

Admission to Isle of Wight community and controlled primary schools for children starting school for the first time in September 2026

The Local Authority is responsible for admissions to the community and controlled primary schools on the Island. This section tells you about admissions arrangements to those schools.

There is also one foundation primary school, nine church-aided primary schools and four academies who consider their own applications for admission.

You can search for the primary school closest to your home address at: [SchoolsMap \(arcgis.com\)](https://schoolsmap.arcgis.com)
If you are not sure which your nearest school is, please contact school admissions on 823455 to find out.

At what age can my child start primary school?

Every child has to receive full-time education from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. However, your child can start primary school in the September after they have reached the age of four. For September 2026 your child must have been born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022.

Can I defer my child's entry to primary school?

As stated in Section 2.16 of the School Admissions Code 2021, you can defer the date your child starts the primary school you have been allocated until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (their fifth birthday) and not beyond the beginning of the summer term of the school year for which the primary school place was allocated. However, you must still apply by midnight on 15 January 2026 so we can allocate a school place. It is important that you discuss deferred entry into primary school with the Headteacher of your allocated school and the pre-school that your child attends, as you may wish them to remain at their current pre-school until they start primary school.

If you feel your child is not ready for full time education in the September, you can discuss opportunities for them attending school part time until your child reaches compulsory school age with the Headteacher of your allocated school.

For children born September - December, they must be in school full time by the start of the Spring Term in January. For children born January to August, they must be in school full time by the start of the Summer Term in April.

My child is a summer born child, can I delay entry until September 2027 and apply for a reception year place?

Department for Education guidance and Section 2.17 of the School Admissions Code 2021 allows parents to delay entry of their children into the school system. School admission authorities are required to provide a place for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school at this point.

If your child is four during the period 1 April to 31 August 2026, but you do not wish them to start school until September 2027, a place will not be allocated at this time if you have formally requested delayed entry and it has been approved prior to the closing date of 15 January 2026.

If you want to delay your child's entry in to school it is important that you complete the application form for Delayed Entry, which is available at www.iow.gov.uk/schooladmissions. You must state

your reasons why you wish to delay starting school until September 2026. It is still advisable to apply for a school place in the correct admissions round, as your circumstances may change and you may wish your child to start sooner than September 2026. We strongly recommend that you discuss this situation fully with the headteacher of the school you are hoping your child will attend. Please be aware that although you will have had discussions with the Headteacher of a particular school, we cannot guarantee a place at that school in reception for September 2026.

Please contact School Admissions during the admissions round if you have decided to delay your child's entry and wish to apply for a school place for September 2026.

The closing date to request Delayed Entry to enable your child to start Reception class in September 2027 is 15 January 2026.

School admissions authorities are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to and are required to make a decision based on circumstances of the case.

There is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside of their normal year group.

If your child is educated outside of their normal age group whilst in primary school, when your child is due to transfer to secondary school it will be for the admission authority of the secondary school to decide whether to educate the child out of their normal age group e.g. they may require your child to transfer in their academic age group, which may mean a transfer at the end of year 5 or they will be able to transfer at the end of year 6 and will have to commence year 8. It is your responsibility to contact the secondary school/s you will be listing as a preference on your transfer to secondary school application form, this will enable you to be fully informed on the process to formally apply for your child to continue to be educated in the year group in which they are currently being taught.

Further information and an application form to download and complete requesting delayed entry into primary school is available on our website at www.iow.gov.uk/schooladmissions then click on the 'Summer Born Children' tab.

What happens if my child does not reach the age of four until after 31 August 2026?

Children whose fourth birthday falls between 1 September 2026 and 31 August 2027 cannot be admitted to primary school until September 2027. However, they will be eligible for funding to attend pre-school for the school year 2026/27.

Is my child guaranteed a place at a primary school if they go to the local pre-school?

No, attending the pre-school on a primary school site **does not** guarantee a place at the primary school. If we receive too many applications for a particular primary school, we will allocate places using the oversubscription criteria of the school.

What about class sizes in primary schools?

There are special rules for admission into primary school reception classes and Years 1 and 2.

The law says that no class in these three year groups must contain more than 30 pupils. If a primary school has too many applications for the number of places available, we will use the oversubscription criteria stated in the school admissions policy to allocate places.

How do I apply for a place at a primary school for September 2026?

If your child will be four by 31 August 2026 and you would like them to start school in the school year starting in September 2026 you should;

- Apply online at www.iow.gov.uk/schooladmissions.
- If you have ticked that your child is applying for the school under medical grounds and/or is LAC, supporting evidence must also be received by School Admissions and Transport, County Hall by midnight on 15 January 2026.
- If you are applying for a place at a church aided or controlled primary school, please check with the school direct as they may require you to also complete their supplementary

information form and return it direct to the school by midnight on 15 January 2026. Alternatively you can request a paper common application form by telephoning 01983 823455. You should then:

- Complete the common application form and return to School Admissions and Transport, County Hall
- If you have ticked that your child is applying for the school under medical grounds and/or is LAC, supporting evidence must also be received by School Admissions and Transport, County Hall by midnight on 15 January 2026.
- If you are applying for a place at a church aided primary school, please check with the school direct as they may require you to also complete their supplementary information form and return it direct to the school by midnight on 15 January 2026.

Please note that we cannot accept responsibility for forms posted, or submitted online, that are not received by the closing date. If you are applying online, once the form has been fully submitted you will receive an email confirmation. If you receive a reminder email to submit your application prior to the closing date, please do not ignore this, you may have double clicked and inadvertently unsubmitted the application. You can either log back into your account for confirmation or contact School Admissions who will check the status of your application.

If you are completing the paper common application form, we advise you to return your form in good time (with the correct postage – please note that postage is based on the size and weight of the envelope and may need to be weighed at the Post Office) and enclose a stamped addressed envelope so we can confirm it has been received in the school admissions office.

Can I apply online for a school place for my child after the closing date?

No. Once our closing date of midnight 15 January 2026 has past all applications or change of preference must be notified to the local authority in writing. If it is a change of preference, a new application form does not need to be completed you can either send a letter with your changes to School Admissions and Transport, County Hall or an email to school.admissions@iow.gov.uk.

If you have submitted your application by the closing date and then request in writing any changes i.e. address, preferences and these are received in writing after the closing date, your application will be classed as 'Late.'

What address is used for school admissions purposes?

The address you give on the application form must be the address where your child usually lives, e.g., in the case of admissions for September 2026 the relevant address will be where your child is living on **15 January 2026**.

If the child resides with each parent during the week, the address on the application form must be the address at which they spend most of their time.

If there is a dispute over the address of the child, then you must provide a residency order, issued by the court, if you wish us to consider that address.

NB – Any attempt to seek admission to a school on the basis of an address other than the normal family home (even if the other property is owned and rented out by you) will be regarded as providing false information and will be treated accordingly (see below)

We cannot offer places based on a possible future address. If you have already submitted your application and you move home, exchange contracts or have signed a tenancy agreement for a new address, please inform School Admissions in writing of your updated address. If this is received by midnight on the 15 January 2026 your application will still be 'on time', if this is received after midnight on the 15 January 2026 it will be classed as 'late'.

If you are moving to the Island from the mainland, under Inter-Authority working you will need to

apply for a place at an Island school via your current local authority. They will inform us of the application.

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live within the area. The application will be considered if it is accompanied by an official letter i.e. MOD, FCO or GCHQ, that declares you will be posted to live within the area.

Parental Responsibility

All parents/guardians with parental responsibility for the child must agree on the preferred schools listed. The local authority will assume all parents/guardians agree on the application submitted unless informed otherwise. If there is a dispute this can not be resolved by the local authority. If the local authority is informed of a dispute they will process the application made by the parent with whom the child resides the majority of the time, unless an official court document states otherwise.

Please note: If the application is not made and agreed upon by the closing date it will be classed as 'late' and will not be processed until after all 'on-time' applications. This could mean that the preferred school/s are full and your child will be placed in the nearest school with a place available.

What happens if I give false information to get a place at a school?

We check all applications. If we discover that you have used false information (such as an incorrect address or date of birth) after we have offered your child a place, we will withdraw that place.

How many schools can I state a preference for?

You can state a preference for **three** primary schools including foundation trust, church aided and academy primary schools. It is important to consider naming your nearest school as one of your three preferred schools. If you do not do so, you may be offered a place at a school some distance from your home address if your three preferred schools are over subscribed and we cannot offer you a place at any of these.

By law we must consider applications we receive by the closing date first. If you apply later, even a day later, we will not consider your application until after we have considered those we received on time.

How many pupils can a school give places to?

Each school has a published admissions number (PAN). This is the maximum number of places available for the new intake each year.

Published admissions numbers for primary schools are shown on a separate document at www.iow.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

The published admissions number is the most important factor when the local authority, church-aided, foundation, or academy schools consider applications for places. However, if there are more applications than places available, the admissions authority for each school will use the oversubscription criteria stated in their Admissions Policy to allocate places.

How are places at a school allocated?

Pupils with special educational needs who have a particular school named in their Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) must be admitted to the school. For further information please contact the special educational needs section on (01983) 821000 or email: SEN.general@iow.gov.uk. All children allocated a place will be included in the admissions number of the school.

Further preferences for community and controlled schools will then be considered by the local authority based on the criteria listed below.

Preferences for foundation trust, aided and academy primary schools will be considered by the

school's governing body based on the school's admissions criteria. After all your preferences have been considered and if more than one place can potentially be offered the single offer is for the school ranked the highest on your application form.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available (both in the normal round of admissions and for in-year admissions) and after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the EHCP, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to determine which children to admit:

1. A 'looked after child'¹ or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.) at the time of making an application to a school. All references to previously looked after children in this Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. A specific medical condition², confirmed and supported by a registered health professional, which makes a particular school the most appropriate. (Any application for a place at a particular school for medical reasons must be supported by independent medical evidence from a registered health professional and must be supplied by the closing date of midnight on 15 January 2026. The evidence must name the school and state the reasons why attendance at the school is essential and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school.)
3. Children who at the time of application have an elder sibling who is already at the school and who will still be in attendance at the school in September 2026.
4. Children of staff³ employed by the preferred school, in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
 - b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is demonstrable skill shortage.
5. Children for whom the school is the nearest primary school to their home address at the time of application.
6. Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools only: - None of the previous 5 oversubscription criterion apply and parents ask for a place for religious reasons. (Any application for a place at a particular school for religious reasons must be supported by a letter from your Church minister by 31 October 2025 for a year 7 place and 15 January 2026 for a primary place, confirming that your family attends their Church⁴ at least once a month and has done so for six months or more before you made the application.) Please complete the Supplementary Information Form if you are applying for a place under this criterion.
7. Children for whom none of the previous oversubscription criteria apply.

¹A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the

definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

²The specific medical condition can be for the child or parent / guardian of the child.

³A staff member is any person employed by the school.

⁴Church is defined as worshipping fellowship who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Bible and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who are members or participant observers of the World Council of Churches or the World Evangelical Alliance.

If there are more applicants than remaining places within any of the above criteria the home-to-school distance will be used as a tiebreaker with those living closer being offered places first.

We will measure in a straight line using the local authority's Geographical Information System (GIS) from the home address to the centre of the school building, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

In the event of a tie between two or more children when applying home-to-school distance as a tiebreaker and where there are not enough places available to offer all those children a place at the school, a random allocation will be carried out by the local authority. This will be in the form of a 'lucky dip' which will be overseen by an independent person from the Corporate Governance Team.

If the distances are equal (for example with a block of flats), lots will be drawn by an independent person to determine the allocation.

If only one place at a school is available within the admissions number and there are multiple birth in the family who have the next highest priority within the oversubscription criteria, we will offer places to all multiple birth siblings.

After all your preferences have been considered and if more than one preference can potentially be offered, the single offer is for the school ranked the highest preference on your application form.

What happens if I return the form late?

If you complete the form after the closing date, even a day later, and the school/s applied for are full as a result of applications completed and received on time, your child will not be allocated a place there. If this happens your child's name will be placed on a waiting list in a community or controlled school or you can request to be placed on the waiting list of a foundation, trust, aided or academy school. You also have the right to appeal the decision, further information on the appeals process and to submit an appeal can be found at:

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Education-Appeals/Appeals-Timetable/>

What happens if I want to change my preference after the closing date?

We recognise that some parents may wish to change their preferred school(s) after the closing date due to, for example, moving house. You cannot make any changes to your online application after our closing date of midnight on 15 January 2026. If you wish to do this, you should write to the school admissions office at County Hall immediately or email your updated preferences to school.admissions@iow.gov.uk. Please remember, however, that your application will be treated as 'late' and children of parents who have applied for a place at a school by the closing date will have priority for admission over those who change their preference or home address after the closing date. This means that, even though you may have moved closer to another primary school, your child may not get a place there if it is already oversubscribed. If this happens your child's name will be placed on a waiting list in a community or controlled school or you can request to be placed on the waiting list of a foundation trust, aided or academy school. You also have the right to appeal the decision, further information on the appeals process and to submit an appeal can be found at: <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Education-Appeals/Appeals-Timetable/>

When will I hear whether I have got the place I wanted?

We will post the letter, from our office, with the result of your application on 16 April 2026 (National offer day for England). If you applied online for a school place for your child the result will also be emailed to you on this date, as long as you did not opt out of receiving information from the Isle of Wight Council.

My application has been refused – can I appeal?

If we cannot offer your child a place at your preferred schools, you can appeal to an appeals panel which is totally independent of us. A 'Notice to Appeal' form will be enclosed with the letter you receive. If you applied online and have requested a reply by email you will be able to download or complete an appeal form online at <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Education-Appeals/Tasks> and the and the booklet which explains how to make an appeal from our website at <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Education-Appeals/Appeals-Timetable/> and click on the 'Appeal Guide for Parents' tab. As well as making your appeal in writing, we recommend that you go to the appeal hearing to present your case. You can bring a friend to support you. The decision of an appeals panel is binding on us.

You can only appeal once for a place in the same school in the same academic year. However, if an admissions authority accepts a second application from you because there has been a significant change in circumstances but your child is not offered a place again, you can appeal this second decision.

Can I put my child's name on a waiting list?

Children refused a place (or places) at their preferred community or controlled school will be automatically placed on a waiting list for that school unless you specifically request that this must not happen. If you have been refused a place at a foundation trust, aided or academy school, you must write to the school to request your child is added to their waiting list. Your child will remain on this list until your child is offered a place at the school, or you do not respond to the letter that is sent to you in July asking if you wish for your child to remain on the waiting list.

Where your child is placed on the school's waiting list depends upon the oversubscription criteria in the school admissions policy. The position on the waiting list is not a first-come first-served basis. If you apply late but live very close to the school, your child may go to the top of the waiting list or very near to it. Please remember that your child's position on the waiting list can change, moving up or down as others join the list or are removed from it.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority or who are allocated a place in accordance with the fair access protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Waiting lists for September 2026 admissions will be established for the first time on 1 May 2026.

If you want to know where your child is on a waiting list you can contact the relevant admission authority (local authority or school). The Isle of Wight Council maintains waiting lists for its community and controlled primary schools.

What happens if I move house after I have received the offer of a school place?

If you have received a letter offering your child a place at your preferred school, and you then move house, you can keep that school place. Please remember, though, that you may be responsible for travel arrangements (including bus fares) to that school. If you would like to state a preference for a different school, please contact the school admissions team in writing or by emailing school.admissions@iow.gov.uk.

Fair access protocol

The Isle of Wight Council has a ‘fair access protocol’ which gives priority to admissions for certain categories of school age children. This protocol relates to admissions throughout the year. The protocol will take priority above the school’s admission policy for those on a school’s waiting list and the local authority may require schools to admit above their published admissions number. The policy can be found at www.iow.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

Primary September 2026 Coordination Dates

15 January 2026	Closing Date for Primary Applications
w/c 2 February 2026	LA Transfer of applications data to other LAs LA provide the Aided, Academy and Foundation primary schools the list of applications received
w/c 23 February 2026	Aided, Academy and Foundation Schools submit their ranked lists of applications to the LA
Early April 2026	Allocation sent to other LAs the allocated school for the application/s received for their LA children
16 April 2026	National Offer Day
16 April 2026	LA provide oversubscribed schools the list of the applications that were unsuccessful, in order for them to establish their waiting lists
1 May 2026	Waiting lists established for oversubscribed schools
Late May – Early June 2026	LA provide ATF Files to all schools containing allocated pupils records
Mid June onwards 2026	Appeals

Terms used

Academy

An academy is a state-funded school managed by an independent sponsor. The funding agreement between an academy company and the Secretary of State requires the academy’s admissions policy and arrangements to be in accordance with, or consistent with admissions law and the school admissions code.

Additional/supplementary information forms

All parents who list their preferred school on the Isle of Wight Council’s common application form are regarded as having made a valid application. An additional or supplementary form will also have to be completed for applicants who are applying for church aided schools, this also needs to be returned to the appropriate school by the advertised closing date to ensure your application remains on time.

Admissions number

The maximum number of children a school can give places to each year group.

Aided school

A school owned by trustees and mostly maintained by the local authority. The school governing body controls admissions and religious education.

Common application form

The form which all parents must complete when applying for school places.

Community school

A school which the Isle of Wight Council owns, funds and maintains.

Co-ordinated admission scheme

Ensures that a letter or email (for online applications) is dispatched on 16 April 2026 to every child living on the Isle of Wight, who is due to commence school, with the offer of a place. The scheme gives clear communications on school admissions between the local authority, the aided, academy, foundation, trust and free schools.

Distance

Distance for the allocation of school places will be measured in a straight line by the local authority's Geographical Information System (GIS) from the centre of the building of the home address to the centre of the school building with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. If distances are equal (for example with a block of flats) lots will be drawn by an independent person to determine the allocation.

Fair Access Protocol

This protocol prioritises admissions for certain categories of school age children. This protocol relates to admission applications throughout the year.

Free School

Free Schools are all-ability state-funded schools set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community.

Foundation school

A school which has foundation status and the governing body controls admissions.

Independent school

A school which the Isle of Wight Council does not fund or maintain – a privately-owned school.

Multiple Birth

Children born to the same parents with the same date of birth.

Online admissions

Parents can apply for a place for September 2026 via the Local Authority's website www.iow.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

Parents

A parent is any person who has parental responsibility for a child as set out in the Children Act 1989. Where responsibility for a child is 'shared', both parents must agree on the school/s listed on the application. If there is a dispute, then legal documentation will be required stating who will be responsible for the child's education. If a dispute has been lodged and parents come to an amicable agreement, written confirmation will be required from both parents with parental responsibility.

Published Admissions Number (PAN)

The maximum number of children a school must give places to for Year Reception in Primary schools and Year 7 in Secondary schools for the new academic year, this number will not change in these year groups for the academic year.

Sibling

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent or carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the address stated on the application form.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

The form which parents complete when applying for a school place at an aided school. Please ensure this is returned to the appropriate school by the closing date to ensure your application for a school place is on time.

Unique Identification Number (UID) – Secondary Schools only

To apply for a school place online you will be able to log on to your child's record using the UID. This number will be in the letter sent to you in September, informing you of the transfer to secondary school.

We, us, our

The Isle of Wight Council as the local authority.