

DIXONS ACADEMIES GROUPED ADMISSION APPEALS
GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARENTS

- Admissions appeal panels are bodies set up to hear appeals by parents against a refusal to admit their child to their preferred school.
- Appeal panels are independent of the academy and the panel's decision is binding on both parties.
- There will be 3 panel members at your appeal, and they will make the decision to either uphold (grant) or reject your appeal once all the appeals have been heard for that academy.
- A clerk will be in attendance throughout to make notes of the hearings.

Due to the number of appeals made, a multiple appeal process will be used and the procedure for your appeal is as follows:

Stage 1 of the appeal

- You will be invited to attend a group hearing with any other parents who are appealing. At this hearing, the academy will explain the reasons why it is not possible to offer any further places.
- Attendance at stage 1 is optional, but if you have any questions about the academy's stage 1 case (which will be sent to you with the letter for stage 1), they need to be asked at this stage. It will not be possible to ask questions about the academy's stage 1 case at stage 2 of your appeal hearing.
- If you are attending stage 1, please arrive 10 minutes before the hearing time to register.
- The panel will enter the room when everyone is seated.
- Once the chair of the panel has made the opening introductions, the academy will be asked to present their case.
- Parents will then be given the opportunity to ask the academy any questions about the case.
- Panel members will also ask the academy questions about the case.
- The chair of the panel will make sure that everyone can ask any questions they have.
- After all questions have been asked, the panel members will retire from the hearing to consider:
 - a) If the admission arrangements complied with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code and Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998
 - b) If the admission of additional children would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.
- The panel members must uphold the appeal at stage 1 where it finds that:
 - a) the admissions arrangements did not comply with admissions law, or
 - b) that the admission of additional children would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources

However, in multiple appeals where several children would be offered a place, and to admit that number would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources, the panel will proceed to stage 2.

Stage 2 of the appeal

- You will be sent a letter / e-mail with the date and time to attend stage 2 of your appeal, and a statement of case by the academy giving the reasons why your child was not offered a place.
- The only people that will be present at the hearing will be the panel members, the clerk, and the presenting officer for the academy.
- Once introductions have been made, the presenting officer for the academy will be invited to give information relating to the application process.
- You can ask the presenting officer any questions about the statement of case, or the information given.
- The panel may also ask the presenting officer questions.

- The chair of the panel will then invite you to give the reasons why you want a place for your child at the academy.
- The panel members and the presenting officer may ask you questions about those reasons.
- Once all questions have been asked, you will be given the chance to make sure you have said everything you want to say before you leave the hearing.
- You will then be informed by the clerk when the decisions will be made and when you can expect to receive your decision letter.
- This will be the end of the hearing and both you and the presenting officer will leave the hearing.

The appeal panel

An appeal panel is comprised of a chair and at least two other panel members and **must** consist of the following persons with at least one from each category.

- a) lay people (someone without personal experience in the management of any school or provision of education in any school (except as a school governor or in another voluntary capacity));
- b) people who have experience in education, who are acquainted with educational conditions in the local area or who are parents of registered pupils at school.

The clerk

The clerk is independent of the academy and is there to provide an impartial service. They do not take part in decision making.

They will:

- Provide advice on procedure and the admissions law.
- Ensure that all the relevant facts are established, and the appeal is conducted in a fair way.
- Makes notes of the hearing.
- Record the decisions made by the panel.

Further information

- If your reasons for appeal relate to your child's medical or social needs, you should consider providing photocopies of any documents explaining your child's needs, for example, letters or reports from a consultant or a social worker. Any documents will need to be sent to the appeals coordinator at least 5 school days before your stage 2 hearing.
- You may wish to bring a friend, family member, or a professional representative with you to support your appeal. If you do so, it is important that you inform the appeals coordinator of their name, their relationship to you or their profession, at least 5 school days before your hearing.
- It is important that you have read the academy's statement of case before you attend your appeal hearing. If you have not done so, your appeal may be deferred (delayed) to another date.
- If you are unable to attend the stage 2 hearing and you inform the appeals coordinator of this in advance, it may be possible to offer an alternative date / time. However, if you do not inform them in advance and you do not defer your appeal, then it will be heard in your absence and a decision on the outcome will be made.

If you are unsure of anything mentioned in this document, please contact the appeals coordinator.