



Admission to Isle of Wight community and controlled schools for children starting school for the first time in September 2009

The Children's Services Authority (CSA) is responsible for admissions to the 37 community and controlled primary schools on the Island. This section tells you about admissions arrangements to those schools – their names and addresses can be found in the booklet 'Educating your child'.

There are also nine church-aided primary schools who consider their own applications for admission – see 'Educating your child' for further details.

Priority Areas

The Isle of Wight is divided into geographical areas called priority areas (sometimes referred to as catchment areas). Each of these areas is served by a particular community or controlled primary school. In most cases, pupils living in a priority area have priority for places at the local school over those who live outside, **as long as their parents put that school down as one of their preferences AND make sure that we have received the application form by 4.30pm on 28 November 2008**. If you apply late, as some parents did last year, your child will not get a place at their priority area school if it is already oversubscribed from applications received on time.

If you are not sure which is your priority area school contact us to find out.

At what age can my child start primary school?

By law, every child has to receive full-time education from the beginning of the term following his or her fifth birthday. However, your child can start primary school in the September after they have reached the age of four. **For September 2009, this will apply to children whose fourth birthday falls between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2009 i.e. they must have been born between 1 September 2004 and 31 August 2005.**

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

If you prefer, you can delay your child's entry to primary school to the start of the term following his or her fifth birthday. For example, if your child reaches five in February 2010, you can delay entry until the start of the summer term in April 2010 (but no later). However, you must still apply by 4.30pm on 28 November 2008 so we can reserve a school place. It is important that you discuss delayed entry into primary school with the headteacher and the pre-school that your child attends.

If your child is four during the period 1 April to 31 August 2009 but you do not wish them to start school until September 2010 a place will not be reserved at this time. Instead, you should contact us after June 2010 for an application form. We recommend that you discuss this situation fully with the headteacher as it is likely that when your child starts school they will be admitted directly into Year 1, the second year at the school.

What happens if my child does not reach the age of four until after 31 August 2009?

Children whose fourth birthday falls between 1 September 2009 and 31 August 2010 cannot be admitted to primary school until September 2010. However, they will be eligible for funding to attend pre-school for the school year 2009/10. (See Early Education in Educating your child).

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

No, we cannot guarantee that your child will get a place at a particular primary school if he or she goes to the pre-school on the same site. If we receive too many applications for a particular primary school, we will allocate places using the oversubscription criteria published in this policy.

What about class sizes in primary schools?

There are special rules for admission into primary school reception classes and Years 1 and 2 (Years 3 and 4 are not affected). **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 to decide which children should be offered places.

How do I apply for a place at a primary school for September 2009?

If your child will be four by 31 August 2009 and you would like them to start school in the school year starting in September 2009 you should:

- Complete the common application form (CAF) enclosed with this booklet and
- Make sure that the form and any supporting evidence is received by us (not the school) by 4.30pm on 28 November 2008 at the very latest.

Alternatively you can:

- Apply on-line at www.eduwight.iow.gov.uk/admissions
- Make sure that your email is received by 4.30pm on 28 November 2008 at the very latest
- Any supporting evidence must also be received by 4.30pm on 28 November 2008 at the very latest

Please note that we cannot accept responsibility for forms posted, or emailed, but not received by the closing date. We advise you to return your form in good time (with the correct postage) and enclose a stamped addressed envelope so we can confirm it has been received in the School Admissions Office. If you are applying for a school place on-line you will be sent confirmation that your application has been received.

Can I apply on-line for a school place for my child after the closing date?

No. Once our closing date of 4.30pm 28 November 2008 has passed all applications, or change of preference, must be notified to the CSA in writing.

What address is used for school admissions purposes?

The address you give on the application form must be the one on the Island where you and your child usually live i.e. in the case of admissions for September 2009 the relevant address will be where you and your child are living on **28 November 2008**.

The address of children who have parents with shared responsibility will be the address of the parent who is in receipt of the child benefit.

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 (see below)

We cannot offer places based on a possible future address except in the limited circumstances set out below.

For children of serving Service Personnel and other Crown Servants re-locating to the Island from abroad, confirmation of the new posting will be accepted as proof that you will be living on the Island.

If you are planning to move during the admissions process we can consider your child for a place at a primary school provided you can demonstrate that this is a genuine family relocation. Examples of suitable evidence of this include:

- A letter from a solicitor confirming that you have exchanged contracts on or before 28 November 2008 to buy a property on the Isle of Wight
- A tenancy agreement signed and dated by both the tenant and the landlord, confirming that you will be renting a property on the Island on or before 28 November 2008
- A letter from a housing association confirming the address and date that you will be living on the Island

and you have sold, exchanged contracts for the sale or given up the tenancy of your previous home.

If you will be moving to the Island from the mainland this last requirement may be waived. However, should a move to the Island not involve the purchase or renting of a property i.e. if you will be taking up residence with a person who already owns or rents a property here, we will consider your application once your move to the Island has taken place.

Any other evidence or special circumstances will be considered on their merits.

For your child to have priority for a place at a primary school for September 2009, the completed application form and relevant evidence must be received by us by the closing date of 4.30pm on 28 November 2008 whether you send us a completed application form or apply on-line via our website www.eduwight.iow.gov.uk/admissions.

If you are unable to supply the evidence by our closing date your application will not be considered until such time as that evidence is received by the School Admissions Office.

How many schools can I state a preference for?

You can state a preference for three primary schools (including church aided primary schools – see 'Educating your child'). It is important to consider naming your priority area 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 therefore we cannot offer you a place there. You should also make sure you put the schools you would most like your child to attend in priority order.

Remember that, by law, we have to 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, even if you live in the priority area of your preferred school.

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

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

How are places at a school allocated?

Pupils with special educational needs who have a particular school named in their statement must be admitted to the school. For further information please contact the Special Educational Needs Section on (01983) 823410 or SEN@iow.gov.uk. These children will be included in the admissions number of the school.

Further preferences for community and controlled schools will be considered by the Local Authority on the basis of the criteria listed below. Preferences for aided schools will be considered by the school's governing body on the basis of 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.

1. Children who are in the care of a local authority;
2. Pupils with a specific medical condition, confirmed by a consultant paediatrician or similar, 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 evidence supplied at the time of application confirming 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. Pupils living in the school's priority area who, at the time of application, have an elder sibling (brother or sister):
 - who is already at the school; and
 - who will still be in attendance at the school in September 2009
4. Other pupils living within the school's priority area;
5. Pupils living outside the school's priority area who, at the time of application, have an elder sibling (brother or sister):

- who is already at the school; and
 - who will still be in attendance at the school in September 2009
6. Controlled schools only: - Pupils living outside the priority area whose parents ask for a place for religious reasons. (Any application for a place at a particular school for religious reasons must be supported at the time of application by a letter from your church minister, confirming that your family goes to church at least once a month and has done so for the last six months or more before you made the application);
 7. Pupils living outside the school's priority area.

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.

Example: *If we can offer places at a school to pupils in the first six criteria, but there are not enough for all those children in criterion seven, we will offer any places that remain to those whose home (measured from their front gate) is nearest to the main gate of that school, (or main entrance if there is no gate) as measured in a straight line.*

If only one place at a school is available within the admissions number and there are twins in the family who have the next highest priority within the oversubscription criteria, we will try to offer places to both. However, this may not always be possible because of the Government's limits on class sizes at primary schools.

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. If you wish to do this you should write to the School Admissions Office at County Hall immediately. You cannot apply on-line for a change of preference after our closing date of 28 November 2008. Please remember, however, that your application will then be treated as late and children of parents who have applied for a place at a school by the published closing date will have priority for admission over those who change their preferences after the closing date. This means that, even though you may have moved into the priority area of a particular primary school, your child may not get a place there if it is already oversubscribed. If this happens you can appeal and your child's name will be put on the waiting list.

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

We will post the letter with the result of your application on 2 March 2009. If you applied on-line for a school place for your child the result will also be emailed to you.

My application has been refused - can I appeal?

If we cannot offer your child a place at your preferred school, you can appeal to an appeals panel which is totally independent of us. Enclosed with our letter, which tells you that there is no place available, will be a booklet which explains how to make an appeal. 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.

In exceptional circumstances, a second appeal may take place if you are able to provide new evidence which could not have been introduced at the time of the original appeal hearing.

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

Children refused a place(s) at their preferred community or controlled school will be automatically placed on a waiting list unless you specifically request that this must not happen. The waiting list will operate until your child gains a place or until the end of the school year. In July a form will be sent to you to complete and indicate if you wish your child's name to remain on the waiting list. If you do not return this form by 31 August 2010 your child will be removed from the waiting list.

Where your child is placed on the school's waiting list depends upon the oversubscription criteria set out on page 4. We do not give priority on a first-come first-served basis. If you apply late but live in the priority area, 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 and down as others join the list or are removed from it.

Waiting lists for September 2009 admissions will be established for the first time on 23 March 2009.

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 etc) to that school. If you would like to state a preference for a different school, please get in touch with us immediately.