

BOARDING

A GETTING READY GUIDE

ARRIVAL

STEP BY STEP

SPENDING MONEY

WEEKLY ALLOWANCES

PACKING

ESSENTIALS AND DECORATIONS

HEALTH

DAILY MEDS AND SPECIAL DIETS

HOUSING

ROOMS, ROOMMATES, AND MORE

TRAVEL

BOARDING TRIPS



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Boarding

CHECKLIST

- 1** Read the Getting Ready Guide
- 2** Fill Out the Roommate Questionnaire on the Parents' Portal
- 3** Sign-Up For Optional Weekend Boarding Trips on the Parents' Portal
- 4** Read the Boarding Handbook, Sign, and Send the Handbook form found on the Parents' Portal
- 5** Submit Your Child's Medical Form on Open Apply
- 6** Open a Supply & Expense Account



Arrival

The Boarding Department opens for new and returning students on Monday, August 31. We ask students to arrive between 10 AM and 2 pm. We welcome parents on opening day and have several events planned for boarding parents on August 31st. We recommend arriving several days before school opens to spend time with your child in Rome and get to know the city together before they move into St. Stephen's. There are a variety of hotels and Airbnbs close to school, in the Aventino/San Saba and Testaccio areas if you would like to begin getting comfortable with our neighborhood.

On opening day students should expect to begin a full immersion into residential life at St. Stephen's. These first days will be filled with exciting social, cultural, practical and recreational activities. There will be narrow windows of visiting time for families staying on in Rome after opening day which will be communicated in the final Orientation Schedule.

Please note that the school does not permit overnight sign-outs and special nighttime plans during the first three weeks as this is a crucial time of adjustment and acclimation to the boarding routine. You can best support our efforts and your child's adjustment by separating on opening day and allowing them to be fully immersed in residential life.

Above
Boarding Prefects welcoming new students In August, 2019

**“I chose to come to St. Stephens because it was something new and different that I could do on my own. I also liked the idea of coming to a new city, especially Rome, and being independent”
- Jeske**



Parent Schedule on Opening Day

The Boarding Department is delighted to invite boarding parents to the following events:

10 am - 3:00 PM

Help your child unpack and settle into their room

3:00 PM

Suggested goodbye time - Parents will have a number of events scheduled on move-in day after 2pm, but these will be separate from their child's schedule. While there will likely be times later in the day where parents see their child, it will be brief and in the midst of other activities. By following our recommendation, you can create a quiet, private space to say your goodbyes.

3:00 - 4:00 PM

Drop-in meetings with Academic Office, Nurses, Boarding Head, Business Office, refreshments in the school bar.

4:00 PM

Meeting on transitions with one of the school counselors in the Chapel

6:00 - 7:00 PM

Cocktail with the Boarding Faculty, key administrators and Head of School in the Cultural Center

7:00 PM

Optional gathering for boarding parents at Boarding Admissions Officer, Jennifer Walbridge's house. Departure from the Cultural Center at 7 PM. Ms. Walbridge's house is a short walk from school.



Returning students

There are updates and changes to the boarding program and routine each year, which we communicate in our opening meetings. In terms of the initial outings, recreational, and cultural events, as a returner, your child's role in setting a positive tone and helping the new boarders acclimate is crucial. The best way to support our community is by separating from your child on opening day and allowing them to be fully immersed in the life of the school.

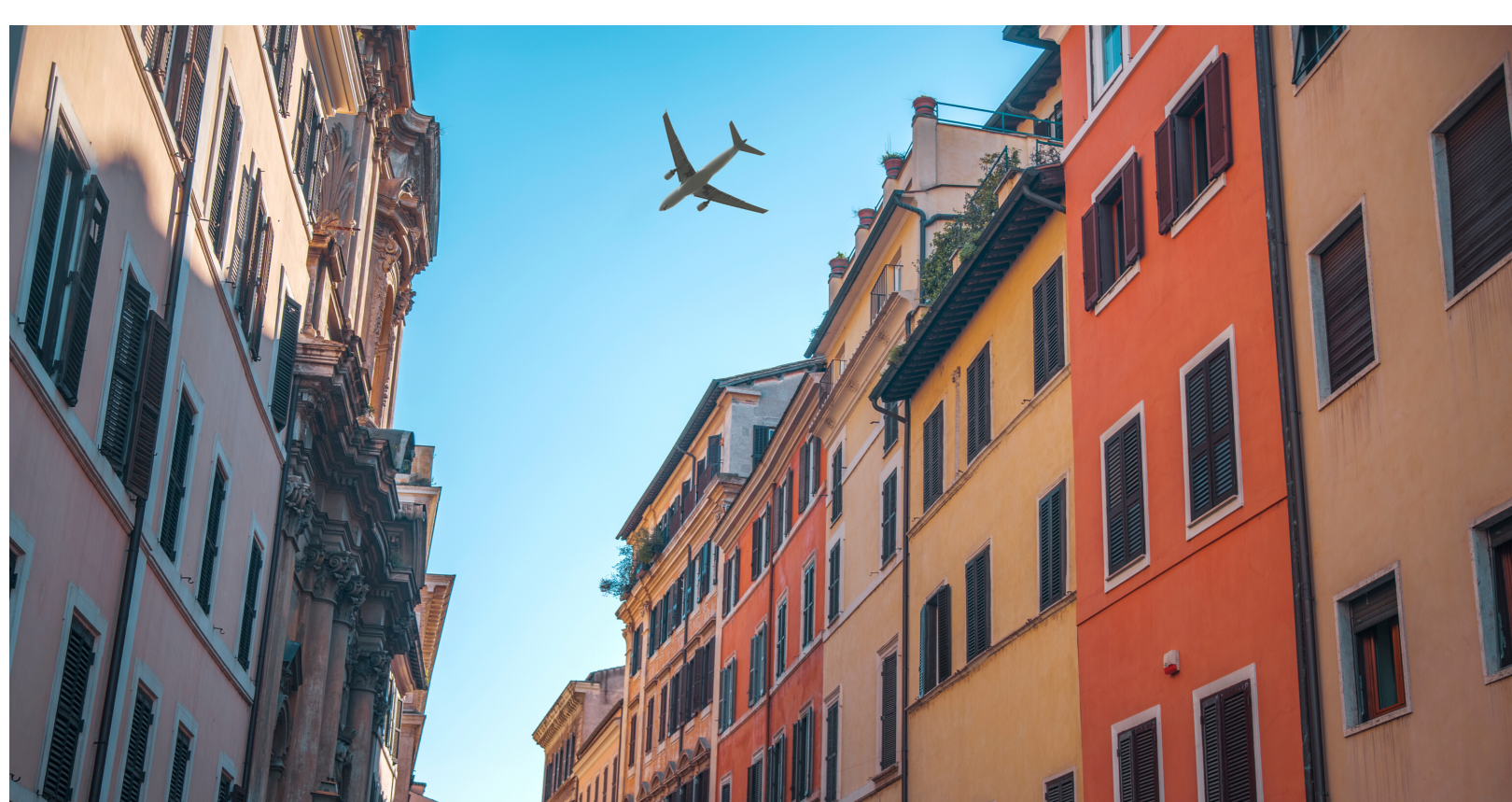
Saying Goodbye

Parents will have a number of events scheduled on move-in day after 3 PM, but these will be separate from their child's schedule. While there will likely be times later in the day where parents see their child, it will be brief and in the midst of other activities. For this reason, we suggest saying goodbye to your child at 3 PM, this also makes it easier to create a quiet, private space to say your goodbyes.

“St. Stephen’s was home, family, discipline, limits, love, understanding, challenges, friends and mental structure. My kids today are what they are, are where they are and have what they have thanks to their development of strength, knowledge, teamwork, and the capacity to maximize opportunities.”

Maria Noero

Parent of Isabella '15 and Andres '19



Unaccompanied Arrival

Many students arrive unaccompanied. Please send your child's travel itinerary to mike.mottola@sssrome.it and we will arrange for a boarding faculty member and driver to meet your child at the airport. The driver will be holding a St. Stephen's sign in the arrivals area after luggage collection and customs. We are delighted to provide this service on opening day for unaccompanied boarders.

During the academic year, students make their own arrangements to the airport or train station. The Boarding Department can assist by booking a private driver for transfers to the airport.

Additional accompaniment services can be arranged through our trusted car service. For an additional fee, drivers can park at the airport and accompany students to the check-in desk. Contact the Boarding Department to make arrangements during the school year.

Shipping Items

Contact boarding@sssrome.it to arrange any deliveries to the school. Small shipments from within the EU are generally easy to accommodate. Anything from outside of the EU can be complicated. One service recommended to us by a boarding family is Luggage Forward. Couriers may or may not handle customs fees on the receiving end. We advise against having packages shipped to the School from outside of the EU. Deliveries from outside the EU require payment upon receipt for customs duties and import tariffs. The school's front office cannot manage payments for packages received from outside the EU.

What to Pack

ESSENTIALS AND OPTIONAL ITEMS

Essentials



Bedding, any required academic materials and homework, any medication, toiletries and towels, clothing for all weather, a phone, chargers suitable for European outlets, lightweight luggage suitable for trips between three to seven days, comfortable walking shoes, slippers, and earphones/headphones.

Clothing



Clothing that works for all seasons. A bathing suit for the orientation trip to Sperlonga. A heavy jacket and scarf for the winter. A mid-weight jacket for late fall and early winter. Warm, comfortable clothes for the dorms. Remember that it is common for temperatures to be in the mid 90s Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius) in the month of September. During winter the temperature rarely drops to zero degrees, but we live in an open building with high ceilings and tile floors, so it can feel very cold.

A tip from one boarder: "Bring enough clothing so that you can survive 10 days to two weeks without doing a wash."

Optional



Ski/snowboard gear, a monitor, speakers, musical instruments, bathrobe, shower caddy, sewing kit, journal, a good water bottle, an umbrella, stationery if you like writing letters. Any other electric appliances you may need: hair dryer, hair straightener, hair curler compatible with 240-Volt European current

Electronics



Earphones/headphones so you can listen to music or Skype without disturbing your roommates/hallmates. Noise cancelling headphones are a nice addition if you are very sensitive to noise.

We strongly recommend buying the European version of the plugs for your electronics (cell phones, laptops and other devices) and appliances. Try ordering these on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [amazon.it](https://www.amazon.it). Other European appliances can be purchased online before arrival or at a shop near the school upon arrival.

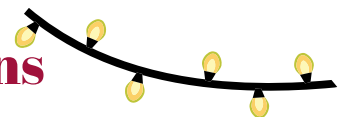
Please avoid using US to European plug adapters and transformers, as these frequently blow the fuses in the student rooms and are problematic not only because of the voltage but also because they do not fit properly into our outlets.

Footwear

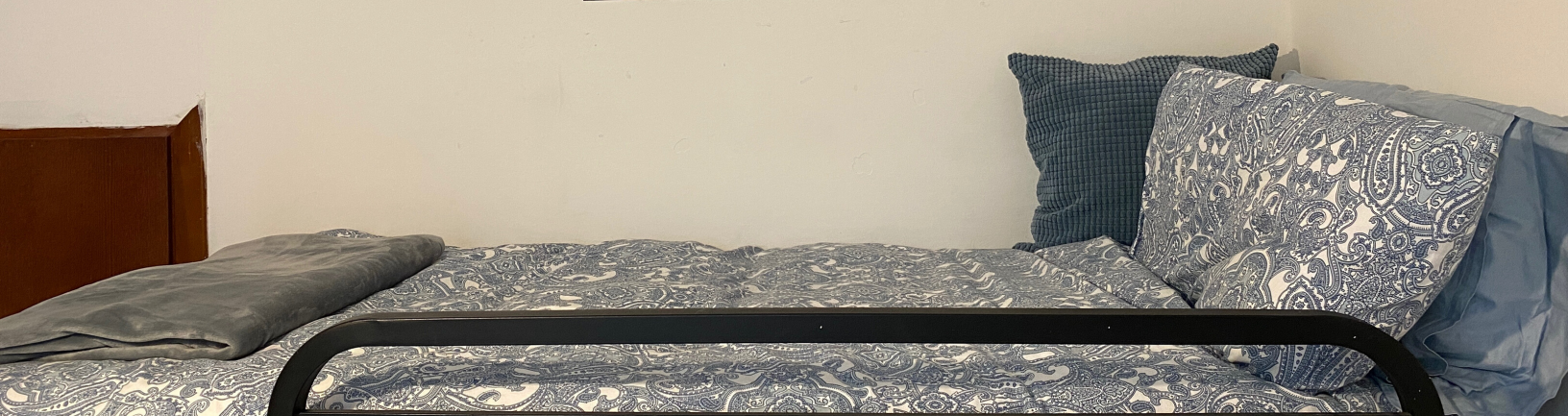


Comfortable shoes - We do a lot of walking and Rome's cobblestones can take their toll on your feet! Comfortable slippers to walk around your room and the building at night.

Decorations



A few items to personalize your dorm room to make it feel like home: posters, pictures of friends and family, your favorite tea (maybe something only available in your country) or a calendar that reminds you of home.



Sheets and Linens

We recommend bringing at least one set of single sheets, a duvet cover and towels; duvets and a second set of sheets may be purchased at IKEA during orientation. The school also has extra duvets, fitted sheets, regular sheets, and heavy blankets if anyone is in need. Dormitory beds are singles and measure 99 cm x 206 cm or 39 inch x 81 inch (equivalent to a U.S. "twin extra long"). Mattress covers, pillows and pillowcases are provided.

Laptops

Laptops are required. The school has a Bring Your Own Laptop Policy, which can be found in the Student Handbook.

Storing Valuables

Each student is given their own personal mini-safe for storing valuables, money, and passports.

The School Provides

Desk lamps, a power strip, recycling bins, laundry bags, and mini-safes. We can also provide towels and bedding if needed.

Buy in Rome

You do not need to bring everything to Rome! Your child will have a chance to visit Ikea during orientation and ample opportunities to go shopping in general throughout the year. Most essentials including dorm supplies, school supplies, and bedding can be picked up at our neighborhood stores.

Cell Phones in Italy

All students must have a cell phone with a SIM card from Italy or another European Union (EU) country. Cellular coverage is very reliable throughout Rome and Italian cities in general. Within one to two days of arrival as a basic measure of student safety, all students must have a functioning phone with an Italian or EU number so that students and Boarding Faculty can be in touch.

We have an outing to the cell phone store on day one of orientation. It is quite quick and easy to register for a SIM card and data plan here in Italy, provided that your child has an "unlocked" smartphone (see note about unlocked phones below). The monthly cost varies by provider, but is usually no more than 15 EUR a month for a sizeable data package (30+ GB). All students attend the outing, even if they already have a working phone.

Many students would like to bring their Smartphone from home. We strongly recommend checking with your cellular provider at home to ensure that your child's phone will work with an Italian SIM card. This will require that your child's phone is "unlocked" depending on the model.





Providing Spending Money

There are many options for your child here. Some families opt to open their own bank account within Italy and provide their students an ATM card. Other children may spend or withdraw from a bank account based in their country of origin, but may be required to pay additional fees related to foreign transactions. Finally, many families use the school's allowance system, wiring money to a school account, from which their children can withdraw (more below). This last option is highly recommended.

We strongly recommend setting up a Supply & Expense account with the school for your child's spending money, to pay for trips, fees for receiving packages, doctor's visits/medicine, Italian stay permit for non-EU citizens, and more. The suggested initial deposit is 1500 EUR. Parents wire funds to the school and the business office sets up an account for their child.

You may also start a Supply & Expense account with a cash deposit with the business office at school (euros only). Unfortunately, the business office cannot fund accounts by credit or debit card, checks or foreign currency.

Students request weekly allowances on Tuesday and receive them on Thursday. More information on Supply & Expense accounts is provided in the Boarding Handbook.

Use the following bank information to start an account:

Name: St Stephen's School

Address: Via Aventina 3 Roma, IT 00153

Bank: Banca Popolare di Sondrio

Cod. IBAN:

IT16U0569603229000003901X16Cod.

BIC: POSOIT22

Please note that the account above is for supply and expense accounts only. Please send a copy of the transaction receipt to mike.mottola@sssrome.it and elisabetta.longarini@sssrome.it.

If you would like to place a limit on your child's requests, please contact mike.mottola@sssrome.it. If your child's request exceeds the limit, you will be contacted and asked to authorize the withdrawal.



Daily Medication

All medications must be registered with the nurse and will be stored in the nurse's office. To ensure the safety of all our students, we ask that students refrain from storing medications of any kind in their rooms unless specifically instructed to do so by the nurse. Medication instructions must be communicated to nurse@sssrome.it and on the Health Form before the start of the school year. Daily medications will be administered by the nurse in their office or, in the case of evening medications, by a boarding faculty member.

Allergies

All allergies (i.e. food allergies, intolerances, medications, bee stings, etc) must be accompanied by a medical statement or certificate issued by a physician and must be signed and stamped, as per the requirements in our Health Forms. The nursing office will coordinate the appropriate meals to be served in conjunction with our caterer.

Health

Our Medical Director and nurses provide around the clock care to all students. Some evenings and weekends, one of the nurses is physically present as "on duty" boarding faculty. On nights and weekends when nurses are not physically present, on-duty boarding faculty can always reach the nurses for virtual audio or video consultations anytime of day or night by calling the nursing phone.

Special Diets

Our caterer accommodates special diets (halal, vegan, dairy free, etc.) Special dietary requests are communicated to the nurse's office by emailing nurse@sssrome.it. The nurse's office will handle any necessary follow-up with the student, family and with the caterer to produce special meals at all mealtimes.



International Health Insurance

The School requires boarders to be covered by a private health insurance policy. The School does not use the national health system unless there is a medical emergency that requires immediate attention. We refer boarding students to private doctors and private clinics. Please contact nurse@sssrome.it for more information on insurance companies that offer international coverage.

The school does not assist families in signing up for doctors in the national health system. European families that would like to sign their child up for the national health program are encouraged to come to Rome well in advance to accompany students through all of the necessary steps to do so.

Where to Look for Guidance

St. Stephen's does not officially endorse any particular insurance plan. Boarding families have used the following providers in the past but our mentioning of these programs does not in any way constitute medical or legal advice. Programs include [CISI](#) (note that CISI is not available to residents of Connecticut and New York), [CIGNA](#), and [Allianz](#). Some families report that they have been able to provide health insurance coverage for their child in Italy through the purchase of add-on packages with their existing family health care providers.



Housing: Room Assignments

Students are housed in either double or triple rooms (with preference given to older students). We have a boys hall, a girls hall, an inclusive all-gender hall, and an off-campus apartment for our older, returning students. Returning students may request to room with someone prior to the start of the year. Otherwise, we do our best to provide them with a suitable match via our roommate survey. Students fill out a detailed Online Roommate Questionnaire, which can be found on the Parents' Portal. The Boarding Department reviews all of the questionnaires to match roommates, making every attempt to pair students with similar lifestyle habits. When possible, we match students of the same grade and separate non-native English speakers who speak the same language. The housing plan is finalized only a few days before move-in and roommate information is not made available until move-in day.

Please note that most beds are top bunks with a large desk below and require a ladder to reach them. Please contact the boarding head well in advance if you need to request a bottom bunk for medical reasons. We are a small community with very limited flexibility in our housing options and may not be able to accommodate requests.

Room Layout

Students are housed in either double or triple rooms (with preference given to older students). Most dorm rooms come in one of two styles: rooms with raised beds and desks underneath, and rooms with traditional bunk beds and separate desks. Every student has a large wardrobe that has a central rack to hang clothes, drawers below, and a shelf above. The wardrobe, desk and bed are the major pieces in each room. There are also two drawers which go under the bed or desk. In terms of decorations and rugs, most roommates discuss how they want to decorate their rooms, and then they pick up whatever they need at Ikea during opening week. Additionally, all students received a laundry bag and a power strip. The room comes with a desk chair and recycling bins as recycling is mandatory in Italy. [Helpful student-made video of one style of dorm room](#)



Laundry

We have three laundry machines and two dryers on site, and we have a rotating weekly schedule which allows each boarder to do laundry at least once a week. If they miss their slot for some reason, there are a limited number of free spots available. Students are responsible for purchasing their own detergent and doing their own laundry. The boarding faculty and returning students help new students learn their way around the laundry room during orientation. While there are no laundromats close to school, there are several dry cleaners about a 5 - 10 minute walk from school.



Safety

All efforts are made to ensure the health, safety and security of the boarders. In this section we outline a few of the measure that are in place to reduce risk and provide the safest possible environment for your children.

Adult Presence

Boarding Faculty and Residential Assistants reside on the hallways with the boarders, should the students need immediate assistance or emotional support. For unexpected emergencies, a faculty member and nurse will always be reachable by phone, no matter the hour. Our faculty and nurse are all instructed on any medical conditions/needs the boarders have.

Safety Workshops

During orientation, we run a number of workshops on safety and address this topic with a multifaceted approach, including group discussions led by the Boarding Faculty, student leaders, the Head of School, the school counselors, and the Regional Security Officer from the U.S. Embassy. We revisit the topic of safety periodically throughout the year. Rome is very safe but it is still a big city where it is important to exercise vigilance, be aware of our surroundings, and follow common-sense safety guidelines.

Orientation

During our three week orientation period to start the year, we build community and orient students to the neighborhood, the city, their academic and boarding life, and their support network. During the opening weeks, students spend most of their time in structured activities under adult supervision in order to give them time to acclimate, settle in, and understand their surroundings. As students become more comfortable in the boarding community, the school, the neighborhood and the city, they are given more independence.



Daily Check-Ins

Once orientation ends and the normal routine begins, there are regular check-ins with students built into the schedule.

During the week, after the school day ends we expect students back on campus for dinner (latest 6:50 PM) where there is an in-person check in with each student. We supervise younger students during weeknight study hall (7 to 9 PM), and check in with every student during study hall and each night around 10:30 PM.

On weekends, we allow boarding students to sign out overnight to day student families provided they have organized this by email during the week and that we have adequate contact information for the family to whom they are signing out (more on next page). Finally, following our three week orientation period at the start of the year, in allowing students to go off campus, we require that they travel in groups and be reachable by cell phone at all times.

Our Campus

St. Stephen's is located in the San Saba neighborhood, one of the safest, most desirable areas to live in Rome.

Our campus is monitored by security guards on site for most of the day and evening, and there are security patrols during the night and CCTV monitoring remotely when guards are not present.

The boarding faculty and building custodian live on campus in close proximity to the students. There is swipe card access for boarders and boarding faculty only to the boarding hallways. There is keyed entry to the boarding rooms and each student has a mini-safe for small valuables, important documents and money.



Signing Out

Students may sign out to stay with day student host families on Friday and/or Saturday nights. Adult presence and supervision is required for all overnight sign-outs. Students who intend to sign out must finalize this process by the Thursday afternoon before the weekend. It is up to them to contact the host family, who must email the head of boarding confirming that they will host the student that weekend. Students are expected to return by dinner time Sunday night at the latest, unless they have arranged otherwise with the boarding head. Full details on this policy are available in the Boarding Handbook.

Medical Care

Our nurses are available on campus during the week generally from 8 AM to 5 PM. The nurses and our campus medical director, an English speaking, licensed Italian physician, are all available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Students needing medical care alert the boarding faculty who call the nurses or medical director for assistance. Students requiring immediate medical assistance are accompanied to a private hospital with English-speaking staff. Screened school employees serving as medical chaperones or the boarding faculty accompany students to off-campus appointments.



Travel: Optional Weekend Trips

Above
Boarders In Florence In 2018

Each year we have some wonderful optional weekend trips on offer. In small groups, we set out to explore major cities as well as some destinations that are off the beaten track. Boarding trips are optional and carry an additional cost, which varies based on the destination. Sign-ups take place before the start of each academic year. The sign-up form can be found on the Parents Portal.

The ideal number of trips differs for each student. If you are considering signing up for all of the trips, for example, think about balancing out weekend trips with your workload and also consider the number of free weekends that you would like to have in Rome to relax and explore. Also take into account that you will be taking part in week-long school-wide Spring Trips.

That said, many semester and year-long students choose to sign-up for most or all optional boarding trips to take advantage of their limited time in Rome and Italy.

IB juniors and seniors tend to sign up for fewer trips because of the heavier workload for these students.

It is important to remember that once you are signed up for a trip, generally hotel and train reservations are made based on your participation. Students who come off trips are responsible for paying any non-refundable bookings made in their name.

All boarders participate in the weekend trip to Sperlonga in September. Here, students have the chance to explore an Ancient Roman site, relax on the beach, and unwind after their first three weeks. Past boarding trips have included a trip to the natural hot springs of Bagno Vignoni In Tuscany, weekend trips to Milan, Florence, Cinqueterre and Athens, a ski trip in Northern Italy and a Naples day trip.

"I love traveling, but I always find myself wishing I could spend a longer amount of time in the places that I go... My desire to immerse myself in a traveling experience and in what I am learning brought me [to Rome]."
- R.L.



Who to Contact

- Study visas: Boarding Admissions Officer: Jennifer Walbridge - jennifer.walbridge@sssrome.it
- Academic program/schedule: Academic Affairs Office deborah.dostert@sssrome.it and tina.samath@sssrome.it
- Boarding program (rooms, package deliveries, boarding orientation schedule, special permissions for nighttime or weekend leave, arrivals to school, general info on boarding, allowance accounts, boarding travel and trips): Boarding Head - mike.mottola@sssrome.it
- Student Health (general health, special dietary needs, medicine, health forms, health insurance) School Nurse - nurse@sssrome.it
- Tuition payments/Business Office: elisabetta.longarini@sssrome.it