

School Appeals Guidance Notes for In-Year Ordinary Prejudice Appeals

The appeal panel will consider the reasons for your preference, and individual circumstances relating to your application. To ensure the panel considers all your information/evidence, you **must** submit it by the specified deadline, **5 working days before the hearing date**. The deadline will be notified when you are given notice of the hearing date.

VERY IMPORTANT: If you do not submit all your information and evidence by the specified deadline, the Panel must decide before the hearing starts whether to accept the late information. In deciding, the panel will consider the significance of the late information and the effect of a need to adjourn the hearing. It may be necessary to adjourn the hearing to a different date to enable all parties to consider further the late information/evidence submitted.

You will be given not less than 10 school days' notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing at which you can be present and speak. You can, if you wish, be accompanied by a friend who may speak for you and represent your views to the appeal panel. Most appeals are heard remotely online using Zoom. Parents for whom English is not the first language may wish to arrange for an interpreter to be present.

You are encouraged to attend the appeal panel meeting. If you prefer not to attend the panel will consider the case based on your written submission(s). Alternatively, a friend or representative may present the appeal on your behalf.

You may wish to write down in advance what you wish to say to the panel and use your own notes to speak from on the day. It is important that you don't think afterwards of something you forgot to say, or wish you had said, as the panel must not accept additional information after the appeal has been heard.

You will need to demonstrate that your child's need for a place at the school outweighs the Admission Authority's reasons for refusing a place. You should consider how that school will meet your child's individual needs. What will your child gain from attending your preferred school that he/she will not get from attending any other school. If part of your case for seeking a new school for your child is dissatisfaction with the current school, such as you believe your son/daughter is being bullied, you are advised to provide evidence such as letters of complaint with the school's written response and other correspondence or any other relevant documents/evidence.

If you believe your child's home to school distance has been calculated incorrectly, please raise this with the admission authority before the hearing date to enable them to check the distance.

You are also welcome to submit additional letters of support from professionals or other parties who have been, or are currently, involved with your child. These may be letters which substantiate your case or actively support your preference. The appeal panel will consider all submissions received.

The Clerk to the Independent School Appeals Panel will explain the procedure of the appeal hearing before the appeal begins.

The sequence of events is likely to be:

School's Case

- i) Presentation of the school's case by the representative of the Admission Authority
- ii) Questioning by the parent/carer(s) and the Appeal Panel
- iii) Summing-up by the representative of the Admission Authority

Parent/Carer's Case

- iv) Presentation of the case by the parent/carers
- v) Questioning by the Appeal Panel/representative of the Admission Authority
- vi) Summing-up by the parent/carers

If more than one family are appealing for the same school on the same day all parents/carers are invited to the same School's case hearing. Individual parent/carers cases are held in private and will be confidential. It should not be necessary for a child to attend, or for there to be witnesses, other than a friend or interpreter mentioned previously.

The appeal panel will ask all parties to withdraw while considering a decision. The decision of the appeal panel will be sent to you in writing by the Clerk to the School Appeals Panel. The decisions of appeal panels are binding upon the parent and the Admission Authority, but parents have statutory rights under other legislation should they wish the matter to be investigated further.

Useful Links

Department for Education (DfE) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>