR community.

Welcome! *Benvenuti!*

Best regards,

The AOSR Parent-Teacher Organization

pto@aosr.org

Emergency Numbers

**Pronto Soccorso (Ambulances), Carabinieri (State Police) and
Polizia (Police- General Emergency) 112**

Vigili Urbani (City police-Accidents) 06 67691

Taxi Service: Call any of these 06 6645, 06 4994, 06 3570, 06 5551

Hospital Closest to School
Villa San Pietro, Via Cassia 600 tel 06 33581

Bambino Gesù (Pediatric hospital with Emergency Room)
Piazza S.Onofrio 4 tel 06 68591

Policlinico Gemelli
Largo A. Gemelli 8 tel 06 30151

AOSR Main Office tel (+39) 06 334 38300

www.roma-o-matic.com English version, lists many emergency numbers and other information on Rome.

Another good source of information is the Welcome Neighbor site:
<http://wnrome-homepage.blogspot.com/>

Chapter 1

The School

AOSR welcomes you to take a look at the programs and activities available to students and where you can find a way to participate...

The AOSR Website, Facebook, and Instagram



Like a one-stop shop for AOSR information, our website at www.aosr.org offers the opportunity for you to find answers to a variety of questions, plus keep up with all of the latest school events. You'll be able to search for grade-specific school supply lists, keep up with the Calendar of Events, and access the school lunch menus. Parents and students can log in to password protected sections that list class schedules, report cards and teacher-posted assignment schedules. Facebook and Instagram are other locations to keep up with school events. Facebook and Instagram - aosr.rome.

Access to School and Parking Rules



Parents may enter the school campus to accompany their child(ren), and must wear their lanyard and parent ID at all times. All other visitors must be authorized by the Administration during the school day and must wear a lanyard and visitor pass. Visitor passes may be obtained at the gate by showing a valid ID to the gatekeepers during working hours.

If you come by car, please note the current rules that are in place both for safety and security:

Morning

- before 9:00 am entrance is permitted by the north gate (nearer to the field) and exit is by the south gate.
- after 9:00 am the north gate is closed, entrance is by the new gate ONLY and exit by the south gate ONLY.

Afternoon

- before 15:00 entrance is permitted by the south gate
- after 15:00 entrance is NOT permitted until the departure of **all** school buses at approximately 15:35

Parking is permitted in the parking lot in front of the school, along the fence borders. Note that the spaces closest to the building are generally reserved for school buses. Additional parking will be made available during special events.

Please Note: Only AOSR personnel are permitted to enter and park along the side of the school (next to Elementary School Wing) and in between the HS building and the quad. The area behind the cafeteria is a pedestrian only zone.

AOSR School Buses

The AOSR school bus system is probably more complex and diversified than those most parents may be accustomed to in their home countries, particularly the United States. The system not only transports children from city areas near the school, but also from distant suburban areas that can be reached mainly by driving on the **Grande Raccordo Anulare (GRA)**, the busy beltway or ring road that surrounds Rome. The routes of the buses are established to cover the areas where the families reside. Each year, some variations are made to each route to include new families. The Bus Coordinator attempts to minimize traveling time for children and to achieve arrival times between 8:15 and 8:45. Parents are expected to have their children at their bus stops a few minutes before the scheduled arrival of the bus.

Upon arrival in the morning, bus monitors bring the very small children from their buses to the established areas. At dismissal, they bring the same children from their classrooms to the buses. Parents are expected to meet their elementary children at the designated bus stops. Bus drivers have been instructed not to leave children at stops if not met by a designated adult: the child is taken back to school and a school administrator contacts the parent. Sometimes heavy traffic, an accident, a public bus strike or a demonstration, may cause lengthy bus delays. Each driver and monitor carries a cellular phone and may be contacted. Children may only take the buses that are assigned; parent requests to switch buses will not be honored. Drivers do not leave school without having all the children on board.



PARENTS MUST NOTIFY BUS COORDINATOR AND DRIVERS IN ADVANCE OF ANY CHANGES IN THE STUDENTS' BUS SCHEDULE such as if the child will not take the bus to school the following day or return home after school. For any changes regarding the bus service parents must inform the school in writing by sending an e-mail to buschanges@aosr.org, by 14:00 pm the day before for changes regarding the next morning, and by 14:00 pm the same day for afternoon changes. **TEACHERS MUST BE INFORMED** of any absence or change in dismissal arrangements as well, and should be CC in the bus changes email. **A written notice is required by law if the student is a minor.** An automatic response will be sent as your assurance that the bus coordinator has received this information.

Administrators supervise children at dismissal time and are responsible for discipline. To ensure the follow-up of inappropriate behavior on the buses, infractions are reported to the School Coordinators or to the Principal, depending on the grade of the student. The bus rules may be found in the AOSR Parent/Student Handbook and parents are to review the rules with their children.

A good number of buses take children home from the After School Activities. Children must be enrolled in a supervised After School Activities program and in grade 4 or higher to use these late buses. Children under grade 4 may ride if an older sibling rides with them.

A new law regarding the formal authorization for children under 14 years of age to leave school after school hours was enacted at the end of the last academic year. In order to comply with this new law, parents (or guardians) are asked to complete an authorization form for students attending school under the age of 14, and send a signed copy to the registrar at registrar@aosr.org.

AOSR School Bus Coordinator-Mr Kieran Canter, Office: 06.334.38.372 Cell: 338.141.8668 Email: kcanter@aosr.org

Bus Changes - buschanges@aosr.org

Secretary – Ms. Manuela Ciocca, Office: 06.334.38300 –Email: mciocca@aosr.org

Elementary Secretary - Ms. Pamela Porreca, Office: 06.334.38395 - Email: esoffice@aosr.org

Secondary School Secretary - Ms. Lucia Agresta, Office: 06.334.38326 - Email: lagresta@aosr.org

Lost and Found

Misplaced items collected on campus are deposited in an area outside the Elementary Principal's Office. Items are displayed there until claimed or at winter break and at the end of the year unclaimed items are donated to charities. You or your child(ren) may also check the backpack/coat racks near their classrooms for lost jackets, etc.

The AOSR Coffee Bar and Cafeteria

The Coffee Bar

Located next to the cafeteria on the lower ground floor of the High School building, the AOSR Coffee Bar is a popular meeting point, and a great place to make new acquaintances. The Bar offers all sorts of coffee drinks, cappuccino, juice, pastries, panini, pizza, on some days- sushi, and healthy snacks at lower prices than you might find in other bars in the neighborhood. The emphasis of the food sales is on providing healthy snacks to the High School and Middle School Student Body, therefore no candy or sugary sodas are sold. Elementary school students are NOT permitted to buy food at the bar during the school day; however, they can visit the bar during the half hour before and after school when accompanied by their parents.

Opening Hours

Monday to Thursday: 8:15 am to 14:30 and 15:00 to 16:00

Friday: 8:15 am to 14:30

The Cafeteria

Hot Lunches



The school cafeteria runs a full-service lunch line that caters to students, faculty and staff. Parents are welcome to eat lunch there on occasion. **Requests from parents to eat lunch in the cafeteria should be coordinated through your child's teacher.**



The cafeteria is open for lunch from 11:30 am till 14:30 pm Monday through Friday. Students have approximately 35 minutes for lunch and seating is scheduled according to grade level.

Lunch costs are not included in the Tuition Fees but are complimentary for students in Pre-K through Grade 3. Starting at Grade 4, lunch is *à la carte* and the students have prepaid accounts. Student lunch accounts are to be paid directly to the caterer either at the school bar or cafeteria cashier. AOSR does not accept payment on behalf of the caterer.

Bagged or Boxed Lunches from Home

Students may bring a bag lunch from home to eat during their scheduled lunch time. Please note that classrooms are not equipped with refrigerators, therefore student lunches must be kept in backpacks until the class departs for the cafeteria.

After School Activities



□ The **After School Activities – Athletics Program (ASA)** program features a variety of instruction to satisfy the extra-curricular needs and interests of all AOSR students from all grade levels. Sports such as tennis, gymnastics, and soccer are offered for elementary and middle school students; in addition, students may choose from a wealth of other offerings, including cooking, robotics, chess, and many fine arts, including private music lessons for many instruments.

Two separate sessions span the school year: Session 1 starts in late September and ends in January. Session 2 starts in January and ends in May. All activities are meant for boys and girls, and are held between 15:30 and 17:00 pm. Late (17:15) buses are scheduled to run during each ASA session. The late bus schedule is usually finalized by mid-September (see above AOSR Bus System). The ASA Coordinator is Mr. Rafael Suarez, and his office is open every day from 15:30 to 17:00, tel 06.334.38.320 - email: asa@aosr.org or rsuarez@aosr.org.

Chapter 2 PTO

Activities and Fundraisers

The PTO designs its activities and events to enhance the educational experience of all our students. The programs listed are the PTO's flagship programs offered every year, as we also introduce new initiatives:

The Booster Bar



The Booster Bar is a PTO-sponsored barbeque and drink bar, which offers juicy grilled hamburgers, veggie burgers and sizzling hot dogs, along with beverages and candy for sale. Prices range from 50 cents to 4 euro. Volunteers staff the Booster Bar every Friday (unless otherwise indicated) from 14:30 until 16:30. Located adjacent to the corridor outside the gym, it is the place to go to have an after-school snack, hang out, and meet friends. The effort and time put into this weekly fundraiser serves to provide additional resources for many departments and school activities toward the purchase of sports uniforms, theatre props, and more. An activity group can sponsor a Friday Booster Bar, assisting with set-up, sales, and cleanup in an effort to earn a portion of the net profits. Friday Booster Bars have become very popular with students, staff, faculty and parents. Contact the Booster Bar Committee for further information about helping out with Booster Bar events at pto@aosr.org.

The Boutique



Located on the parking lot level next to the stairs to the Elementary library, the Boutique can be a bargain hunter's dream. As AOSR's very own consignment shop, the Boutique is a great place to find new and second hand clothes in many sizes and styles, toys, household goods, books and childcare items at extremely convenient prices. Everyone is welcome to come and shop; parents, alumni, staff, and members of AOSR may sign up to be vendors. You set the prices on your items, then 60% of the selling price goes to you and 40% goes to the school for PTO sponsored projects. Clothing must be clean and in very good condition, no spots, holes or worn places. Items stay on sale for two-three months and then are either recollected by vendors or donated to the school. At the end of the school year any unsold items are donated to charity. Opening Hours: Tuesdays 9:30-13:00 & Fridays 14:00-16:30.

AOSR Mayfair

You will very often hear people talking about the annual Mayfair Festival since it is one of AOSR's major fundraising events for all people affiliated with the school. Held usually on the second Saturday in May from 11:00 to 16:00, Mayfair blends music, stage presentations, games, and delicious food into a carnival atmosphere on the campus of AOSR. **This year's Mayfair event will be on Saturday, May 25.**

Children are invited to join in the county fair-style games organized by the Elementary, Middle and High Schools, while parents can feast on tasty treats offered in the International Food Court or take

advantage of local vendors special offerings on artwork, jewelry, books and clothing. Our every popular Booster Bar also sells its traditional hamburgers, veggie burgers and hot dogs, alongside coffee, wine and drinks tables, and sweets available at the Bake Sale and Candy Market.

A secondhand Book Sale attracts many customers with amazing deals on mostly English-language books. At the School Spirit table you can indulge your taste for the AOSR Falcon logo on T-shirts, caps, bags and sweatshirts. Meanwhile, the Raffle offers many fantastic prizes to be won at very little cost for one ticket. There is always something for everyone and something new at Mayfair.

The purpose of all this fun becomes clear when profits from the Mayfair go to the Inspiration Fund. This fund will be available to teachers and their classes to introduce tools, resources and experiences that will inspire and engage our students. Perhaps it may be in the form of an artist in residence, creative and flexible classroom furniture or new and engaging technology. Whatever form it may take, its purpose is to inspire and engage. Teachers are able to apply for the grants twice a school year.



Participation in the planning and execution of this big event is a great way to help the school provide a better quality service to our children, as well as to meet new people. Contact the Mayfair coordinator as soon as now to volunteer email - pto@aosr.org.



If you are interested in lending your talents to the celebration, contact the Mayfair Committee at any time during school year. Just email - pto@aosr.org.

Parent Liaisons



Room parents for the Elementary School and Grade Level parents for the Middle School represent a vital link of support and communication between teachers and parents. The objective is to strengthen networking between parents and teachers of the same classroom/grade thereby enriching the children's educational experience and enhancing community spirit. The Room/Grade Level Parents take their instructions from the teachers and either the Elementary Principal or the Middle School Coordinators, and coordinate their efforts with the PTO Elementary and Middle School Liaisons. Depending on the needs of the teachers, these parents help organize parent participation in class projects, field trips and other events. They also help ensure school initiatives are well-publicized among parents in the grade level/classroom.

Parents interested in volunteering their time by becoming a Room parent should inform their child's teacher.

If interested in becoming a Grade Level parent they should inform the Middle School Coordinator at mscoordinator@aosr.org.

For the Elementary School or Middle School Liaison positions please contact a PTO Board member or by email at pto@aosr.org.

Family Picnic



At the beginning of the school year the Family Picnic is a great opportunity for the whole school community to meet friends and spend some time in a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. The event features musical entertainment, games and activities for children and the tasty food from the Booster Bar grill. A highlight of the AOSR Family Picnic is the Potluck Luncheon--a table full of treats from around the world that shows the culinary talents of the international community at AOSR. Consider volunteering for this event. You might be ready to lend a hand for an hour or so. Contact the PTO at pto@aosr.org.

AOSR Holiday Market – November 30th



This year, kick off the holiday season with plenty of time to get your purchases wrapped and ready to put under the tree or send back home. The AOSR campus will be filled with twinkling lights and a variety of vendors, featuring Italian art, products, and crafts. We'll share food, drinks, and abundant holiday cheer for a memorable Friday evening together... and rumor has it that Santa often takes an early detour to visit the Market!

The Holiday Market is another great event to volunteer your time. Whether you like to decorate, sell food or wine, or help the jolly old fellow, the PTO needs your help to make this event a success. Email the PTO at pto@aosr.org to sign-up.

Chapter 3

Living in Italy

We hope you find these hints and tips helpful as you settle into your new city.

Paper Work

 In order to stay in Italy as a foreigner, you must obtain a *permesso di soggiorno* (residence permit) from your local *Questura* (police station) or from your place of employment, within 8 days from arrival.

 You must also secure a *codice fiscale* (social security number/fiscal code), for all family members, from the *Agenzia delle Entrate* www.agenziaentrate.it. It can take two months to obtain both of these documents, even longer if you apply as a spouse/relative. If you are an employee of a foreign embassy in Rome, many embassies have staff personnel who will help you with this process.

The Italian bureaucracy can be very challenging at times. Be prepared to experience delays and misunderstandings. You will not have health insurance until your paperwork is completed, so it is advisable to have your own insurance until the public system takes effect. However, emergency rooms (*pronto soccorso*) are free if you are ill or injured in the event of an emergency.

 To access the Italian Health Insurance System you must register and obtain a *Tessera Sanitaria* (health insurance card) from your local ASL (*Azienda Sanitaria Locale*).

 For EU citizens on a temporary stay, health services are guaranteed. Just present the E111 form from your country of origin.

 For non EU citizens, we recommend you obtain the *Tessera Sanitaria*, even if you have your own private medical insurance. To qualify you must furnish your *permesso di soggiorno* or just the application. The Italian health system is mostly free or is received at a much lower price than what occurs in the United States. You choose a doctor in the system and care is coordinated through this doctor. Many prescriptions are free as well or lower in price (see Pharmacies/*Farmacia* below).

Check www.expatsinitaly.com for more information on paperwork and living in Italy in general.

Language Acquisition



If you do not already speak Italian, learning the basics will enhance your enjoyment of this wonderful country, and perhaps reduce some inconveniences. Prepare yourself by purchasing beginner language books and familiarizing yourself with some essentials of the Italian language. If time allows, courses or tapes will prove beneficial in your learning the language. There are many Italian language schools in Rome. The Italians are wonderful, kind people who are very tolerant of people trying to speak their language, and often they will try to help you.



Ms. Gabriella Iacovoni, who was the Coordinator of the Italian Program for many years at AOSR, runs a language institute, the Centro Studi Cassia (Tel. 06.332.53.852 or 335.841. 3369) across the Cassia from AOSR on Via Sesto Miglio, 16.

Cell Phones

Generally, your U.S. cell phone will not work in Italy unless it is a TRI-BAND or QUAD-BAND phone. To use a sim card with a local phone number, your U.S. or other nation cell phone must be unlocked. You can make international calls with a calling card, which you can purchase at a *tabaccaio* (a store selling tobacco products such as cigarettes, bus/metro tickets, and stamps, recognizable by the “T” sign outside).



There are two main ways to establish mobile phone service in Italy so you can avoid paying international phone and data charges. Cell phone companies have two basic programs: sign up for ‘monthly minutes’ plans or purchase a prepaid phone card. Get a new cell phone with an Italian provider or bring in your own, unlocked tri/quad band phone to one of the many major cell phone companies in Italy: TIM, Vodafone, Wind, Tre, Iliad and Ho. To apply for a cell phone contract in Italy you will need your *codice fiscale* and an ID that shows your local address in order to sign a contract. Instead of a long term contract, you can choose a plan where you “recharge” your minutes/messages/data every four weeks. Recharges for monthly and prepaid plans can be purchased at *tabacchi shops*, but are now also available at many ATM’s. Most services can also be paid online or through an app using a credit card or PayPal. And once you have opened an Italian bank account, you may also be able to recharge your phone through your institution’s mobile app.

Telephone and Internet Set Up



Telecom Italia is the most established telephone company in Italy and therefore more reliable, although not the cheapest. To sign up for a new telephone line you need:

- full name
- fiscal code
- the exact address where the line will be installed
- the type(s) of service you need (analog, ISDN, ADSL)

They will then tell you immediately what your telephone number will be and they will make an appointment for installation.



Apart from Telecom Italia www.telecomitalia.it (English version available), the following Internet Providers advertise offers at convenient prices for Internet access. ADSL is still the standard in many areas, although many neighborhoods have been upgraded to higher speed fiber internet.

- Libero www.internet.libero.it
- Tiscali www.tiscali.it
- Virgilio/Tin www.virgilio.it

Be prepared to wait 3-6 weeks for your internet connection to be finalized.

Recommended Reading



Just as researching exciting locations prior to travel makes the trip more enjoyable, learning more about your new city and country will heighten your experience and perhaps shorten your adjustment time. The travel section at your nearby bookstore offers a variety of books, which focus on Italian travel (helpful for weekend and holiday trips); however, living in Italy can be a whole different story!

For a good overall introduction to moving and living in Rome and Italy, the following books are very helpful. We have a few copies available for loan, just ask the PTO (Welcome Committee.)

Culture Shock! Rome at Your Door, by Frances Gendlin, 1997 Times Editions Pte Ltd

Culture Shock! Italy: A Guide to Customs and Etiquette, by Raymond Flower, 1997 Graphic Arts Publishing Co.

Living, Studying and Working in Italy, by Neighbor and Larner, 1998 Henry Holt & Co.

A Thousand Bells at Noon: A Roman's Guide to the Secrets and Pleasures of his Native City, by G. Franco Romagnoli, 2003 Harper Perennial

Time Out Rome - Eating and Drinking Guide AND *Time Out – Rome*, Penguin Books published every two years www.timeout.com/rom

Internet Resources:

Wanted in Rome— www.WantedInRome.com –a free web publication and monthly magazine print which lists news, features and events of interest to the English-speaking community in Rome. It also sponsors a free classified service including housing. Follow on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

AngloInfo – www.angloinfo.com/rome -- offers a directory of a wide variety of businesses, from auto repair to entertainment options.

Rome Review— www.romereview.com – one of the most reliable resources to get authorized, up-to-date show times for movies in original language in Rome.

Insiders Abroad - www.insidersabroad.com –a web directory of all English-speaking businesses in Italy, Spain and France. Insiders Abroad sponsors a free classified service, reference information (weights & measure conversions, national holidays, basic vocabulary and maps) as well as a photo gallery of people and events in the US/Expatriate communities in these three countries. All can be downloaded from the website.

Online Public Bus and Commuter Train Info in Rome— www.atac.roma.it –Rome’s public transportation services offers an online directory, in choice of either Italian or English with address-to-address directions, instructions on using the bus, metro and tram, to include maps and routes.

Online Train Information— www.trenitalia.it – Reservations, routes, timetables and special offers are available on this website for Italy’s vast national train network.

Romeing – www.romeing.it -- features information about cultural events, food, nightlife, and a host of other fascinating tidbits about Rome.

Rome Airport Information— www.adr.it --Airport arrival and departure information for Rome’s Fiumicino and Ciampino airports.

American citizens can register by request at the U. S. Embassy to be included on the e-Embassy Rome email list to be notified about security alerts and other important information for Americans living in Italy. Call 06-46741 or send an email to USEmbassy@lb.central.com

Facebook Pages

Many of the sites listed above also have Facebook pages; in addition, you may find the following Facebook groups helpful:

Rome Info *Closed Group*

Buy, Sell, Trade – Rome, Italy

Expats Living in Rome

Finding an Apartment

Remember that Rome wasn't built in one day! Do not expect to find an apartment quickly if you arrive in Rome in August. Landlords are on vacation and so are the majority of Romans.



Take advantage of the reduced traffic and congestion to enjoy the city sights and to learn road directions to your most important destinations. Do not get used to the nearly empty streets, however, because as soon as schools open in September, the traffic returns to its normal heavy flow, and the city becomes more chaotic.

If you need to find an apartment/house, the weekly newspaper *Porta Portese* (in Italian) or *Wanted in Rome* website, [/www.wantedinrome.com/](http://www.wantedinrome.com/), (in English) lists apartments available for rent. A website to include during your search- [/www.immobiliare.it/](http://www.immobiliare.it/). Key words:

Appartamento = apartment
arredato = furnished
bagno = bathroom
cucina = kitchen
condominio = building fee
balcone= balcony

affittasi = for rent
camera da letto = bedroom
giardino = garden
piano = floor
salone = living room

For two or three year rental periods, the normal rental is a furnished apartment. If you have moved all your furniture with you, please note an unfurnished apartment can mean a bare kitchen, lacking refrigerator, cupboards, etc. Cost, as always, varies with location, and luck. Apartments located near the school tend to be less expensive than in the center of the city (*centro*). See area descriptions below.

During your search, it is best to look at different locations around the city. If possible, get a contract on the apartment to avoid any misunderstandings later. Real Estate Agencies can be of great assistance during this process. They are experts in what to look for, contract law and agreements and may already have relationships with the owners. But they charge a fee of one month's rent from the tenant, and often offer only more expensive apartments.

Areas of Rome

The following are some descriptions of areas of Rome where you may find apartments for rent:

Cassia – This is where the school is located, in north Rome. There is no metro line here, but several different public buses stop directly in front of the school (see Transportation below). Each year there are many families who live near the school, for the convenience of walking to and from every day.

Giustiniana/La Storta--These two areas are located farther up Via Cassia, north of the GRA/Beltway. The properties here tend to be spacious and there are a number of large villas with private gardens in a country setting. This area offers the advantages of a country location near the city.

Olgiata--This private compound, situated about 10 Km north of the school, is made up of villas with gardens in peaceful suburban surroundings. Access to the compound is restricted and there are only two gates with security personnel 24 hours a day. However, it takes a while to drive into Rome from this location, especially during rush hour, and public transportation unfortunately is scarce.

Prati and Flaminio--Prati is located behind Castel Sant'Angelo and near the Vatican. The Flaminio area is located near Ponte Milvio. Both are on the side of river opposite from the historical center (*centro*), and a bus ride or two from school.

Parioli – residential and upmarket area just across the Corso Francia bridge, at the bottom of Via Cassia. Rents tend to be more expensive here, but usually the apartments are larger and better equipped. Many embassies are located in this area.

Trastevere – Trastevere is a very old Roman neighborhood with many pizzerias and restaurants, bars, and a very vibrant nightlife. It is very popular with young people and tourists. It is across the river from the historical center, past the Vatican area, and most apartments are small with high rents.

Historical Center – The area within the Aurelian walls is referred to as the historical center (*centro*). It includes the major Rome landmarks, such as the Spanish Steps, the Pantheon, Piazza Navona and Piazza Venezia. Rent in these areas can be extremely expensive but worthwhile for those wanting Rome at their door. The **Monti, Via Veneto, and the Esquiline Hill** neighborhoods are adjacent to the historical center, and includes the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the Trevi Fountain, the Quirinal and Trajan's Market. The elegant Via Veneto is home to the U.S. Embassy and many expensive hotels.

Other areas – The Aventino and Testaccio are just outside the historical center, but more difficult to get to and from AOSR. San Giovanni, Nomentana, and Monteverde are all lovely areas, but also quite a distance from school. EUR is a modern-looking area built in Mussolini's time for the 1942 World's fair which never took place. Its town centers around a large man-made lake and extensive park system. We have many families who live there, and access AOSR directly from the GRA for a 20-45 minute drive depending on traffic. About 45 minutes' drive north of Rome lies Lake Bracciano with its three towns of Bracciano, Anguillara and Trevignano. It is a very beautiful area with a large volcanic freshwater lake, nice beaches, and a green and countrified feel. The towns of Anguillara and Bracciano are serviced by a high speed commuter train to Rome. A stop (La Storta) is located about 2 miles north from AOSR, and the transit to Rome *centro* takes about one hour. Some families choose to commute this distance because it is quiet and peaceful, and far less expensive than living in the city.

Security



Protecting your property and ensuring your safety at home are important issues to consider in Italy. Although Italy may be considered a much safer place in terms of violent crime, Rome has its share of theft and property crimes. Burglary is common (including the use of sprays to induce sleep at night) and favorite items are laptops, digital cameras, cell phones, cash and gold jewelry. It is helpful to remember to lock windows, shutters and doors properly at night and when you will be away from your home. In addition, police warn tourists and residents alike to beware of pickpockets in the

Metro (subway), in crowded public areas and on city buses. Security experts recommend you keep photocopies of important documents such as passports, drivers licenses, and credit card numbers in a safe place at home in case you need to have them replaced or cancelled due to a theft. Should you be a victim of theft, we advise you to make an immediate police report in order to expedite insurance claims.

Shops

Rome has small neighborhood shops to supply your every need. The following are a list of general shop names and what they provide:

ferramenta = hardware store

alimentari = small grocery

supermercato = supermarket

latteria / bar = dairy / coffee

fornaio / pasticceria = bakery

macellaio = butcher

cartoleria = Hallmark / office supply store

posta = post office

tabaccaio = stamps, bus tickets, telephone cards, candy, cigarettes

farmacia = pharmacy/chemist/prescriptions

parrucchiere = hairdresser

- Shops opening hours vary according to the type of products they sell:
- Supermarkets (Sma, GS, Despar, Superfresco, Conad, Ipercoop, Carrefour, PewEx, Auchan, etc.) usually open daily non-stop from 8:00 am till 20:00. Most are closed on Sundays, but you will find a few exceptions to this in the larger grocery chains.
- *Grandi Magazzini* open nonstop from 9:00 am till 20:00., some of them are open also on Sundays.
- Smaller shops tend to close for the lunch break (*riposo*), usually from 13:00 until 15:30 or 16:00., and most of them are closed Monday morning (clothes, shoes, etc) or Monday all day (hairdressers).
- Opening hours change also according to season, so be aware that if you live in a residential area you might find that the majority of the shops close on Saturdays during the summer, particularly in August.

- There are Drugstore shops in Rome open 24 hours, some are located in: Rosati 2 - Via Golametto 4/a, Castellino – P.zza Venezia, Museum – via Portuense 313, Tiburtina - Stazione Tiburtina. – EUR, via Europa.
- Many outdoor markets open mostly in the morning hours in and around Rome (Ponte Milvio and San Giovanni --- Monday through Saturday; Villaggio Olimpico (Viale XVII Olimpiade) --- Friday; Porta Portese --- Sunday, Via Grottarossa --- Wednesday. Prices are attractive and you can find everything from fresh fruits and vegetables to kitchen and household items to clothing and shoes. For more information click on www.inromenow.com/site/templates/FoodMarkets.html for descriptions of markets or <http://rome.angloinfo.com/information/17/markets.asp> for a comprehensive listing of all markets and days available.
- Leroy Merlin- Home and Garden giant - <http://www.leroymerlin.it/>- operates Mondays-Saturdays 9:00-20:30.
- IKEA- Home Furnishing giant - [/www.ikea.com/it/](http://www.ikea.com/it/)- has two locations north and east off the GRA. Hours are Monday to Friday: 10:00 -22:00 and Saturday to Sunday, 10:00 – 20:00.
- Trony and Euronics- Electric and home appliance megastores - [/www.trony.it/](http://www.trony.it/)- and Euronics [/www.euronics.it/](http://www.euronics.it/)- also are in various locations throughout Rome and hours vary according to location. Please check their websites for details.
- Auchan- Grocery Store to include housewares, clothing, school supplies and more (think Italy's Super Walmart) - [/www.auchan.it/](http://www.auchan.it/)/Located north of the city in Porta di Roma and is open from 9:00-22:00 everyday.
- Porta di Roma and Euroma2- Major shopping malls north and south of Rome - [/www.porta-di-roma.klepierre.it/](http://www.porta-di-roma.klepierre.it/) open everyday 10:00-22:00 and [/www.euroma2.it/](http://www.euroma2.it/) open Mondays- 10:00-22:00 and Tuesdays-Sundays 9:00-22:00.



Returning items requires the greatest of patience and detailed written data on your original purchase. Save your receipts and all packaging of items you seek to return. Try to return them in the best condition possible or stores might not accept them.

Pharmacy (Farmacia)

Pharmacies (*Farmacia*) dispense a wide variety of prescription and non-prescription or over-the-counter drugs and remedies. Prescriptions from a doctor may be presented to be filled at the counter. Many over-the-counter drugs must be requested from the pharmacist as well, but are available without a prescription. Pharmacies have two different opening times according to the season:

- Monday to Friday 8:30 am until 13:00 and 16:00 to 19:30
- In the summer 8:30 am until 13:00 and 16:30 until 20:00
- Saturdays 8:30 am until 13:00

Check www.federfarmaroma.org to find out which pharmacy in your area is currently open on Sundays or after hours.

Eating Out

The *ristorante* is a place where you can have more formal meals and tends to be expensive. The *trattoria* serves good food at reasonable prices unless the *trattoria* has become trendy. The *pizzeria* offers pizzas and often a wide selection of other dishes. The *paninoteca* is a stand up snack bar. *Bars* serve coffee, tea, and all types of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. If you are in the *centro*, you will pay more to sit at a table and order something to drink from a waiter than if you stand up at the bar.

Transportation

Public Bus, Tram and Train

To and from AOSR: The 301 and 201 bus lines both stop at a *fermata* (bus stop) directly in front of AOSR on Via Cassia. Both buses terminate their route (*capolinea*) at Piazza Mancini. From there, you can catch tram 2 which travels to the center (*centro*) Flaminio (Piazza del Popolo) and the Red Metro (A) Line. The 223 bus also stops in front of AOSR and travels through the Parioli district to its *capolinea* near the Bioparco (Zoo) at the Villa Borghese Park.



General Transportation: If your car does not have a GPS system, a detailed section by section road map of Rome and its surrounding towns is available at most bookstores, *giornale* shops and some *tabacchi* stores. The initial investment of 12 euro is well worth it for the street by street map visuals you receive. A public transportation map, *Roma metro – bus piana*, is available for purchase at many newspaper stands. For all public transportation, a 100 minute ticket (*biglietto*) must be stamped on the bus/tram at the time of use. Travel around Rome can take 45 - 90 minutes. (If you do not have a stamped ticket, you could be fined Euro 50,00). Tickets are available for purchase at most ‘Bars’, *tabaccaio* stores and newsstands for €1,50. A monthly pass (*tessera*) is available in the first few days of the month at the same locations for € 35, 00. A yearly pass can be purchased for € 250, 00. There are reduced prices for students and senior citizens. More information and maps at www.atac.roma.it, available in Italian and English, the site is very easy to use.

Driving in Rome



The city of Rome was clearly not built for modern vehicles and therefore, the narrow winding streets, lack of organized parking, and overall congestion while driving can add up to stress. Some suggestions to improve your experience: plan your route before you leave home and try it out on a Sunday or during the month of August when traffic is at a minimum, don't take Roman driving habits personally, be aware of motor scooters (*motorini*) popping in and out of lanes of traffic ***on both sides of your vehicle***, keep a city map handy in your car, familiarize yourself with the road signs and driving regulations in Italy, try to be as courteous as possible. Should you get into an accident, knowing where your documents are (drivers license, registration, and proof of insurance) and what they mean will smooth the process and prevent unnecessary fines.

Helping Your House

Electricity/Appliances



In Italy the electrical current operates on 220 volts and a 50 Hz cycle as opposed to the 110v/60Hz in the U.S. In order to run electrical items with a different voltage set up you will need a transformer. Some appliances have a 110/220 switch or are compatible with either set up, but the switch is sometimes not easy to find (some desktop computers). Consider purchasing a (heavy) 220/240V//110/120V voltage converter from your country of origin for use on demanding outlets that feed into multiple and important items such as your home computer/light switch/television. Make sure to check all your electrical and electronic appliance documentation before plugging in and switching on or you might end up with a very expensive piece of junk! In addition, due to the expense of electricity, most Roman homes are not equipped with as many kilowatts, therefore you may find you have to unplug some “power suckers” in order to plug in others. Dishwashers, microwaves, air conditioning units, and clothes dryers are common culprits of power outages, so it is helpful to know where your breaker box is and how to reset the switches.

TV, DVD



The Italian system for TV is PAL, while in the US they use NTSC. If you buy a DVD player things get a bit more complicated, since there is the PAL or NTSC problem, as well as different region codes: Europe is region 2, the U.S region 1. If you want to watch all your DVDs, make sure you get a multi-system AND a multi-region one.

Dryers (Asciugatrice)

Do not search for the clothes dryer in your rented furnished apartment: Italians simply never use them! If you are desperate to get one, there are only two types on sale in Italy, either vented or condensation. The vented type requires a hole in the wall, window or door to the outside. Careful with your rented apartments! Condensation types are easier to install, but they work on regular electricity not on gas, so make sure you get one that is energy friendly.



If you wondered why Italian supermarket display 10 sq meters or more of liquid fabric softeners (*ammorbidente*) soon you will know! Very hard (calcium-based) Roman water, (see below) along with the intense sun create towels that stand up on their own and really cry out for a lot of *ammorbidente*. Not surprisingly, fabric softener sheets for the dryer are not available in Italian supermarkets.

Calcare/Lime Scale



Tap water in Rome, although safe to drink, is very hard (has lots of minerals in it, especially calcium). It is normal to experience problems with calcium deposits or *calcare*, as the Italians call it. Do not use tap water to fill up your steam iron or other appliances that require water fillings, but instead purchase *acqua distillata* or *demineralizzata* (distilled water) from your local supermarket. Adding a decalcifier to tap water does not really work as well.

For your electric coffee maker, use bottled mineral water that says *acqua oligominerale*, which means very low in mineral contents as distilled water is not fit for drinking.

To help fight mineral build-up on the heating element of your washing machine try using Calfort powder, liquid or tablets every wash, the powder goes in with the detergent, the tablet with the clothes. It will not affect the color of the wash.

The dishwasher has a special compartment where you may add *Sale Per Lavastoviglie*, which will have to be refilled as needed (usually one packet every couple of weeks). Use it, together with the *brillantante* (Finish is a good brand), to have your dishes sparkling clean.

If you are looking for a product to remove calcium stains or build-up from faucets and showerheads, or from any other metal surface, try Viakal in the plastic blue squeeze bottle, or Smac (check bottles to mention anticalcare on the label). You can also use simple white vinegar and some elbow grease, if you want a more natural and environment-friendly product.

Mommy, how do you say notebook in Italian?

This is a question you might be addressed with very often. Here is a list of how to say in Italian what your children will find in their School Supply Lists:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • lined notebooks | = <i>quaderni a righe</i> |
| • notebook with squares | = <i>quaderno con quadretti</i> |
| • A4 size ring binder with dividers | = <i>classificatore A4 con divisori</i> |
| • supply of lined or plain A4 paper | = <i>fogli rigati o semplici</i> |
| • folder for carrying homework papers | = <i>una cartellina rigida per compiti</i> |
| - safe scissors | = <i>forbici (con punte arrotondate)</i> |
| - eraser | = <i>una gomma da cancellare</i> |
| - pencil sharpener | = <i>un temperamatite</i> |
| - pencil case with pencils, markers, wax crayons | = <i>un astuccio con matite,
pennarelli, pastelli a cera</i> |
| - blue , black, red pens | = <i>penne blu, nere, rosse</i> |
| - centimeter ruler | = <i>un righello</i> |
| - calculator | = <i>una calcolatrice</i> |
| - glue stick | = <i>uno stick di colla</i> |
| - diary for homework assignment | = <i>un diario</i> |
| - book bag/backpack | = <i>uno zaino</i> |
| - protractor | = <i>un goniometro</i> |
| - compass | = <i>un compasso</i> |

Loose – leaf paper (fogli) and binders in Italy are a different size called “A4” and have four holes. You cannot get US-standard (8.5” x 11”) replacement paper in Italy.

Library Resources

After the apartment is found, internet access organized, and your favorite café bar decided upon, the next question is: “Where do we get English language books and films in this wonderful city?”

AOSR High School and Elementary School Libraries

The HS Library has approximately 5,000 reference volumes. Together with the ES Library, the total books in the lending stacks number 25,000. In addition, there are monthly magazine subscriptions and technological help with internet access and color scanners. Parents have donated entertainment DVDs as well, allowing teachers to borrow entertainment DVDs to which they might not otherwise have access. The ES Library has age-appropriate literature for the Pre-K to Grade 5 student. These books are available for loan to families as well!

St. Patrick's English-Language Library (formerly Santa Susanna Catholic Church Lending Library)

Recently reopened in its new location at the Saint Patrick's Catholic American Church of Rome on Via Boncompagni, N.31, near the US Embassy and the Via Veneto, this Lending Library offers an oasis to English readers and keeps a regularly updated selection of American and British book titles. Other subjects include a large selection on Italy, biographies, romances, mysteries and thrillers. The library is open to people of all nationalities and religions. You must join the library, with memberships available for three months (27.50 euros), six months (35 euros) or twelve months (45 euros), with an additional but returnable deposit of 40 euros. The hours, terms of lending and directions can be found on the website: www.stpatricksamericarome.org/index.php/parish-ministries/library

The British Council

Located at Via Quattro Fontane #20, the British Council media library has a large collection of videos and some DVDs, which can be rented for one or two weeks. They have an extensive Shakespeare collection, including BBC productions and rooms of linguistic study resources for teachers of English. The cost for full annual borrowing privileges is €80. More info is available at www.britishcouncil.org/it/italy-english-rome-sac.htm tel. 06-478141

Other Libraries and Resources

The two following libraries have extensive collections but do not have lending privileges. Research can be done in the reading rooms.

1) The American Academy on the Gianiculum Hill (tel 06-58461) has a 130,000 volume collection of classical studies, art and architecture. They have two reading rooms, one of which was designed by acclaimed American architect and alumnus, Michael Graves.

2) The Centro per Studi Americani (National Center for American Studies) on Via Caetana near Largo Argentina is a beautiful building and a great tourist destination as well.

The British Council and the American Academy both have cultural evenings including “meet the author” usually in English or Bilingual English/Italian. The American Studies Center also hosts seminars and “meet the author” evenings, usually in Italian.

Bookstores

For younger readers the **Bibli Bookstore** (www.bibli.it, Italian only) in Trastevere hosts a story hour every Sunday afternoon, sometimes in English. It has a cinema, a live music venue and a tea room.

The Lion Bookstore on Via dei Greci, 33 near the Spanish Steps is run by AOSR alumni. They have a wonderful selection of new English language titles and a gallery/exhibition space. Tel. 06-3265-4007.

Feltrinelli International on Via V. E. Orlando (Piazza Repubblica) and the **Almost Corner Bookstore** near the Spanish Steps also have good English non-fiction and fiction collections for sale. **The Little Reader** is a unique bookstore for children in central Rome- Via Conte Verde, 66.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for appointing the Head of School, strategic planning, and approving the annual budget.

The objective of the AOSR Board of Trustees is to advance the school's mission by selecting, evaluating and supporting the Head of School, planning strategically for the school's long term well-being and sustainability as an institution and securing the resources necessary to operate and perpetuate the school. Abstaining from any engagement in day-to-day school operations, the AOSR Board, like other private, independent, and international school governing boards, delegates management to its only employee, the Head of School, who is the Executive Officer for the Board and responsible for implementing Board policies and, in turn, for the school's curriculum, personnel and programs.

The Board adheres to standards of good practice in governance established by the school's accreditors and other international organizations such as ECIS, AAIE, and NAIS in how it goes about its work. This includes exercising fiduciary oversight of institutional performance. All trustees are skilled and recognized specialists in fields identified as necessary for the sustainability of the school. They serve as volunteers without compensation in any form.

The AOSR Board of Trustees currently consists of 12 voting members plus the Head of School who is a non-voting member. Twelve trustees are elected to a three-year term and may serve at any given time for a maximum of two consecutive terms. Up to six trustees may be appointed to the Board annually. The Board of Trustees meets approximately six times per year. Faculty representatives are invited to attend open sessions.

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To contact the AOSR Board of Trustees, please write at aosrboard@aosr.org.