

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2026/27

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide International Sharing School (ISS) with a clear, transparent, and structured framework to guide prospective and current families through the admissions and enrolment process. By ensuring that standardised procedures are followed, this policy guarantees that all families are treated with equality and fairness. Additionally, it serves as a reference point for current families, offering clarity on their journey at ISS and, if necessary, providing guidance during the withdrawal process.

MISSION STATEMENT

International Sharing School aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and open-minded lifelong learners who aspire to build a better tomorrow, through a supportive, respectful and caring environment promoting learning through sharing.

LEARNING AT ISS

ISS seeks to attract students who demonstrate a positive attitude and a willingness to embrace the academic and personal challenges of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programmes.

At ISS, English is the language of instruction, and all communication with parents is conducted in English. The school welcomes students regardless of ethnicity, religious beliefs, nationality, social background, or gender, nurturing an environment of inclusivity and equality. ISS is committed to a holistic approach to teaching and learning, ensuring the personal, social, and academic development of every student.

The diverse student and staff population at ISS reflects the school's commitment to cultural inclusivity. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting international-mindedness and fostering an appreciation for multicultural understanding within the curriculum and throughout school life.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Step 1: Send an Enquiry

Begin your journey with ISS by completing an online Registration of Interest through the OpenApply platform (<https://iss-madeira.openapply.com/roi>).

Step 2: Book a Tour

We warmly invite all prospective families to get to know our unique learning environment. Schedule a personalised School Tour of our campus in Madeira or, if you are not yet in Portugal, join us for an online meeting.

Step 3: Submit Application

Complete and submit the full application form through OpenApply, providing us with the following:

- School records for the previous two years. A final report card for the current school year must be provided before joining ISS. Applicants will only be able to join the respective grade level if they have successfully completed the previous grade level. Scanned copies or photos of the original documents are acceptable, along with an English translation. For younger applicants in Early Years or Grade 1, report cards may not be necessary.
- Any relevant medical or psychoeducational reports if applicable.
- Copies of passports or IDs for the student(s) and both parents/guardians.

Step 4: Interviews

- Family Interview: Applicants for Grades 1 to 7 participate in a family interview online or in person.
- Individual Interview: Applicants for Grade 8 and above attend an individual interview online or in person.
- A Trial Day/Lesson Observation may be requested.

Step 5: Offer of Vacancy / Confirmation of Enrolment

Once all steps are complete, the final decision of the pedagogical leadership team will be communicated to the parents.

- a. Application is approved, families will receive a formal offer of a place of study
- b. Application is approved but respective grade level is full - families will be offered the option to join the waitlist
- c. Application is declined and family will be provided with an explanation on the grounds of which this was done

Enrolment is confirmed upon receipt of the Enrolment Fee. Families will receive official confirmation and be welcomed into the ISS community.

Withholding or Omitting Information

By completing the enrolment process, families agree to adhere to the school's policies and confirm that all relevant documents, including prior school reports and psychoeducational/medical declarations, have been accurately provided. All the relevant information that may result in the need for special educational support must be provided prior to enrolment. Any omissions or falsifications may result in appropriate actions by the school's leadership, including the cancellation of enrolment. Fees which have already been paid will not be refunded.

GRADE PLACEMENT

At ISS, we take great care in determining the most appropriate grade placement for each student. Our goal is to ensure every child is placed in a grade level that supports their academic growth and emotional wellbeing.

Guidelines for Grade Placement

1. Age-Appropriate Placement: Grade placement is primarily determined by the student's age as of 15th September of the academic year, as a guideline. For more information, refer to our Grade Placement Table at <https://madeira.sharingschool.org/grades-conversion/>
2. Final Decision: The final grade placement is determined by the Pedagogical Leadership Team, ensuring alignment with the student's academic history, social, and emotional needs.
3. Offer of Vacancy:
 - a. The grade level specified in the Offer of Vacancy letter is reserved for the student once all required fees are paid.
 - b. Changes to the grade level after the Offer of Vacancy is issued cannot be guaranteed, even if the student fails to complete the previous grade level or demonstrates exceptional performance.
4. Placement Assessments:
 - a. The school reserves the right to request applicants to conduct additional placement tests.
 - b. Students may be invited for a trial day or half-day to observe their interaction and readiness within a peer group.

PROGRAMMES

Early Years Programme:

- Early Years 3: 3–4yo, potty-trained, formal and play-based activities.
- Early Years 4: 4–5yo, potty-trained, formal and play-based activities.
- Early Years 5: 5–6yo, equivalent to Portuguese preschool, preparation for Grade 1 with foundational reading and writing skills, activities both in the morning and afternoon.

For further information on the EY Programme please visit:
<https://madeira.sharingschool.org/early-years-programme/>

Primary Years Programme (PYP):

Subjects include Unit of Inquiry: Science & Social Studies, Mathematics, Languages (English and Portuguese, Spanish, French, German or Mandarin), Physical Education, Music, Library and Personal, Social and Health Education.

- Grade 1 (PYP1): 6–7yo, English support available for beginners.
- Grade 2 (PYP2): 7–8yo, English support available for beginners.
- Grade 3 (PYP3): 8–9yo, English support available for beginners.
- Grade 4 (PYP4): 9–10yo, English support available for beginners.
- Grade 5 (PYP5): 10–11yo, English support available for beginners.

For further information on the PYP Programme please visit:
<https://madeira.sharingschool.org/primary-years-programme/>

Middle Years Programme (MYP):

- Grade 6 – Grade 10 (MYP1–MYP5): 11–16yo. Subjects include languages (English, Portuguese, French, Spanish, German, Mandarin), Integrated Sciences, Individuals and Societies, Mathematics, Design, Arts (Music, Visual Art) and Physical & Health Education.

For further information on the MYP Programme please visit:
<https://madeira.sharingschool.org/middle-years-programme/>

Diploma Programme (DP):

- Grade 11 (DP1): 16–17yo. Students choose six subjects across six subject groups, completing IB core requirements plus Extended Essay, TOK and CAS.
- Grade 12 (DP2): 17–18yo. Continuation of DP1 studies, culminating in final exams and completion of all IB components.

For further information on the DP Programme please visit:
<https://madeira.sharingschool.org/diploma-programme/>

Diverse Classrooms

Grade placement is based on age. With students from approximately 30 nationalities, age and grade placements may differ based on national education systems. An age difference within a classroom may occur in exceptional situations.

We strive to make grade placement a smooth and supportive process, ensuring students are set up for success both academically and emotionally. If you have further questions or concerns, our admissions team is here to assist.

At our school, we strive to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. If you are aware or believe that your child may have Special Educational Needs, we kindly ask that you inform the school during the admissions process. This allows us to better understand your child's needs and ensure that the appropriate support and resources are available to help them thrive.

SCHOOL FEES

At ISS, we follow a transparent tuition fee structure to provide clarity and ensure all necessary resources are included in the educational experience. Our tuition fee schedule is available online at <https://madeira.sharingschool.org/tuition-fees/> and is reviewed annually to reflect current market conditions.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL / CANCELLATION OF ENROLLMENT

Parents or guardians must notify the school in writing via email at admissions@madeira.sharingschool.org one full term before the student's intended departure.

Deadlines for Notice of Withdrawal (during the academic year)

- Leaving after Term 1 on 11th December 2026: **Notify before the 30th September 2026.**
- Leaving after Term 2 on 25th March 2027: **Notify before Term 2 begins on 5th January 2027.**
- Leaving after Term 3 on 30th June 2027: **Notify before Term 3 begins on 13th April 2027.**

Failure to meet these deadlines will result in charges for the subsequent term.

Once the school has received the notice of withdrawal, the family will be asked to complete the Withdrawal Form on OpenApply.

WAITLIST PROCEDURE

If a grade level or age group is full at the time of application, the school will offer the family the option to join the waitlist. This incurs a non-refundable fee of € 600. A child on the waitlist will have priority for any vacancy that arises in that age group. If no vacancy becomes available during the academic year, the school will prioritise the student for the following grade level in the next academic year, provided the student has completed the current grade in another institution during that time. In such cases, the family will not need to pay the enrolment fee to confirm the child's vacancy; the waitlist fee will cover the enrolment fee.

The Waiting List is processed in a "first come, first served" basis, with priority given to:

- Siblings of students already enrolled at ISS;
- International students;
- Students allowing the maintenance of a balanced ratio of nationalities;

CONDITIONAL OFFERS

After the completion of the application process, including necessary interviews and placement tests, the school may extend a conditional offer to the applicant. This offer will be at the discretion of the school Principal and will be accompanied by a letter detailing any specific conditions applicable to the applicant.

By submitting an application, the family acknowledges and consents to the processing of personal data in accordance with this policy. This policy reflects our commitment to protecting personal information while ensuring transparency and trust in our admissions processes.



International
sharing school
madeira-portugal