



Isle of Man
Government

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Department of Education and Children
Rheynn Ynsee as Paitchyn

Advice for parents relocating to the Island

Introduction

This leaflet assists parents who are relocating to live in the Isle of Man by answering commonly asked questions about the education system. If you have additional queries, please ring +44 1624 685820 and speak to our administrative or schools' teams and we will be pleased to assist you. Alternatively, email your query to admin@doe.gov.im or visit our website www.gov.im and click on the A-Z menu or visit the Department of Education and Children's (DEC) pages under 'D'.

Is there a state-run pre-school system in the Isle of Man?

No. All nurseries and pre-schools are run by private operators. However, you will be eligible for £1700 in pre-school credit from the Isle of Man Government in the academic year your child reaches his/her fourth birthday, with a further £700 if you are on certain benefits. Please visit www.gov.im and click on 'Pre school' for more information and to complete an online application form.

Is the school year the same as in the UK?

Broadly. The academic year starts in early September and runs until late July and there are holidays at Christmas and Easter and half term breaks in the autumn and spring terms. In the summer term, schools close the week the TT races are held. This holiday differs from the UK's summer term break and, as a result, students can expect to sit external exams.

At what age will my child start school?

Your child will start school in the academic year in which he/she turns five.

How many schools are there in the Isle of Man?

The Department of Education and Children runs 32 primary schools, including one that teaches in Manx, and five secondary schools. Children attend primary school until the year they turn 11 and then switch to secondary school.

How are school places allocated?

Primary and secondary schools in the Island have catchment areas and children are expected to attend the school in whose catchment they live. Requests for out of catchment places are usually only granted where there are sound educational reasons. Applications must be made in writing on the relevant form and the decision will take into account schools' capacities as well as individual circumstances. Full details are on www.gov.im under 'School admissions'.



Putting the Customer **First**

How do I find out which catchment area I'll be in?

If you know your new address or postcode, visit www.gov.im, go to the green 'Maps' button in the bottom right hand corner and enter the information into 'address search', then click on 'local information' and view 'my school catchment'. If you don't have your address and your query is more general, please contact us by phone or email and we'll assist you.

What is the enrolment procedure?

Contact the administrator at the school your child will attend. There are links to all schools' websites on the A-Z menu on www.gov.im Kindly note that during holidays, there may be no-one to answer your call.

Does this procedure differ if my child has a statement of special educational needs?

Yes. School places for children with a statement of special educational needs are allocated centrally. If your child has such a statement, please contact Sue Marriott, Special Educational Needs Adviser. Tel: +44 1624 686067. Email: s.marriott@doe.sch.im

I am taking schooling into account when deciding where to live. Which are the best schools?

All our schools have significant strengths but all are distinctive and we would recommend you arrange with headteachers to visit schools to see which would best suit the needs of your child.

I am renting a property temporarily but plan to live in another catchment area once a property becomes available. Can I enrol my child in the catchment area I'll be moving to?

Your child would normally be expected to attend school in the catchment area in which you now live. Once you move, your child can stay on at this school or move to the school in the new catchment area. If you are in the process of purchasing or leasing a property and can present evidence of this, to the satisfaction of the Department, along with an out of catchment area application form, this may be taken into consideration by the Department.

I am moving from abroad. What paperwork will my child's new school require?

You will require your passport and your child's passport, your child's birth certificate (with a certified translation if appropriate) and evidence of your address on the Island. Any paperwork that will help your child's new school assess their needs, so that their transition is as smooth as possible, would be welcomed. This might include recent school reports, results of examinations, a copy of any assessments carried out by professionals etc.

Can my child attend Reception class part time?

Your child is required to attend school full-time when they turn five. Requests to attend part-time prior to turning five should be made direct to your child's school.

How does the curriculum differ from that in the UK?

The curriculum content is largely drawn from the English national curriculum, but also draws on the Island's unique geographical, cultural and historic features. Schools have the freedom to deliver lessons in an imaginative way. The Island's Essentials for Learning approach encourages the development of the well-rounded child by teaching through the 'six Rs' – readiness, relationships that are positive, resourcefulness, resilience, remembering skills and reflectiveness. To find out more about the curriculum, visit <https://www2.sch.im/groups/essentialsforlearningparentsinformation/>

How are children assessed?

Our schools use continuous teacher assessment from Reception class through to Key Stage 3 and the information gathered from this process is used formatively to decide what children need to learn next to improve their performance. You will receive frequent updates on the progress your child is making and receive formal reports on teachers' assessments at the end of each Key Stage. Teachers are provided with a framework against which they make assessments and the Department quality assures teacher assessment through external moderation visits and the work of its Education Improvement Service.

When will my child take SATs?

Your child will not take SATs at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 or 3. Instead, ongoing teacher assessment informs children, parents and teachers of children's current performance and generates next steps in learning.

Can my child sit GCSEs and A levels?

Schools in the Isle of Man currently enter pupils for GCSEs and A levels. Over the next few years, pupils will increasingly be entered for International GCSEs, mainly using Cambridge International Examinations (with a small number of WJEC GCSEs). This move will ensure an outward-looking curriculum and will retain tiered papers in nearly all subject areas. It will also provide opportunities for coursework and ensure that if a student reaches the specified standard, he/she will be given the grade. At A level, students will continue to sit the A levels offered by the examination boards in England and Wales as the main route to university.

How does the quality of education in the Isle of Man compare with that in the UK?

Recent investment in education has seen new junior and secondary schools being built and impressive new facilities created at several other schools. Visitors to our schools comment on the high standards of pupil behaviour and on the wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities open to pupils. The Island has a profile way beyond that which would be expected, given its size, in sport, while the arts and music are other areas of excellence in schools and via the Music Service's orchestras, bands and choirs. The Island has also attracted global praise for its innovative use of ICT in the classroom.

How are schools inspected?

Standards at Island schools are monitored by a cyclical School Self Review and Evaluation (SSRE), a system by which schools consider how well they are performing under five headings. A senior officer from the DEC is responsible for quality assuring schools and visits them regularly to ensure a focus is maintained on striving for improvement. In addition, on a three-yearly cycle, an external validator from off the Island visits a school and can agree with, or revise, these judgments.

Will the Isle of Man Department of Education and Children continue my child's support as outlined in the statement of Special Educational Needs?

The DEC does not operate the UK statement process, but there are similarities with regards to identifying special needs and providing appropriate support. As such, SEN staff will consider, in consultation with appropriate partner agencies, the support identified in the UK statement and discuss options with you.

What resources do schools have for students with special needs?

The Island has a comprehensive range of specialist educational provision and services, including 15 Special Units (10 attached to primary schools and 5 attached to secondary schools), a dedicated sensory team (visual and hearing support), an Educational Psychology Service, a Pre-School Assessment Centre and the Education Support Service (supporting children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties). The Department of Education and Children works closely with partner agencies (eg, speech and language, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and occupational therapy) to ensure children and young people have access to appropriate services and resources.

My child doesn't speak English as a first language. What assistance will be available for us?

We operate an inclusive policy and children with all languages and from all cultures are welcomed and valued in our schools. A team of staff works with schools to give highly individual support to pupils with English as an additional language and their teachers.

Will my child have the opportunity to learn Manx?

Children have the chance to learn Manx Gaelic at primary schools and the language can be studied further at secondary school to A level standard. Bunscoill Ghaelgagh in St John's follows the normal primary curriculum but teaches through the medium of Manx. The school is open to all regardless of catchment area. For further information contact – Manx in primary schools: Rob Teare at: r.teare@ug.sch.im +44 7624 225326; Bunscoill Ghaelgagh: Headteacher, Julie Matthews headteacher@bunscoill.sch.im +44 1624 803330; general information: Adrian Cain greinneyder@mhf.org.im or +44 7624 451098 or visit www.learnmanx.com

How do you assist pupils to make the transition between primary and secondary school?

The 'One Island, One School' transition model sees primary and secondary schools work together in a number of ways to support the move of pupils from Year 6 into Year 7. Year 6 pupils have the

opportunity to spend time enjoying lessons and activities in secondary school prior to transfer, so they are familiar with key staff and their new surroundings, meaning the move to the secondary school is much less daunting for them. The aim of 'One Island, One School' is to ensure a smooth transition of learning as well as effective induction for all the Island's year 6 pupils.

How does exam attainment compare with the UK's?

The Island's pass rates at GCSE and A level usually compares favourably with those of the UK. Results in the Isle of Man are published in the form of tables and graphs showing schools' results over the last five years rather than one league table. Visit www.gov.im, click on Department of Education and Children and see the 'Policy and Procedures A-Z' for the current information.

What further and higher education opportunities are available locally?

University College Isle of Man (UCM), which incorporates the former Isle of Man International Business School, offers academic, vocational, leisure and recreational courses, including a dozen subjects at degree level, through its partner, the University of Chester. Please visit its website <http://www.ucm.ac.im/>

Are Isle of Man students eligible to attend universities in the UK and further afield?

Students staying on into sixth form at the DEC's five secondary schools generally study between three and five subjects at A level to gain the necessary entry qualifications and apply for places through UCAS, just as UK students do. The vast majority of students from the Island get into their first or second choice universities and those who go through the clearing system are usually successful in obtaining places.

Is funding available for students attending higher education courses?

The Isle of Man Government seeks a universal contribution of £2,500 a year from students towards the cost of their degree courses, with a further, means-tested, contribution if family income exceeds £100,000. A loan scheme supports this. The Government continues to meet the balance of the cost of degree courses – up to a maximum of £9,000 a year in most cases. This cap is waived for courses in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science. A third of students who enter higher education also qualify for means-tested maintenance grants to help them pay for accommodation etc. Residential and academic criteria apply for student seeking funding for university courses. Students are required to have been resident in the Island for four years prior to commencing study at university. They must have attained a minimum of 200 UCAS points, regardless of any lower offer that might be received from a university. For more information visit www.gov.im and click on 'Student grants'.

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