



# THE ISLAND FREE SCHOOL

## **The Island Free School's admissions policy**

The admissions policy for The Island Free School will enable us to meet the following vision statement:

### **An Island school for Island families that gives parents a real educational choice for their children.**

In establishing The Island Free School, we want all parents on the Island to feel as though their child has the opportunity of attending the school regardless of their location on the Isle of Wight. As a consequence we aspire to be the number one choice of school for parents on the Isle of Wight.

We will admit pupils in one of three categories

- Assisted music programme (10%)
- By distance (45%)
- Island wide area (45%)

More detail about these categories will be found below.

This Policy has been drawn up in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

The Island Free School will take students of mixed ability and aptitude aged 11 – 16.

The Island Free School has an agreed Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 125 for entry into Year 7 and will admit up to this number each year. All applicants will be admitted if fewer than 125 apply to start in Year 7.

In our first year of opening September 2014, we will admit a maximum of 125 pupils and will admit another 125 pupils each consecutive year.

### **Applying for a Year 7 place**

Parents wishing to send their child to The Island Free School must complete an application form which is available through the school website at [www.islandfreeschool.org](http://www.islandfreeschool.org).

**In addition to applying to The Island Free School, parents will also need to fill in a local authority CAF (common application form) naming the Island Free School as their 1st choice school. Copies of the CAF are available at the Isle of Wight Council, County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UD or online at [www.iwight.com/schooladmissions](http://www.iwight.com/schooladmissions)**

### **Assisted music programme**

If you wish your child to be considered for a place on our assisted music programme there will be a box for you to tick on the application form. The purpose of the assessment is to discover true musical aptitude and talent, not just from those that may already be learning an instrument, but to discover potential in those that may not have had the financial advantage of being able to afford instrumental lessons in the past. For more details on the scheme please visit the website [www.islandfreeschool.org](http://www.islandfreeschool.org)

### **Applying for a place**

From 2015 onwards The Island Free School will be part of the local authority's co-ordinated admission arrangements. The deadline for applying will be 4.30pm on 31 October each year.

### **Offer of places**

The school Governing body will be the admissions authority for the school and will make the offer of places to successful parents. Parents who have applied for a place at The Island Free School for their child will be informed of the outcome by letter on national offers day each year. Parents of children to whom places are offered will be advised in their offer letter of any action they need to take to accept the place for their child.

The admissions panel reserve the right to withdraw an offer of a place where it is found that the application has been made on the basis of a false or misleading information from a parent.

### **What address is used for school admissions purposes?**

The address you give on the application form must be on the Island where you and your child usually live i.e. in the case of admissions for September 2014 the relevant address will be where you and your child are living on Monday 2 December 2013. For all other years the relevant address will be where you and your child are living on the 31st of October of that year. The address of children who have parents with shared responsibility should be agreed by the parents. If no agreement can be reached then the address of the parent who is in receipt of the child benefit and where the child is registered with a doctor will be used by us to establish the address of the child for school admission purposes.

### **We may ask for a utility bill from the given address which matches the names of the parents applying for the child on our application form.**

N.B 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 or rented by you) will be regarded as providing false information and will be treated accordingly. We cannot offer places based on a possible future address except in the limited circumstances set out below.

For children of serving UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants, an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a relocation date and intended address to the area will be accepted as proof that the child will be living on the Island.

### **Appeal procedure**

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful will be given an opportunity to appeal against the decision to an independent appeal panel set up in accordance with the statutory provisions in force at that time. Parents will have the right to appeal in writing within twenty days of the date of posting of the letter from The Island Free School.

### **Waiting list**

If a pupil cannot be offered a place at the school because the year group for that child is full, parents will be asked in their letter sent out if they wish their child to go onto our waiting list. Details of the waiting list can be seen in the next section of this policy.

### **Statements of special educational needs**

The Island Free School will admit statemented pupils whose statement names the Island Free School as their 1st choice school in compliance with the School Admissions Code.

### **Island Free School Oversubscribed Admissions Policy**

If there are more applicants than places available, the criteria listed below will apply, after the admission of children with a statement of Special Educational Needs which names The Island Free School. The oversubscription criteria will be:

**(a) Looked after children** or previously looked after children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or given a residence or special guardianship order.

**(b) Siblings** Children with a sibling attending the school at the time they would be admitted. We define siblings as children who live together as brother or sister in the same residence, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or step sisters and foster brothers or sisters, but not cousins. When admitting siblings they will be counted as sibling admissions only and to gain a place on the assisted music programme all siblings will have to apply for a place in the normal way.

**(c) Assisted music programme** Up to 12 pupils each year will be selected on their musical aptitude and this will be determined by an assessment taken by the pupil in the January before the September of entry. The purpose of the assessment is to discover true musical aptitude and talent, not just from those that may already be learning an instrument, but to discover potential in those that may not have had the financial advantage of being able to afford instrumental lessons in the past. More details of the assessment that will take place can be viewed on our website

[www.islandfreeschool.org](http://www.islandfreeschool.org). If children apply for a place based on musical aptitude, but are not successful in obtaining a place, their application will still be considered according to sections e and f below.

**(d) Children of staff** There are two criteria we will use in admitting the children of staff to our school:

- (i)** Where a member of staff has been working for the school for a period of two years or more they may enrol their children.
- (ii)** Where a member of staff fills a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable shortage they may enrol their children.

**Founders' children** Admission of children whose parents have been given Founders status, subject to approval of the Secretary of State. A copy of our founders' children policy can be found on our website.

**(e) Distance** Half of the remaining intake will be taken from the local area around the school. Places will be offered to those pupils who live closest to the school as measured from the school gates to the child's front door. This will be a straight line measured by the local authority's geographical information system (GIS). The address for a child must be the address of the parent / carer with whom the child lives for the majority of the time and who has parental responsibility (we may require documentary evidence). If a child regularly lives at more than one address, the governing body reserves the right to reach a conclusion about which should be counted as the main address when allocating places. This will normally be the address where child benefit is paid and where the child is registered with a doctor.

**(f) Island area** The remaining places will be allocated by random selection from all other applicants who fall outside the distance from school area. This process will be overseen by an independent adjudicator from the local authority.

### **Tiebreaker**

In the event of two or more applications tying when the above admission criteria is applied, the positions will be determined by random allocation and as above will be overseen by someone independent of the school.

However, if the tiebreaker for a place at our school is between two siblings living at the same address we will admit both children as we believe strongly that siblings should be kept together.

### **Pupils on waiting lists**

All pupils who applied to the school but were not given an offer of a place will be placed on our waiting list, unless parents tell us otherwise. If a space becomes available at the school we will allocate pupils from our waiting list in the following way:

- **Distance** If a space becomes available from this category then we will admit the next pupil on our waiting list that lives the closest to the school geographically.
- **Island wide Area** If a space becomes available from this category then they will be allocated a place by random allocation and for each child to be allocated a place from this category a new round of random allocation must be carried out.

The waiting lists will be maintained by the Office Manager at The Island Free School. Towards the end of each academic year, parents whose children are on the waiting list will be contacted and asked if they wish to remain on the waiting list for the next academic year.

### **Other admissions (in-year or casual admissions)**

Applications for vacancies that arise outside the normal annual admission round for Year 7 will be considered at any time during the year. Information and application forms may be obtained from the school. Where there is more than one application for a vacant place, the offer of a place will be determined in accordance with the following criteria, in order of priority:

- Children with statements of Special Educational Needs in which The Island Free School is named on the statement and meets the criteria listed above.
- Looked after children or previously looked after children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- Children who will have siblings in the school at the time when they are admitted to the school.
- Children who live nearest to the school, measured by the straight line distance from the front gate of the school to the child's front door.

Admission to a year group will be based upon the size of teaching groups already existing in the Free School and the efficient use of resources for all pupils in that year group.

The School may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools. The ability to refuse admissions will run for a period of two years since the last exclusion. The school will consult and co-ordinate its arrangements, including over the rapid re-integration of children who have been excluded from other schools and who arrive in an area after the normal admissions round, in accordance with local in-year fair access protocols for securing schools for unplaced children.

