



# *The Minister of Education and Merit*

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF ADOPTED PUPILS<sup>1</sup> 2023**

(Update of the Guidelines for promoting the right to education of adopted pupils - note prot. no.7443 of 18/12/2014)

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<sup>1</sup> The updating of the Guidelines was handled by the Joint Committee established by D.D. no. 2624 of 28/12/2021, envisaged by the Ministry of Education/Commission for International Adoptions (MI/CAI) Memorandum of Understanding signed on 22/11/2021, with the contribution of the Italian Ombudsperson for Children and Adolescents



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The reality of adoption<sup>2</sup> has long been a widespread phenomenon in our society, and, in addition to its clear value as tool for Children, it also makes a significant contribution to our country's cultural and social growth. From 2000 to 2018, approximately 49,000 children and youths were adopted internationally (IA), and approximately 19,000 children and youths were adopted domestically (DA) during the same period. As a result, the presence of adopted pupils in Italian schools has also become a quantitatively significant phenomenon. Moreover, in many cases the issue of schooling poses itself as an urgent matter, because many of these children are adopted at school age, or otherwise close to the age of 6, especially those adopted internationally, although this is increasingly also the case for children adopted domestically.

It must be considered that adoption does not entail uniformity in terms of situationality and consequent needs, and that the children may have very different conditions, which, if placed along a continuum, can range from cases of complete and positive adaptation to ones that are highly problematic. In fact, it is not uncommon to encounter children and youths who display average or even above-average psychological well-being and scholastic performance. It is therefore extremely important to avoid any pre-judgement, and not to automatically presume that the children will have problems.

That said, it is nevertheless undeniable that being adopted is associated with certain risk and vulnerability factors, which must be recognised and taken into account, so that a school reception methodology can be structured to ensure the well-being of these pupils as soon as they enter the classroom, in the conviction that a good start is the best way to ensure a positive scholastic experience in the years to come. In this sense, schools must be prepared to welcome adopted children from Italy and abroad, and to build useful tools, not only of an organisational nature, but also of an educational and relational nature, for the benefit of the children and youths, and their families. Adequate practices and tools must also naturally be ensured during the post-enrolment phases, with particular attention being paid to transitions from one level to the next.

This document was drawn up in 2014, and has now been updated, with the aim of providing knowledge and theoretical/methodological guidelines to help schools provide the children and youths, and their families, with additional tools for their growth paths.

### 1.1. The characteristics of adoption

In order to fully understand the phenomenon, it is appropriate to begin with the data<sup>3</sup> on international adoption. From 2012 to 2021, a total of 17,610 boys and girls were adopted in Italy. Over time, the ages of the boys and girls adopted internationally have gradually increased. The average age of the children adopted was 6.6 years in 2019, and 6.8 years in 2020. In 2020, the percentage of children over 10 years of age also increased (16% as opposed to 14.2% in 2019), as did the number of children 5 to 9 years of age (55.8% as opposed to 52.5% the previous year). The average age of entry is particularly critical with regard to the Italian education system, which, on an almost daily basis, has to handle requests for the enrolment and placement of children and youths with special needs in its various schools.

In addition to these figures, the domestic adoption figures also showed an increase in the adoption of older children, sometimes having been born and lived for a period abroad, and often with special needs.

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<sup>2</sup> Law No. 184 of 4 May 1983, as amended by Law No. 476 of 31 December 1998, Law No. 149 of 28 March 2001 “*The child's right to a family*” and Law No. 173 of 19 October 2015 “*The right to affective continuity for children in foster care*”.

<sup>3</sup> The source of the quantitative data regarding international adoptions is the Italian Commission for International Adoptions (CAI). The source of the quantitative data on domestic adoptions is the Ministry of Justice.



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## **1.2. The common experience**

As previously mentioned, while the situations vary considerably, there are several unfortunate experiences that all adopted children undergo prior to being adopted, both domestically and internationally. In fact, all of them have gone through the painful experience of being separated from their birth parents, and sometimes even from their siblings. In addition to these difficult events, many of them have also suffered conditions of loneliness, lengthy periods of institutionalisation, and physical and/or psychological abuse. Some children are adopted after living in foster homes, or after prior unsuccessful adoption experiences.

Children who come to Italy through international adoption channels even experience additional complexities, as they have to deal with numerous changes (language, climate, food, etc.), and are placed in contexts that are entirely new and unfamiliar to them. This is a drastic existential change, which often takes place leaving difficult and little known elements of the past behind (the information regarding their health and former lives is frequently scarce and somewhat fragmented). Finally, for those who arrive from other countries, the integration pathways into their new living environments are rendered even more complex and delicate due to differences in culture and physical appearance.

And these complexities are increasingly being experienced by children adopted domestically as well. In fact, children born abroad who have arrived in Italy with their migrant parents, or who migrated to Italy on their own<sup>4</sup> (unaccompanied), or who were previously adopted internationally and were subsequently abandoned, can be adopted domestically.

In these cases, introduction within various social contexts can be hindered by the messages that children receive on a daily basis: a phenomenon known as “micro-aggressions”. These consist of deliberate, explicitly derogatory messages (micro-attacks), or rude communications (micro-insults), or stereotypes (micro-invalidations) that negate or tend to nullify the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the people towards whom they are directed. For the recipients, these modes of communication have a disabling negative effect, while those who deliver them, whether consciously and/or unconsciously, are apparently left with a sense of power and superiority over the other person<sup>5</sup>.

## **1.3. Critical areas**

In particular, for a large number of adopted children there are certain critical areas that must be carefully considered. Although not always present, nor equally present in all subjects, there are several major factors that may be encountered, a list of which is provided below.

### 1.3.1. Learning difficulties

Various studies have examined the higher percentage of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) present among adopted children with respect to the average among their non-adopted peers<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> This definition is taken from the recent document entitled, *Intercultural Guidelines, ideas and proposals for the integration of pupils from migrant backgrounds*, published on 17 March 2022 by the Italian National Observatory for the Integration of Foreign Pupils and Intercultural Education, established at the Ministry of Education’s Directorate General for Students, Inclusion and School Orientation.

<sup>5</sup> M. Ferritti, A. Guerrieri (2019), *When Adoption Becomes a Complication: First Evidence Regarding the Discrimination Suffered by Young Adoptees in Italy Due to Phenotypic Differences and/or because of their Adoptive Identity*, in Proceedings of the 1st International Conference of the Journal Scuola Democratica “Education and postdemocracy”, VOL. 1, Politics, Citizenship, Diversity and Inclusion, pp 208-214.

<sup>6</sup> The analyses carried out in Italy include: C. Artoni Schlesinger and P. Gatti, *Adozione e apprendimento scolastico*, Richard and Piggie (2009); M. Chistolini, *Scuola e adozione. Linee guida e strumenti per operatori, insegnanti e genitori*, FrancoAngeli (2006); A. Molin, C. Cazzola and C. Cornoldi, *Le difficoltà di apprendimento di bambini stranieri adottati in Psicologia Clinica dello Sviluppo* (2009); M. Ferritti, A. Guerrieri, L. Mattei, *Il percorso verso il successo formativo degli alunni adottati e alunni fuori della famiglia di origine: il ruolo della comunità educante*,



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It should be noted however, that, even in the absence of specific learning disabilities, many adopted children may have psychological/emotional and cognitive issues that significantly affect their learning abilities (especially with the abilities that one would expect based on their age) due to a variety of critical situations, such as damage from prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol, early institutionalisation, use of psychotropic drugs while in care, neglect, deprivation, abuse, and/or the trauma of abandonment. These difficulties can manifest themselves with deficits in concentration, attention, memorisation, verbal and writing skills, and certain logical functions.

### 1.3.2. Psychological/emotional difficulties

In various cases, therefore, difficult experiences during the period prior to adoption can have negative impacts on the ability to control and express one's emotions. Difficulties in tolerating frustrations, aggressive behaviour, disregard for rules, provocations, and an uncontrollable need for attention are just some of the more evident manifestations of the inner distress that may be present in many children. The lack of stable reference figures capable of offering adequate relationships of affection can cause a sense of insecurity with respect to one's own value and vulnerability in relationships with others, leading the child to view him or herself as undesirable, and the environment as hostile and dangerous. The need to feel loved and considered by others, the fear of being rejected and abandoned again, and the anger and pain caused by what they have suffered are the emotions that reside deep in the hearts of many children, making it difficult for them to manage their relationships with adults and peers in a balanced and practical manner. These children usually need a medium to long period of time to acquire appropriate ways of interacting, learning to recognise and properly express their own emotions, as well as to recognise those of others. This is a challenging pathway that must be taken into account, especially for school-age adopted children who start their schooling almost at the same time as they are introduced into their new families.

### 1.3.3. Schooling in the countries of origin for children born abroad

Children adopted internationally, as well as those adopted domestically if born abroad, may come from predominantly rural countries with fragile social structures, where illiteracy and/or early school drop-out rates are high. Children from these types of situations may have received little or no schooling, or may have been schooled in a manner that is quite different from the system utilised in Italy. It should also be considered that, unlike Italy, schooling begins at the age of seven<sup>7</sup> in many of these children's countries of origin (e.g. in Brazil, Bulgaria, Ethiopia, the Russian Federation, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, and Hungary), sometimes with a four-year primary school cycle. The fact that schooling begins at seven years of age in so many countries of origin is particularly important considering that schooling begins at the age of six in Italy, sometimes even at five. For these children, therefore, the age of six is often still considered pre-school age. This is in addition to the fact that, in some countries, children with psychological/physical delays may have been diverted into "special education" pathways.

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WELFARE E ERGONOMIA, Fascicolo 1, (2020); M. Ferritti, A. Guerrieri, *Adopted students and intersectionality, starting points for a first analysis*, Educazione Interculturale -Teorie, Ricerche, Pratiche vol. 18, no. 2, (2020).

<sup>7</sup> Istituto degli Innocenti, *Insieme a scuola. Buone pratiche per l'inserimento scolastico dei bambini adottati*, Studi e Ricerche, Collana della Commissione per le Adozioni Internazionali, June 2010.



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### 1.3.4. Children reported as having special or particular needs<sup>8</sup>

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in so-called “special needs adoptions”, both domestically and internationally. This term broadly refers to the adoption:

- of two or more minors;
- of children seven years of age or older;
- of children with significant health problems or disabilities;
- of children recovering from particularly difficult and/or traumatic experiences.

The latter two types are particularly relevant with regard to school inclusion and attendance<sup>9</sup>. In fact, it is easy to understand how these children are more likely to have specific problems in terms of learning and adaptation to the school environment. It should also be noted that, as far as international adoptions are concerned, the overall figure, even for health alone, is underestimated. It is often symptoms rather than diagnoses that appear in the medical records, and different countries have different standards of evaluation. Finally, in some cases, medical files are lacking or insufficient and certain situations can only be verified or ascertained after arrival in Italy.

### 1.3.5. Presumed age for children born abroad

In various countries of origin, children are not registered at birth, despite the fact that this right is enshrined under art. 7 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. Many foreign-born children who will later be adopted may therefore have been ascribed a presumed birth date, and therefore an age, for the sole purpose of registering with the general register office, and only upon entering the institution, or when the match with the adoptive family is formally documented. It is not uncommon for discrepancies of more than a year between the children’s actual age and the age ascribed to them to be encountered after the fact, and one major reason for this is that, immediately prior to adoption, the child may have been in such a state of malnutrition and mental/motor deficiency as to make their real age difficult to determine.

### 1.3.6. Pre-adolescence and adolescence

A considerable number of children and youths are adopted domestically and internationally after the age of 10, at a stage of development that is already complex in itself, when the structuring of emotional and family ties clashes with the natural need for growth and independence. For internationally adopted children, this implies a longer and more complex experience, and therefore requires additional flexibility during the school integration and assistance phases. Moreover, even for those adopted during childhood, the onset of pre-adolescence and adolescence can see the emergence of significant problems with regard to establishing their own identity, physiological changes, relationships with peers, and with the social context in general, which could interfere with learning abilities.

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<sup>8</sup> According to reports issued by the CAI, the term “special needs” indicates the presence of a serious and irreversible condition. The term “particular needs”, on the other hand, indicates the reversibility of the indicated conditions over time.

<sup>9</sup> In 2021, out of a total of 680 children and youths adopted internationally, 425 (or 62.5% of the total) had one or more special needs. The arrival of adopted children with special needs also represented the majority of cases in previous years, albeit with different percentages: 59% in 2020, 64.2% in 2019, and 70% in 2018. More specifically, in 2021, a particularly high percentage of the special needs encountered (which had been steadily increasing with respect to previous years) regarded children adopted at the age of seven or older: 48.5% in 2021; 47.6% in 2020; and 37.2% in 2019. Furthermore, in 2021, 33.9% of children and youths with special needs had traumatic experiences, behavioural problems, or physical and mental issues. This case had increased with respect to 2020 (29.4%). The special needs phenomenon thus represents a clear majority of the arrivals. Among the countries with at least 10 children authorised to enter Italy for adoption purposes in 2021, the following stand out in terms of percentages of special needs cases: Colombia, India, Bulgaria, Hungary, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation. As opposed to 2020, when Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Colombia had the highest percentages. Far behind were India, Hungary, the Russian Federation, Peru and Haiti. It should be noted that, in the field of international adoption, the countries of origin change over time due to the socio-political changes occurring within the countries themselves. (Source: *Report to Parliament of 5 June 2020; Dati e prospettive nell'adozione internazionali, rapporto sui fascicoli dal 01 gennaio al 31 dicembre 2020*. CAI in collaboration with Istituto degli Innocenti).



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### 1.3.7. Italian as L2 for children born abroad

Experience has shown that internationally adopted children are generally quick to learn basic Italian vocabulary and everyday expressions used in common conversations (so-called “basic interpersonal communicative skills”). The more abstract language, on the other hand, which is necessary for advanced academic learning (so-called “cognitive/academic linguistic abilities”, which consist of complex grammatical and syntactic knowledge and a broad vocabulary), is learnt much more slowly. Based on experience and relevant studies<sup>10</sup>, internationally adopted children often tend to have difficulties not so much in learning to “read” as in understanding the text they are reading or expounding on the content they have learnt, while later in their studies they may encounter serious difficulties in understanding and using discipline-specific languages, and in understanding increasingly abstract concepts. It should also be noted that the linguistic structures in the countries of origin are often quite different, and include phonemes that do not exist in the Italian language, and vice versa. In many cases, recognition and production of new, previously unlearned sounds can be extremely difficult, resulting in challenges with dictation and/or public speaking. These difficulties in the use of language can also intersect with any of the other learning difficulties previously highlighted<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, the method of learning the language is not “additive” (with the new language being added to the previous one), as is the case for those with migratory backgrounds, but is rather “subtractive” (with the new language replacing the previous one), and therefore implies greater difficulties, which at times can lead to feelings of “not having the words to express oneself”, thus provoking anger and a range of negative emotions, which in turn can become disruptive to learning at school.

### 1.3.8. Ethnic identity

Another relevant aspect often encountered among adopted children, both in Italy and abroad, is that they are born to people of different ethnicities and, in many cases, have typical, recognisable physical traits. For these children, the task is to integrate their original ethnic/cultural belonging into that of the adoptive family and the new living environment. This is a very challenging task, one which can require a great deal of cognitive and emotional energy.

From the moment of adoption, the adopted child is an Italian citizen for all intents and purposes, and must be recognised as such by the environment in which he or she is received, without being expected to abandon or otherwise renounce his or her roots and history. In our country, however, the inclination to consider those who are physically different as *foreigners* is often triggered automatically: schools therefore play an important role in raising awareness of the fact that many Italians have physical traits typical of other geographical areas. In this sense, the presence of adopted pupils in the classroom is an added value in the process of inclusion and acceptance of diversity. As previously mentioned, it is crucial to work on any micro and macro aggressions inherent to the ethnic identities of children and youths<sup>12</sup>.

It is necessary to avoid the mistake of equating a pupil who has been adopted with a foreign pupil who has migrated to Italy. The fact of the matter is that, even if from another country, the adopted child is not a child with a migrant background. Rather, he or she is a child who, despite having different physical traits than his or her new family, nevertheless has Italian parents and lives in an Italian cultural environment. Unlike children that have migrated to Italy with their families, who

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<sup>10</sup> E. Freddi, *Acquisizione della Lingua Italiana e adozione internazionale. Una prospettiva linguistica*. Cà Foscari University, Venice (2015).

<sup>11</sup> A. Molin, S. Andrich, *Il percorso scolastico dei bambini stranieri adottati*, Genitori si diventa, ([www.genitorisidiventa.org/notiziario/il-percorso-scolastico-dei-bambini-stranieri-adottati](http://www.genitorisidiventa.org/notiziario/il-percorso-scolastico-dei-bambini-stranieri-adottati)). A. Guerrieri, M. Nobile, (2015), *Una scuola aperta all'adozione*, Edizioni ETS, 2015. *Guidelines on the management of Specific Learning Disorders*. June 2021

<sup>12</sup> S. Lorenzini, (2013), *Adozione e origine straniera. Problemi e punti di forza nelle riflessioni dei figli*, Edizioni ETS. S. Lorenzini, (2012), *Famiglie per adozione. Le voci dei figli*, Edizioni ETS. *L'importanza di ogni parola. Razzismo e discriminazione nel sistema adozione*. Convegno del Coordinamento CARE (2021) “L'importanza di ogni parola. Razzismo e discriminazione nel sistema dell'adozione”, <https://youtu.be/8JaurQNIWL4>.



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maintain strong ties to their culture and language of origin, adopted children quickly lose their first language, and may display a pronounced ambivalence towards their culture of origin, with moments of nostalgia/pride alternating with moments of repudiation/rejection.





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## 2. GOOD PRACTICES

### 2.1 THE ADMINISTRATIVE/BUREAUCRATIC CONTEXT

This Section addresses the topic of the reception that **domestically** and **internationally** adopted children receive in schools, with particular regard to the series of obligations and measures whereby the relationship is formally established between the pupil and his or her family and the school.

#### 2.1.1 Enrolment

Enrolment is an important time for families to make a well-informed decision that will fully meet their children's educational needs. As mentioned in the introduction, in the case of domestic and international adoptions, there may be multiple critical and specific issues requiring targeted solutions in terms of **how and when to enrol, as well as when to start, and the choice of grades in which to place the pupils**<sup>13</sup>.

##### 2.1.1.1, *Enrolment for educational and pre-school services*

Legislative Decree no. 65/2017 established the Integrated Education and Training System for children from birth to six years of age. The decree states that “*the Integrated System guarantees all children equal opportunities to develop their potential for relationships, autonomy, creativity, and learning to overcome inequalities, and territorial, economic, ethnic and cultural barriers, from the time of birth until six years of age.*”

Since the Ministry of Education and Merit is only tasked with the integrated system's promotion, dissemination, and qualification, enrolment in educational services for children up to three years of age (crèches, micro-crèches, pre-school prep programmes, supplementary services) must be requested from the local authorities or the manager of the individual service, if private.

Enrolment in pre-schools (public or private) must be carried out directly with the chosen educational institution, following the guidelines issued annually by the Ministry of Education and Merit.

##### 2.1.1.2, *Enrolment in first grades*

Since the 2013/2014 school year, the procedures to be followed for enrolment in the first grades in public schools, with the exception of pre-schools, have been exclusively online. After having registered with the website [www.iscrizioni.istruzione.it](http://www.iscrizioni.istruzione.it), families must fill out and submit the enrolment form for the selected school. The same methods can also be used for private educational institutions that have adopted the computerised procedure.

Families that are adopting **internationally**, however, may find themselves enrolling the children or youths at a stage when the bureaucratic process leading up to the formal conclusion of the adoption procedure is not yet complete. The family may therefore not already be in possession of the child's fiscal code or all the final documentation. The online enrolment form may still be submitted even if the aforementioned fiscal code has not yet been received<sup>14</sup>. In fact, a specific system function allows for the creation of a “temporary code”, which the educational institution to which the enrolment form is submitted will replace as soon as possible on the SIDI portal with the definitive fiscal code, using the documents submitted by the family certifying the adoption from abroad (Commission for International Adoptions - CAI, Juvenile Court).

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<sup>13</sup> Attention to the enrolment methods has been emphasised in the *Guidelines for the right to education of pupils outside their families of origin* (MIUR AGIA 2017).

<sup>14</sup> Memorandum no.28 prot.206 of 10/1/2014 “*Enrolment in pre-schools and schools of all levels for the 2014/2015 school year*”.



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In any case, since it is not possible to predict when the children will arrive in their adoptive households, in the cases of both **domestic** and **international** adoption, families are permitted to enrol their children in school at any time of year, even after the online procedures have closed, by submitting the enrolment forms directly to the selected school.

Similarly, families that adopt **domestically** may have to undergo lengthy intermediate stages during which the children are in placed “*temporary*” foster care (*legal risk foster care or adoption*)<sup>15</sup> or in pre-adoption foster care. This step is also sometimes preceded or substituted by a phase known as: “*temporary placement*”. During these phases, the online registration of the minor, who still retains his or her original personal data, but is simultaneously residing at the adoptive parents’ home, poses a real risk to the traceability of the minor and the family to which he or she has been assigned<sup>16</sup>. It is no coincidence that, for obvious privacy reasons, the Juvenile Court sometimes expressly forbids the disclosure of the child’s data. For this reason, even for pupils/students on temporary placement, registration is carried out by the foster family directly with the selected educational institution.

The FAQs on the 2014 online enrolment website, on the other hand, already specified that, even in these contexts, “*given the particular situation, in order to guarantee the protection and confidentiality of minors, the enrolment is to be carried out by the foster family by contacting the selected educational institution directly*”, thus without necessarily having to use the online enrolment platform.

For pupils in temporary placement, a temporary fiscal code<sup>17</sup> should be created in order to ensure the confidentiality of their original personal data.

### 2.1.1.3, Enrolment times

Regardless of their age, children and youths who have been **domestically** or **internationally** adopted need to be welcomed into the new school system in ways that meet their specific and personal needs in terms of understanding their new family context and getting to know the social environment into which they have been placed. Also, in order to facilitate and support the establishment of emotional ties with the new parental figures, the start of the children’s school careers can be postponed by a few months (information on this topic can be found in **Annex 1**).

Therefore, in light of this need, the actual enrolment times are decided by the Headmaster, in consultation with the teaching team, and in agreement with the family and the public and/or private services that have supported and assisted the family throughout the adoption process. Particular attention should be paid to cases involving children adopted **domestically** or **internationally** who are between five and six years of age, and who have particular vulnerability factors. These children

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<sup>15</sup> “*Legal risk placement*” is a legal practice recognised under art. 10 of Law 184/83 (amended by Law 149/98), which allows the Juvenile Court to temporarily place a minor in foster care for whom proceedings for the declaration of adoptability have been opened or concluded. The rationale behind this procedure lies in the need to prevent the child from subsequent family changes in the event that the parents or other relatives, up to the fourth degree, object to the adoption. Given the long time it takes for the court proceedings to reach a conclusion, in order to prevent the child from having to wait numerous years for a resolution, potentially causing serious emotional damage, the court may entrust the child to an available couple that has already been declared suitable for adoption. The child is therefore given to them in foster care (which is not yet pre-adoptive, and is sometimes called placement), and (unlike “traditional” temporary foster care) the child’s placement is kept secret from his or her family of origin. If the declaration of adoptability later becomes final, the temporary foster care is converted into pre-adoptive foster care, thus avoiding the trauma of another separation for the child.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that there are situations of international adoption similar to that which has just been described. Some children come from countries of origin that impose a period of pre-adoptive fostering, or for which the paperwork in Italy takes several months. Even in this context, the original documents and fiscal codes assigned to the children contain information about their origins, and put their privacy at risk. For these situations, the recommended procedure is the same as that recommended for domestic adoption, with regard to both the registration methods and the management of surnames and everything else related to the general register office.

<sup>17</sup> The temporary fiscal code must be replaced with the definitive one, however, by the end of the school year, or rather before the State examinations are held.



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can be excused from enrolment in the first year of primary school when they turn six years old, with the possibility of remaining in nursery school for an extra year (see also note no. 547 of 21/2/2014<sup>18</sup>), provided that documentation attesting to the need to do so is able to be provided. If necessary, this possibility is available in the case of both international and domestic adoption, given the wide range of circumstances in which domestic adoption can occur (e.g. when involving children born abroad, who have only recently arrived in Italy through migration or were previously adopted, or involving children from particularly neglectful backgrounds). In this regard, where necessary, in addition to the assessment of specific risk factors relating to pre-adoptive history, the actual level of neuro-psychological and functional ability should also be assessed by the professionals assisting the family during the initial enrolment phase. It is important to be aware of the subject's actual resources and difficulties, in order to make a well-informed decision as to the grade that's most appropriate for his or her placement.

### *2.1.1.4, Choice of grade of enrolment*

The phase of first introduction into the school environment and the choice of the grade of enrolment are considered crucial for all adopted pupils. Therefore, as also noted in other contexts<sup>19</sup>, with regard to children adopted internationally and arriving in Italy at school age, the choice of the class of enrolment must take into account the information gathered during the school/family dialogue phase, which is discussed in the next section, as well as the reports of the public and/or private services involved during the post-adoption phase. The Headmaster decides on the grade of enrolment, in agreement with the family, taking into account the opinions of the professionals overseeing the family, if applicable, and, in certain cases (e.g. lack of any previous schooling, language of origin very different from Italian), also considering the possibility of enrolling the child in a grade one year behind that which corresponds to their age, even if presumed. This may also be necessary for specific cases of children adopted domestically (e.g. children who have arrived in Italy by migration and unaccompanied, failed international adoption, or other peculiar situations).

## **2.1.1 Documentation**

### *2.1.2.1, Enrolment*

Following the submission of the enrolment form, either online or during the course of the year, the school office asks the family to provide copies of the legally required documents. However, in the case of both domestic and international adoptions, there can be critical issues related to the lack of all the necessary documentation on the part of families adopting abroad, or the confidentiality of the information regarding children adopted domestically and in pre-adoptive foster care. Schools are required to accept the documentation in the family's possession (issued by the countries of origin, the Commission for International Adoptions, the Juvenile Court, etc.) even when

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<sup>18</sup> This possibility was first laid out in MIUR note Prot. no. 547 of 21/2/2014 - Exemption from compulsory schooling of adopted pupils - which invites School Headmasters, *"if they find themselves dealing with pupils in need of special attention, to adopt the most appropriate measures and strategies to examine the individual cases with sensitivity and precision, even engaging with specific industry professionals, where necessary, and with the support of Local Government Services, in order to prepare individualised and personalised pathways. The Headmaster can only make the decision to keep the pupil in pre-school upon the conclusion of the process described above regarding exceptional and duly documented cases, and always in agreement with the family, and having consulted with the teaching team, and this decision may only be applied for the time strictly necessary to acquire the prerequisites for primary school, and, regardless, for no more than one school year, even through careful and personalised educational planning, in accordance with the provisions of Article 114(5) of Legislative Decree no. 297/1994"*.

<sup>19</sup> *Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign pupils (2014), Guidelines for the right to education of pupils outside their families of origin (2017)*.



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it is in the process of being finalised<sup>20</sup>. With regard to pupils born abroad and adopted internationally or domestically, the school usually requests documentation confirming the studies completed in the country of origin (report cards, certificates, declarations, etc.); failing this, it will ask the parents to provide any information in their possession. As far as domestic adoptions are concerned, one good practice is that which has been applied in Piedmont since note prot. no. 4403 of 15-05-2011 from the Regional School Office. The schools limit themselves to examining the documentation issued by the Juvenile Court in the case of foster care (sometimes called “temporary placement”), without keeping it in the pupils’ personal files. A similar procedure must be put in place for all the other documents required for enrolment or for transfer to another school (e.g. authorisation)<sup>21</sup>.

The School Headmaster then inserts a declaration into the pupils’ file indicating that he or she has seen the documentation required for enrolment. The school administration offices then take measures to ensure that the children’s names are transcribed into the class registers directly with the surnames of their adoptive parents, verifying that their former surname does not appear in any context.

### 2.1.2.2. School certifications

In the case of children in legal risk foster care or adoption (sometimes referred to as “temporary placement”), an evaluation sheet must be issued in which the pupils are indicated with their adoptive parents’ surnames<sup>22</sup>. The Headmaster then signs a declaration acknowledging that the identity of the pupils - to whom the assessment document was issued - corresponds to the actual identity of the pupils<sup>23</sup>. In order to protect each pupil’s privacy, the lists of names and surnames should not be displayed in any public places (including the classrooms).

### 2.1.2.3. Health documents

The school must ascertain whether the pupils have received the mandatory vaccinations through the presentation of the relevant certification. If the pupils have not been vaccinated, the family can contact the public health services office to determine their vaccination situation and carry out the appropriate healthcare interventions, if necessary. It is important that the schools facilitate this decisive step in ensuring the right to health. Whatever the case, the lack of vaccinations shall not preclude compulsory schooling or regular attendance. The attendance of early childhood educational services or pre-school, on the other hand, is a different matter, as the failure to regularise the vaccination status of minors will result in the forfeiture of enrolment<sup>24</sup>.

Particular attention must be paid in the case of pupils in foster care or legal risk placement, if they are in possession of certifications pursuant to Laws 170/2010 and 104/1992. In these cases, the health documentation may indicate the pupil’s name and surname of origin. The headmaster will

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<sup>20</sup> As stated in the *Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign pupils* (February 2014): “in the absence of any documents, the school shall enrol the foreign child regardless, as an irregular status does not affect the child’s right to an education.” These principles are reiterated in the *Intercultural Guidelines*, cit, 2022.

<sup>21</sup> As mentioned in the *Guidelines for the right to education of pupils outside their families of origin* (2017), special attention should be paid to school transfers that may coincide with legal risk placement. The authorisation indicates the name of the school to which the transfer is to be made. This practice risks exposing the pupil to arbitrary interference with his or her privacy. It is essential for the school administration to approve the necessary steps to be taken in order to draw up an authorisation document that will allow for transfer to another school without providing the details needed to identify the pupil’s new school situation (and therefore also his or her family situation). It is considered essential for all the documentation concerning the pupil to be transferred at the same time as the transfer from their school of origin to their school of destination.

<sup>22</sup> See *Guidelines for the right to education of pupils outside their families of origin* (2017).

<sup>23</sup> Note prot. no. 4403 of 15/05/2011 of the General Directorate of the Regional School Office for Piedmont.

<sup>24</sup> Art. 3-bis(5) of Decree-Law no. 73 of 7 June 2017, converted, with amendments, by Law no. 119 of 31 July 2017.



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acquire the documentation, and will arrange to protect the pupils' privacy as described in the previous sections<sup>25</sup>.

### **2.2 THE COMMUNICATIVE/RELATIONAL CONTEXT**

#### **2.2.1 Initial reception**

The initial reception and enrolment at the school are crucial for every child's well-being, especially those who have been adopted, whether domestically or internationally. A "good reception" can play a preventive role with respect to possible uneasiness at the later stages of the pupil's school career. For these reasons, the school's relationship with the pupil's family is of considerable importance, as, in this case, each family has a "different story", and is able to give voice to their child's "different story". An adopted child's reception, integration, and educational success at school can only be ensured through a process of collaboration between the family, the school institution, the Local Government Services, the Authorised Bodies, and the other parties involved, which also include the Family Associations upon which the families often rely (see **Annex 1** for further details). In order to facilitate this networking, each school institution should appoint a designated teacher with appropriate training on the topic (see **Annex 4** for further details regarding the appropriate training). Upon first contacting the school, prior to enrolling their son or daughter, the parents can receive information about the school's organisation, the three-year education plan adopted at the school, and the timetable for enrolment, by meeting with the designated teacher and/or Headmaster. The designated teacher can also help during the later stages, as described below.

#### **2.2.2. The designated teacher**

Having undergone specific training on adoption matters<sup>26</sup>, during the initial reception phase prior to enrolment, the designated teacher informs the adoptive family that has contacted the school of the following:

- the projects included in the three-year education plan;
- any previous experience and knowledge in the field of adoption;
- the resources and tools available to facilitate the inclusion of adopted children and youths.

The designated teacher (or the school Headmaster) also gathers information useful for the successful integration of the children and youths, even using tools like those recommended in **Annex 2**<sup>27</sup>. Whatever the case, the following information may be important, and must be treated as sensitive:

- The children's and youths' first and last names (maximum attention is recommended for **domestic** adoption cases and for **international** adoption cases involving pre-adoptive fostering).
- Type of adoption (domestic or international).
- Origins and age at which schooling began in the country of origin (in the case of children born abroad).

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<sup>25</sup> These pupils may be transferred from one school to another during the course of the year, and find themselves leaving schools where they were entitled to the presence of support teachers and educators. Particular efforts may be required on the part of the receiving schools in order to guarantee the pupil's rights in this regard.

<sup>26</sup> Thanks to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education (2021), the CAI provides a specific training module, which can be accessed online.

<sup>27</sup> Annex 2 has been revised in order to render it applicable to various school levels.



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- Previous schooling of the children (or lack of schooling) and previous documentation (if applicable).
- Possible assessment of the child's emotional and affective state by service providers and/or authorised bodies.

In addition to the data above, the school operators should also emphasise the following specific aspects:

- The parents' experience with respect to inclusion within the family.
- The duration of the child's acclimatisation period within the new family prior to beginning school, with particular regard to the amount of time that has passed since their arrival in Italy for children born abroad.
- Potential assumed age situation. These children often arrive with a declared age that deviates from their actual age by one or more years, and may need to be switched to a lower or higher grade after an initial period of schooling, based on their manifested abilities. The school must therefore offer the possibility of transferring these children to different grades based on specific flexibility policies.

During the phase following their initial enrolment, a second specific school/family meeting can be scheduled, also making use of tools like those recommended in **Annex 3** (designed for Primary School), in which the sensitive data must be treated as confidential.

These subsequent meetings can naturally also be useful for determining whether or not a Personalised Education Plan (PED) needs to be drawn up to facilitate the pupil's initial enrolment. The Ministerial Directive of 27 December 2012 and the Memorandum of Application no. 8 of 6 March 2013 describe the complex reality of our classrooms, pointing out that *"each pupil, either continuously or for certain periods, may show special educational needs: either for physical, biological, or physiological reasons, or even for psychological or social reasons, which the schools must address in an adequate and personalised manner."* Therefore, in the case of adopted pupils, **where necessary**, provisions must be made for the possible preparation of a PEP **at any time of the year**, with the understanding that, if there is not enough time between the pupil's arrival at school and the end of the school year to observe their performance and draw up the document, the school must nevertheless arrange for assisted teaching measures, to be formally documented in the PEP the following school year. In this regard, it should be noted that the purpose of preparing a PEP, where necessary, is to activate personalised educational pathways that take into account the special attention required, deploying all the educational and teaching strategies deemed appropriate during the reception and/or transition phases between school levels.

During these stages, the designated teacher offers the family:

- information on psychological/pedagogical support (for schools with a dedicated desk);
- willingness to collaborate with other resources and services in the area, if necessary.

He or she also collaborates with the pupils' teachers during the reception phases in order to:

- make them aware of the specific details and any critical issues;
- monitor the educational/teaching pathway, in agreement with the family and the pupils' teachers;
- participate, if requested, in the meetings with the other networked services, once again with the agreement of the family and the relevant teachers.

### **2.2.3. International adoptions: The transition from Language 1 to Language 2<sup>28</sup>**

As previously mentioned, adopted children and youths tend to learn the language of their new families very quickly. This could lead to the assumption that they will not encounter any significant language difficulties at school. In reality, however, that which they learn in a very short period of

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<sup>28</sup> With regard to this topic, please see the previous section of this document and the *Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign pupils*.



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time is the language of everyday life, and not that of academic learning, which is full of polysemes, nuances, connections, inferences, and cultural references. Strengthening language proficiency is therefore crucial, and should not only be pursued at the beginning, but also during the more advanced stages of schooling, which require increasingly refined language skills.

In the case of children who are enrolled in the final grades of primary school or in higher grade levels, experience shows that a good facilitating factor is to provide assistance to the adopted pupil with a peer tutor and, if possible, a *language facilitator*, especially if the pupil has recently arrived in Italy. This might be an Italian teacher, even from another class, who becomes a reference figure for the purposes of applying a broader educational and teaching framework. This teacher should have prior experience and/or training in teaching Italian as a second Language (especially during the delicate “interlanguage” phase), and above all, must focus on communicative literacy during the reception phase, and the approach to the specific language of study at a later stage. For pupils attending lower secondary school, the two hours per week dedicated to teaching the second foreign language can be replaced, if necessary, with either Italian or the language of instruction, even temporarily<sup>29</sup>. In such cases, where the need for this replacement has been prolonged, and it is not possible to assess the learning outcomes for the second foreign language, the State examination concluding the first education cycle will not include the written test for the second foreign language, and this will not affect the validity of the qualification obtained.

In some cases, the need for language support, above all in the case of school-age adopted pupils, may also have to be determined during the continuation of their scholastic careers, especially during the first two years of upper secondary school, with the provision (if necessary) of the same language enhancement activities usually provided for Italian pupils with language difficulties (reading, writing and speaking).

In Italy’s bilingual Regions and Provinces with special statutes (Valle d’Aosta, Friuli Venezia Giulia and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano), children and youths adopted internationally and arriving in Italy at school age (as well as those born abroad and brought to Italy to be adopted domestically) are required to also study another language (e.g. French, German, Ladin, Slovenian, etc.).

Through synergistic collaboration between the school and the family, and with the professional help of Local Government Services and Authorised Bodies, in these situations a personalised educational pathway should be drawn up in order to establish sustainable workloads both at school and at home, as well as the testing methods for the other languages of study.

## **2.4. CONTINUITY**

### **2.4.1. Continuity in schooling**

Even in schools where due attention is paid to pupils who have been adopted, once the initial reception and integration phase has passed, their special circumstances may eventually come to be seen as having been overcome, with no further attention being dedicated to the specific needs of these pupils. In this regard, it should be noted that being adopted represents an existential condition, and that, at certain times during one’s schooling and development, problems and insecurities can arise, which, among other things, should also be understood in light of adoption circumstances. In fact, while the progression through the school levels, with all the discontinuities that this entails

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<sup>29</sup> Presidential Decree no. 89 of 20 March 2009, article 5; Ministerial Decree no. 741 of 3 October 2017, article 9(4).



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(changes in reference figures, peers, educational styles, and required performance levels) can be temporarily destabilising for many students, at times it can be even more so for adopted pupils, and this is due to the potential for a certain sense of vulnerability linked to particular reactivity to changes, low self-esteem, difficulty believing in oneself, and the fear of not being accepted by one's peers and teachers. This, however, is not the case for everyone, and special care must be taken to avoid categorising the pupils; however, it is important to take the vulnerabilities associated with some specific situations into account. Examples include children and youths who have undergone multiple changes in terms of where they live and who takes care of them (community, foster care, previous attempts at adoption, etc.).

Moreover, as the course of study progresses, the scholastic requirements become increasingly complex, requiring organised study habits, and the continuous assimilation of various types of complex knowledge. This learning method often leads to difficulties that are quite common for many students with complex backgrounds<sup>30</sup>, such as the need for longer periods of time to assimilate and memorise the content, as well as difficulty staying on task or applying oneself. This can be compounded by difficulties mastering the language skills necessary for higher learning (abstract language, complex syntax, specialised vocabulary), due to the replacement of their original mother tongue with Italian. For some adopted children, the emotional experiences of pre-adolescence and adolescence, phases of life in which the identity is forming, can also manifest themselves as an even more complex process, since, for them, thinking about their identity implies attempting a complex reconciliation between their past and present experiences. This process can last a long time, and may be accompanied by periods of extreme existential turbulence, in which the mental capacity for learning can be reduced, if not completely overwhelmed by the urgency of other thoughts. This can be especially true for pre-adolescent adopted children.

It is therefore recommended to implement good practices that will facilitate these children's progress in school, such as:

- thorough exchange of information between teachers of the different levels (agreed upon with the family) and, if necessary, the possibility for the children to familiarise themselves with their new environment through visits to the school and meetings with teachers before the actual attendance begins;
- special attention to school/family relations, by arranging initial and ongoing meetings to foster communication and monitor the children's progress in terms of personal development and learning;
- the designation of a teacher within the class council who can act as a privileged point of reference for the child and his or her family<sup>31</sup>;
- the timely implementation of appropriate measures (language reinforcement, acquisition of the study method, individualised pathways permitted by law) when learning difficulties are encountered at the start of a new school cycle;
- special attention to the relational climate within the classroom through activities designed to raise the students' awareness of acceptance, inclusion, and appreciation of diversity.

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<sup>30</sup> One useful reference for the scholastic well-being of pupils with traumatic experiences is the book *Feriti Dentro* by L. Bomber, FrancoAngeli. The book *Una scuola aperta all'adozione* by A. Guerrieri and M. Nobile, ETS Editore, Pisa, contains several indications by R. Lombardi. Useful material for teachers can be found in the book *Crisi adottive: una opportunità?* edited by L. Luzzatto, A. Guerrieri and E. Cedroni, FrancoAngeli (2022).

<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that, even at the secondary school level, the presence of a preferential relationship with an adult who dedicates personalised attention has proven to be particularly useful in guiding and supporting adopted children who are more fragile from an emotional and relational perspective.





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Attention must also be paid to the guidance pathway<sup>32</sup> leading up to the choice of the secondary school. While the academic success of adopted children varies from case to case, the inherent aspects of their adoptive history can make it difficult for them to achieve the learning goals that the parents and the children themselves would aspire to. While scholastic guidance is one of the lower secondary school's basic tasks, it assumes a role of even greater importance for pupils with different and more critical histories (including some adopted children), who must be dedicated special attention throughout their entire three-year journeys in order to help them to determine which scholastic pathways will allow them to maximize their talents and potential. Insertion within a school pathway that is consistent with one's own skills and abilities helps all adolescents better orient themselves and improves their sense of personal security. Excessively high expectations can generate anxiety and a sense of inadequacy, which in turn can lead to isolation and closing oneself off from one's class group and teachers, or even a downward spiral of confrontational and transgressive behaviour. Expectations that are too low, on the other hand, can reinforce a child's already low self-esteem. Experience has shown that, all too often, ill-considered school choices end up undermining self-confidence and exacerbating teenage crises.

### **2.4.2. Continuity with local resources**

The multidimensionality of adoption circumstances requires the schools' efforts to integrate adopted pupils to be adequately accompanied and supported by coordinated efforts between the school, the family, social and health services, family associations, and other local entities that work with adopted children and parents. From a collaborative perspective, a coordinated network of various actors allows for the discussion of any problems that may arise, both upon entering school and afterwards, and renders available a range of professionals with a variety of skills, in order to support the students' academic well-being using a multidisciplinary approach. At the level of the individual schools, it is particularly advisable for the school staff to have a clear understanding of the different roles of the actors involved, and to have useful contact details and references. At the local and regional levels, the practice of signing memoranda of understanding between the various territorial entities (Territorial Offices, Local Health Authorities, Authorised Government Bodies, Family Associations), which has already been well-consolidated in recent years, will hopefully be further accelerated, in order to establish a wide-reaching network of agreements throughout the country.

## **3. ROLES**

### **3.1 The Ministry of Education and Merit (MIM):**

Has established an area on its website dedicated to collecting and disseminating useful information for the ongoing training of school staff on adoption: scientific, educational, and methodological papers, fact sheets, and documentation on exportable good practices.

### **3.2 The Italian Commission for International Adoptions (CAI):<sup>33</sup>**

In agreement with the Ministry of Education and Merit, the commission implements pathways for the dissemination of the "*Guidelines for promoting the right to education of adopted pupils*" in schools, also providing for their translation into the languages of the main countries of origin of the

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<sup>32</sup> A section specifically dedicated to guidance can be found in the *Guidelines for the right to education of pupils outside their families of origin*, with a focus on Provincial Adult Education Centres (CPIAs) and vocational training courses.

<sup>33</sup> International adoption is governed by the Hague Convention, which provides for a system of cooperation between the Central Authorities of the various contracting countries. In Italy, this authority is the CAI.



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pupils and students who have arrived in Italy by way of international adoption; proposes training courses for headmasters and teachers, and information activities for educators and the community, to be proposed regularly over time, occasionally also involving the Juvenile Courts and social welfare services; arranges the production of guides/brochures on the subject of adoption for use in Italian schools.

### **3.3. The Regional Scholastic Offices (USRs):**

The USRs play a guiding and coordinating role, and are therefore responsible for the systemic implementation of the actions taken by the schools, in order to standardise the conduct and procedures at the national level. It would therefore be appropriate for each USR:

- to designate an internal contact person for adoption<sup>34</sup> from among those already operating in the areas of inclusion, inter-cultural relations, and pupils outside their families of origin;
- to prepare protocols in order to formally establish procedures and conduct to be adopted (procedures for reception, grade assignment, adaptation of teaching content, identification of special educational needs, preparation of personalised plans, etc.);
- to enter into agreements with the Regional Health System, Local Authorities, Community Services, and Family Associations;
- to set up coordination groups of institute contact persons;
- to promote monitoring and training activities for the designated teachers.

### **3.4. The School Headmasters:**

As the guarantor of the educational opportunities offered by the school and of each individual's right to an education, the Headmaster<sup>35</sup> promotes and supports measures aimed at fostering the adopted pupil's full inclusion within the educational and scholastic context. To this end, he or she:

- can rely on the collaboration of a designated teacher for adoption related issues, with information, consulting, and coordination tasks;
- ensures that the school's Three Year Education Plan lays out the reception methods and the specific support provided for adopted pupils;
- proposes the grade in which the new pupils are to be placed to the Teachers' Board, after having consulted with the parents and the designated teacher, and after having viewed the documentation provided by the family and public and/or private services involved;
- obtains the resolutions of the pre-school and primary school interclass councils and class teams, in the event that (in light of the documentation acquired) it is deemed appropriate to retain the pupil in pre-school beyond the age of 6<sup>36</sup>;
- ensures the provision of personalised teaching pathways aimed at achieving adequate linguistic skills in order to allow for the use of the Italian language in the study of the various subjects;
- promotes and fosters the development of projects aimed at ensuring welfare and inclusion in the scholastic environment;
- ensures the monitoring of the actions taken to foster the dissemination of good practices;
- ensures the link between all the actors involved in the post-adoption process (school, family, public and/or private services in the area);

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<sup>34</sup> The CAI provides a specific training module, which can be accessed online.

<sup>35</sup> The CAI provides specific training modules that can be used online, which are also specifically designed for training incoming Headmasters.

<sup>36</sup> See section 2.1.1.3.



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- promotes training and refresher activities, even in-network, with a special focus on training for teachers during their first year of teaching<sup>37</sup>.

### **3.5. The designated teacher:**

The purpose of the institute's specially trained designated contact person is mainly to support colleagues who have adopted pupils in their classes, to raise the awareness of the Teachers' Board with regard to adoption issues, and to welcome parents. In particular, he/she performs the following functions:

- notifies teachers (including temporary teachers) of the possible presence of adopted pupils within their classes, guaranteeing the necessary confidentiality with regard to any sensitive data;
- welcomes parents, gathers from them the essential information needed for enrolment and grade choice purposes (also thanks to **Annexes 2 and 3**), and informs them of the actions that the school can take;
- collaborates in monitoring the pupil's integration and educational pathway;
- collaborates in handling the passage of information between the various school levels;
- in more complex cases, collaborates in maintaining active contact with the professionals overseeing the child or youth during the post-adoption phase;
- provides the teachers with the existing legislation and materials containing further insights;
- promotes and publicises education initiatives to be included in the school's

Annual Education Plan:

- assists teachers with the implementation of any personalised teaching curricula;
- holds moments of discussion and planning on welcoming methods, approaching personal history, how to talk about adoption in the classroom, and how to deal with difficult situations.

### **3.6. The teachers:**

In the presence of adopted pupils in the classroom, the teachers engage all the individuals involved in their schooling in various capacities in the inclusion process, in order to establish practices aimed at highlighting their specific needs, supporting their inclusion, and promoting their scholastic well-being, while at the same time always maintaining the necessary confidentiality. In particular, therefore:

- they participate in targeted training sessions on adoption-related issues;
- they propose activities aimed at raising the classes' awareness of acceptance and appreciation of everyone's individuality;
- they maintain a balanced attitude in the classroom, avoiding both overexposing adopted students and overlooking their specific needs;
- with regard to the freedom of teaching associated with the teaching function and the resulting freedom to choose the textbooks and educational content, they pay particular attention to the family models presented therein and the child's personal history;
- they create opportunities to talk about the different types of families that exist in today's society, proposing a concept of family based on emotional and relational ties;
- when dealing with "sensitive" topics (such as the construction of temporal concepts, personal history, the family tree, etc.), they inform the parents in advance and adapt the content to the specific situations of the pupils in the class;

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<sup>37</sup> The CAI provides specific training modules, which can be accessed online.



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- if necessary, they prepare personalised curricula tailored to the specific learning needs of individuals;
- they maintain constant contact with families and, if necessary, with public and/or private services assisting them during the post-adoption process.

### **3.7. The families:**

The families cooperate with the school in order to promote their children's well-being and success at school.

Therefore:

- they provide the school with all the information necessary to get to know the child or youth, in order to ensure their successful integration within the scholastic environment;
- in the case of pupils who have already undergone schooling, they collect and communicate all the information available regarding their previous educational background, where possible;
- they aim to keep their child motivated and committed to their studies, in the right measure, respecting their individual times and learning possibilities;
- maintain constant contact with the teachers, making themselves available for any discussions regarding the pupil's ongoing achievements.

THE MINISTER  
Prof. Giuseppe Valditara

Digitally signed by  
VALDITARA GIUSEPPE  
C = IT  
O = MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND  
MERIT