



THE ISLAND FREE SCHOOL

Welcome to our January newsletter

Dear Parents,

After two years of hard work, our fantastic school is finally beginning to come to life. Headmaster Steph Boyd has taken up his post and, alongside Office Manager Vicky Turtle, has begun to put into action all the plans and policies so painstakingly developed over the past 24 months.

Here are our updates on all the key areas of the school's development:

Governance

Please visit our website [here](#) to read about the appointment of our Community and Foundation Governors who will be responsible for ensuring that the school meets our vision for outstanding education. Our highly qualified and experienced group has already begun a detailed training programme. This includes workshops delivered by the National Governors' Association to ensure that our governance team are fully briefed and are ready to take up their responsibilities in September. There will be further opportunities for parents to join this exciting team once offers of pupil places have been confirmed in March.

Public Consultation

As part of the development of our bid to open an outstanding school in the South Wight we have asked for a catchment area so that we are on an equal footing with all other schools. This is now up for public consultation and we would ask that all of you once more show your support for our school and complete the consultation. The consultation is open to all adults so please gather as much support as you can.

The consultation can be accessed here: <http://www.iwight.com/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/School-Admissions/Admissions-Consultation-2015>

Admissions

The 72 children who applied for music scholarships have now been assessed and successful candidates will be informed on National Offer Day (Monday 3 March 2014).

We are currently working on the straight line home to school distance measurements so that we can allocate 45% of the places at the school by distance. Key measurements will be double checked by the local authority using their GIS system to ensure accuracy.

Once this has been done, we will conduct a lottery draw for the remaining places. Steve Stubbings, Mayor of Ventnor and Deputy Leader of the Isle of Wight Council, will be our independent witness to verify that the process is fair.

All results will be shared on National Offer Day on Monday 3 March.

Staffing

There was huge interest, both nationally and internationally, in the four senior teaching posts that we advertised in December. Shortlisted candidates were interviewed on Saturday 18 January for the following positions: Head of English, Head of Mathematics, Head of Languages and Head of Year 7.

Candidates were involved in a rigorous day long interview involving lesson observations, data tasks, written tasks, presentations, formal interviews and team work challenges. By the end of the day the interview panel was delighted that there were four candidates whose background and skills were of a high enough quality to be offered posts at our school.

The Headmaster will complete school visits to see each of these candidates teach, prior to formal offers of employment being made. We look forward to sharing the full details of these appointments in early February.

Meanwhile we have now begun the advertising process for the remaining five teaching posts and are currently advertising for outstanding teachers of Science, History, Geography, Music and Physical Education. Please see www.theislandfreeschool.org/jobs.

Site

As reported last month, we have secured our temporary home at the former St Boniface Primary School site. The Headmaster has now met with our Education Funding Agency project manager and begun to develop plans for the renovation of the site to ensure that it meets the needs of an outstanding secondary school.

Plans for the permanent site, which will be located nearby, are progressing well and all parties are looking to agree the final details in the next few weeks.

National Offer Day

As previously mentioned, all parents will receive written notification of the outcome of their application for a place at The Island Free School on Monday 3 March. Those who are offered a place at the school will then be invited to attend a meeting on Saturday 15 March. The time and venue for this meeting will be shared in the offer letter. At the meeting we will provide details of calendared events over the coming months. Parents will also be given the opportunity to share their thoughts on the development of aspects of the school including term dates, the parent association and the developing governance of the school.

Kind regards,

The Island Free School Team

An Island school for Island families offering outstanding education for all