



Procedures for appeal hearings

Admission Appeals Timetable

Admission Authorities are responsible for arranging hearings, but appeals must be heard within the following timescales:

On time school application decision sent on/after 1 March hearing should be heard by 6th July.

Late applications should be heard within 30 days of lodging the appeal.

In-year applications should be heard within 30 days of appeal being lodged.

Admission Authorities should publish a timetable of event in advance, including period when appeals for normal round expected.

Parents have right to appeal against AA's decision refusing your child's admission to school. When admission is refused parents must receive following information in writing from AA:

- Details of why your application was unsuccessful.
- Notification of right of appeal, including details of how, and to whom to make the appeal.
- Where you can obtain further information.
- Their right to attend the appeal hearing.

Letters and information for parents must not limit the grounds on which parents can make their appeal (parents can put forward whatever case they choose).

Must not comment on likelihood of success, but can refer to % of successful appeals nationally or in LA in previous years.

If the AA discovers an error was made in applying the school's admission arrangements and that child should have been offered a place, it must offer a place without requiring the parents/carers to go through the appeals process, except in exceptional circumstances.

What happens next?

Send back your form or letter as quickly as possible

You don't have to write out your whole case now just say you want to appeal and give as many reasons as you can.

Send you letter to:

The local authority, for community and controlled schools

The school itself, for all others.

Example:

To the Appeal Panel c/o The Local Authority or The Chair of School Governors.

Date

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to appeal against the decision not to give my child (name) a place at (name of school).

If you have an official form on which I should write my appeal, please send it to me as soon as possible.

My grounds for appeal are; (outline as many reasons as possible)

Yours faithfully

Parent.

When your appeal is heard depends on when you applied;

You must be given 10 school days to send in your written appeal. You can put forward whatever case you choose in your appeal, except for infant class size appeals, where there are limited reasons for upholding an appeal,

You should be told in writing the date of your appeal hearing at least 10 school days before it is held.

You must also submit your evidence and any other relevant information any time before the hearing, however if it is submitted late the appeal hearing may be adjourned.

At least 7 working days before the hearing you must be sent all the appeal papers and at least 3 days before you should be notified of the details of the panel members and clerk plus all the information you may have reasonably requested plus details of any witnesses who will give evidence.

What will the panel look at?

The clerk will check whether the admission rules were followed properly and if the school could take extra pupils.

The panel will consider the problems your child may have if they do not go to the school of your choice alongside the problems the school may face if they have to take an extra child.

The rules governing school admissions will be checked as schools can have their own admission rules which may change from year to year. These are generally called the admission criteria or the oversubscription criteria and must be in the local authority guide or prospectus for local schools.

If the rules have not been applied correctly and you think a mistake has been made, contact the admission authority. If they agree with you—usually your child will be able to go to the school even if it is full.

If they don't agree—write down why you think they are wrong. When you receive the appeal papers if you do not agree with what is said, write down your reasons.

'I do not feel that the admission rules have been followed because....'

My child has been discriminated against.

If your child has a disability and you feel that the admission authority has discriminated against your child, for example by treating your application differently than for other children, or refusing to accept, you may be able to claim discrimination.

If you think your child has been treated less fairly because of their race, your views should be part of your case. Write down why you think discrimination has taken place.

'I think my child has been discriminated against because.....'

About your child

Write a bit about your child, think carefully write down in detail how each point affects your child in school and at home.

Points that could be used include;

- What is your child good at?
- What does your child like to do?
- Any health problems now or in the early years?
- Any social problems—shyness, victim of bullying?
- Any family problems?
- Any emotional problems—anxiety or low self-esteem?

Why my child must go to this school

Think carefully about all the issues that show how only the school you are appealing for can meet your child's needs.

1. Why this school would be good for your child and..
2. Why it would be difficult for your child if they didn't go this school.

The letter could start.....

' This school would be good for my child because.....'

- It has a good anti bullying policy
- It has good sports facilities
- My child really liked the school
- Most of my child's friends go there
- It is very close to where we live
- It is a very easy journey
- It is a mixed school or a single sex school
- Most of our community goes there
- It teaches 3 different languages or single sciences etc.

Explain why each point is so important for your child.

'If my child does not go to this school I am very worried that.....'

Explain how your child may be affected at home or in school if they don't go to this school.

Other School's

Always try to visit other schools available, take your child with you if you wish. Do not give generally negative views of other schools, some may have been given a bad name unfairly.

Proof

- Have you any reports to back up your case?
- Get a doctor to write a letter if they agree with you.
- Check the school profile, school prospectus and inspection reports

The Hearing and Panel

Generally there are 3 panel members who can ask questions whenever they wish, plus a clerk to take notes.

You may take a partner, friend or your School Choice Adviser along with you for support .

After the hearing you should be notified of the panel's decision by letter. The letter should be sent as soon as possible or within 5 working days.

The letter should give clear and detailed reasons for the panel decision.

Taken from: Appealing for a school ACE booklet

[Www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)