

Admissions Appeals Information – A Guide for Parents/Carers

It is understandable that you may be very disappointed at not being offered a place at Bishop Ramsey School. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application, you have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. Appeals are heard by an independent panel of three to five voluntary members of the public. At least one will have an educational background. However, the Appeals panel can only consider whether or not you meet the Admissions Criteria and whether the Admissions Committee of the Governing Body correctly assessed your application. Therefore, you should think carefully about whether or not you wish to appeal against the decision. You should keep in mind that:

- An applicant is not entitled to a place at the school simply because they have expressed a preference for it, if the school has reached its admissions limit with those who have a better case for admission under the admissions criteria.
- The Admissions Criteria are those published in the admissions arrangements and are applied strictly as stated.
- The Governors have no authority to vary or set aside the published criteria nor to take into account issues that lie outside the scope of the admissions arrangements.
- The school has a standard number of 186 places in each year group- the Published Admissions Number (PAN)
- The limit is not arbitrary. It is calculated through a DfE formula which is based on the actual size of teaching and other accommodation.
- The Governors believe that any decision to exceed the admissions limit in any year group would compromise efficient education for all students and will put at risk their health, safety and welfare.

If you wish to proceed, this is how the appeal process works:

- You must complete the Governors' 'Notice of Appeal' form and return this with any supporting information by the deadline specified on the form.
- The deadline for receipt of the appeals form is Thursday 30th March 2021. The Appeals Clerk will contact you directly in the weeks following that date.
- The Appeals Clerk will then write to you direct at least 10 school days before the appeal hearing confirming the date, although if you have agreed to less than this period of notice on the 'Notice of Appeal' form it may be later. You will receive a copy of all the appeal papers.
- You need to tell the Appeals Clerk whether or not you can attend. If you cannot make the date of the appeal hearing, the appeal will go ahead in your absence. It will be decided on the written information you submit.
- You should also provide any further written evidence, if any, asked for in the Appeals Clerk's letter. You should be aware that people employed by the school are not allowed to support your appeal, for example by writing a letter for you to take to the hearing.
- You can attend the hearing with a friend if you wish. Either the Head Teacher or his Representative will also be there to present their case.
- The chair of the panel will direct the appeals hearing and make sure that everyone present is treated fairly.

BISHOP RAMSEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Completing the Notice of Appeal form

You should think carefully about the original reasons you gave, if any, for wanting your child to attend the school. You can add more information in the Notice of Appeal. The Appeals panel will be given copies of your original application form and paperwork.

You should send copies of any letters or documents, such as medical evidence, in support of your case with the 'Notice of Appeal' form if you wish to use these at the hearing.

It is advisable to send **all** your evidence with the form but if this is not possible do not delay sending your 'Notice of Appeal' form to arrive by the specified deadline.

Any further evidence may be sent later but should be supplied in good time to be copied and distributed to all panel members to ensure they have the time to give due consideration to this evidence. You may produce other documents at the hearing but you should remember that the members of the panel and the Governors' representative will not have had time to look at these or think about them and adjournment in order to do this may not be possible on the day.

What happens at an appeal hearing?

Both the admission authority and parents are given an opportunity to explain their case without being interrupted. This is what usually happens:

- The panel chair welcomes everyone and explains the procedure.
- The case for the Governors will be put by the Head Teacher or his representative.
- You and your representative and the Panel will have the right to question the Head Teacher or his representative on the statement given by them.
- You and your representative will present your case, including any new evidence for the Appeal.
- The Head Teacher or his representative and the Panel will have the right to question you and your representative.
- Final statement by the Head Teacher or his representative.
- Final statement by you and your representative.
- You and your representative and the Head Teacher or his representative leave the hearing.

Reaching a decision

The appeal panel reaches a decision in private, by a majority vote.

The panel will write to the parents and the admission authority to tell them the decision and give clear reasons for that decision. If the appeal has been upheld you will be advised when your child can start at the school.

If your appeal fails

You can't appeal twice for a place at the same school in the same school year unless the admission authority agrees that your first appeal wasn't conducted properly or they accept that there has been a change in your circumstances.

If you think your appeal hearing was not managed properly, you can write to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to complain, details of which can be obtained from the Appeals Clerk.