

## FAQs

***Q: Why have you decided to close the Isle of Wight Studio School when the local community are demanding it stays open?***

**A:** The Department have informed us that they received numerous responses from members of the local community who portrayed their high regard for the school and its staff. The DfE considered and assessed all responses. Concurrently the DfE and IAT carried out further financial and educational analysis, which has confirmed our view that the school is not viable in its current form.

***Q: Why have you decided to keep the school open until August 2019?***

**A:** In order to honour the commitment made to the current year 10s, the school will remain open to enable these pupils to complete their courses, several of which are not offered elsewhere on the Island. It also means that children will not have to move school twice in two years, which we believe would be detrimental to their educational experience.

***Q: Why are you closing the Isle of Wight Studio School when it provides an alternative model of education, which meets the needs of less academic students?***

**A:** Operating a school at 40% capacity indefinitely is unsustainable. This is not in the best interests of the school or prospective students as its income is too small to pay for everything the school needs. The DfE has noted the support from the community for more vocational education to support the local economy. The Department wants to ensure that all provision is of the highest quality and provides genuine value. The Isle of Wight College and new Centre of Excellence for Composites, Advanced Manufacturing and Marine are a strength in this respect for post-16 vocational and technical education. We will continue to work with the local authority and academy trusts operating on the island to improve vocational and careers education across all schools on the Isle of Wight.

***Q: Why not allow the school to join another Multi-Academy Trust?***

**A:** Prior to making the in-principle decision for closure, the DfE together with the Trust extensively explored other options for the future of the school. We spoke to potential trusts, both on and off the Island, about sponsoring the studio school. However, the long-term viability of the school presented challenges to finding a trust willing to proceed.

***Q: Why don't you consider expanding the age range of the school?***

**A:** We have considered expanding the school to year 9 to year 13. However, last year the school recognised that there was insufficient demand for years 12 and 13 in the area so it closed the sixth form. We have also discussed the option to add a Year 9 with the Local Authority. However, DfE guidance states that this is not possible as the school is not Ofsted 'Good' nor 'Outstanding'. Additionally, there is already an over-provision on the Isle of Wight of secondary school places. As an age range expansion is not possible and pupil numbers are unlikely to increase, the school, in its current form, is not financially viable in the long term.

**Q: Why hasn't the Trust provided better support (financial or educational) to prevent the need for the closure of the Isle of Wight Studio School?**

**A:** The Trust has worked very closely with the IOW Studio School to support educational provision at the school, for example strengthening the leadership of the school. However, the underlying challenges outside of its control have meant that the school has not been able to attract sufficient numbers of pupils across the age-range of the studio school model (14-19) to make the school financially viable in the long term.

**Q: How many pupils are affected by this and what will happen to them?**

**A:** The school currently has 120 pupils - 71 in the current Year 11 and 49 in Year 10.

The announcement should not affect Year 11 pupils who are finishing their GCSEs and who will move as planned in the autumn to sixth forms on the Island, the Isle of Wight College or apprenticeships. To minimise disruption for the current Year 10 pupils, the IOW Studio School will remain open until the summer 2019, to enable these pupils to complete their GCSEs at the Studio School.

Pupils who have applied to the school for next academic year are able to stay at their current school or they can be offered a place at a suitable alternative school.

**Q: My child currently attends the Studio School, do I need to find an alternative school?**

**A:** No, the Studio School will close in August 2019 by which time all current students will have completed their education.

**Q I had planned that my child would attend the Studio School starting in September 2018 is this possible?**

**A:** The Studio School will not be admitting new students for September 2018 as they would not be able to finish their education within this institution. If your child is home educated and you wish to find a place in a school then you will need to make an application for a school place. If you wish to consider an alternative school then you have a right to apply to a different school who will admit your child if they have spaces.

If you need to apply for a school place then information can be found on the Isle of Wight Council's website and you should also contact School Admissions on [school.admissions@iow.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@iow.gov.uk) or by phoning 01983 821000.