

Rudolf Steiner High School

Senior Class Italy Trip Chaperones

The Rudolf Steiner High School can only take trips, and provide this valuable international experience to students, with the support of adult chaperones, and we appreciate your interest in participating. The Italy Trip, while enjoyable for the adult chaperone, is also ten days of student supervision, teaching and constant interaction. We have laid out these processes and expectations to ensure that all chaperones understand their role in the group and what to expect.

A. Number of chaperones needed:

Each year the number of chaperones varies depending on the number of students participating. The core group goes every year, and then additional chaperones are chosen.

- Educational Leaders – Two art teachers: Elena Efimova and Sudee Taormina. Two history teachers: Margot Amrine and Robert Black
- Bursar – One administrative person: Siân Owen-Cruise
- Student Support – A minimum of two chaperones who takes primary responsibility for student physical and emotional health. Two student support chaperones can support a class of 20 students, an additional one should be considered for classes from 20 – 25, and classes over 25 require three student support chaperones. One of the student support chaperones should be an alumni member at least 21 years of age

B. Process for choosing chaperones:

- Educational Leaders – Changes in this group are only made as roles change in the school. For instance, the new High School history teacher will work his/her way into this role (probably accompanying the group as a student support chaperone for a minimum of one year before replacing Margot Amrine or Robert Black)
- Bursar – Changes are made here as necessary, with an eye to ensuring that continuity and familiarity with the Italian systems are preserved
- Student Support –
 - Alumni Chaperone: Any alumni of at least 21 years who are interested in accompanying the trip should contact Siân Owen-Cruise. The Educational leaders and bursar will meet each fall to choose the alumni chaperone for the coming spring trip. The choice will be made based on the gender balance needed and the ability of the applicant to meet the social and practical needs of the students traveling on the trip that year
 - Additional chaperones: Chaperones are ideally RSSAA faculty and staff, full or part-time. Anyone interested should let Siân Owen-Cruise know by the summer of the previous year, and decisions about who will accompany the group will be made by November 1 preceding the trip

- Decisions about which interested individuals will accompany the trip will be made in the following way, priority will be given to:
 - Any individual who is preparing to take on an educational or bursar role
 - The teacher who took the senior class through the eighth grade
 - Full time High School teachers who have not previously accompanied the trip
 - Full time Lower School class teachers who are approaching the sixth and/or seventh grade year

C. Roles of chaperones:

- Educational Leaders:
 - Art Teachers develop assignments, order materials and provide examples of sketches. They teach the art of plein air drawing on site and determine the length and venue for sketching assignments. Each art teacher checks student artwork and helps to organize an art show in each city. Art teachers should have extensive understanding of the museums and major sites of Italy. Perhaps most importantly, student sketch books are examples of the culmination of the 12-year art curriculum at RSSAA; each art teacher should have a deep knowledge of this curriculum.
 - History Teachers must have an extensive knowledge of architecture, art history or the Italian Renaissance. Each history teacher should be able to link the students' experience to the RSHS curriculum and have an understanding of the evolution of consciousness. Each history teacher should have an extensive familiarity with the four Italian cities, in history and today. History teachers are required to lead tours and walks. They should be able to refine the schedule spontaneously. When there are strikes or closings they should know what to substitute. History teachers also read student journals.
 - Educational leaders also provide student supervision as they lead lessons, tours and activities and join the group for meals.
- Bursar: The bursar organizes the finances for the trip and ensures that the practical arrangements are smooth and support the progress of the group. This includes monitoring cash flow, handling currency exchange, establishing a budget, paying hotel, convent and restaurant bills, tipping etc. Travel arrangements are made by the bursar. The bursar may request help with reservations, and purchasing of tickets, groceries and meals, etc. The bursar and core group members collect and hold student passports.
- Student Support: The student support chaperones take responsibility for room assignments, wakeup calls, accompanying night walks (a history teacher leads), room checks, student welfare and ensuring that students do not become separated from the group. They work throughout the day but are the primary supervisors in the evenings when the educational leaders are preparing the lessons for the coming day. The student support chaperones are responsible for ensuring that the students respect quiet hours

and are where they are expected to be during free time. If a student needs to leave the group activities due to illness or inappropriate behavior, a student support chaperone will remain with him/her in the convent or hotel. If a student needs medical care or to be hospitalized, a student support chaperone will be with him/her at all times. If a student is unable to continue with the group because of a contract violation, a student support chaperone will accompany him/her back to the United States (not the alumni chaperone)

Expectations of all Chaperones

- As we ask the students, chaperones will refrain from the use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs throughout the trip
- As students are segregated in the hotels and convents by gender, and students need to have comfortable access to same-sex chaperones at night, all chaperones will sleep in shared rooms with other same-sex chaperones. This applies even if a married couple accompanies the group
- Chaperones are expected to stay with the group and actively supervise unless the full group of chaperones is aware that an individual chaperone is taking some time off. This includes situations where students are given some individual freedom, such as in the marketplace in Florence or within a particular museum. Chaperones should stay in the same location as the student and ensure that they are easily findable by any student who needs assistance