

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING AN APPEAL NOTICE

Please read these before filling in your appeal notice

Please return the form (electronically is preferred) to:

OfficeDBE@LeicesterDBE.org or Leicester DBE, St Martin's House, 7 Peacock Lane, Leicester, LE1 5PZ

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Parents have the right to appeal if they do not accept the decision of the Admission Authority of a Church School not offering a place at that particular school. To deal with appeals, special appeals panels will be set up and the Governors will have to abide by the committee's decisions. For some Church Schools, appeals are administered by the Local Authority (LA). For others, the administration of such appeal panels will be carried out by the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE). Parents should check with the school directly whether appeals are administered by the LA or DBE. The following information relates to appeals administered by the DBE.

It is likely that the appeals panel that will look at your appeal will consist of three members appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education. These must come from the following two categories:

- Lay people who have no personal experience in the management of any school or the provision of education in any school;
- People who have experience in education; are acquainted with educational conditions in the area or who are parents of pupils at a school.

At least one panel member must fall within this last category. Alternatively, the appeal committee could consist of five people. The appeal panel are independent of the Governing Bodies of the schools concerned.

THIS APPEAL NOTICE AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which gives you your right of appeal, also says that your appeal must be in writing and you must state the reasons for your appeal. The attached form has some questions that are aimed at finding out some basic information.

If you wish to appeal, please complete and email the appeal form to OfficeDBE@LeicesterDBE.org or send the appeal form (if you have not already submitted an appeal in writing) to the Clerk to the Appeals Panel, Diocesan Board of Education, St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane, Leicester, LE1 5PZ.

HOW THE APPEALS ARE HANDLED

The appeals arrangements are currently slightly different due to COVID, appeals are taking place by phone or video conference or in writing, and panels can have only two members. The emergency rules apply until the end of August 2021 at the least.

A week before the date of your Appeal Hearing, each member of the appeals panel will be sent a copy of your completed Notice of Appeal and any other supporting documentation you may have

submitted. By doing this we have found that parents/carers do not have to go over everything they have written but can concentrate on the important points.

The emphasis is very much on informality. The appeals panels are not open to the public or press and we regard them as strictly confidential. The aim is to give parents/carers a fair opportunity to put their point of view to the appeal panel. Appeals will be heard during the day and you will be informed of the date and your allocated time.

Sometimes there are several appeals for the same school. In that case, we try to arrange for the same appeal committee to deal with all the appeals for that school; if there are a lot of appeals for the same school, the appeal panel will probably have to meet on more than one day but, in any event, it will not reach a decision until it has listened to all those appeals.

During the Appeal Hearing you will have an opportunity to tell the appeal panel why your appeal should be allowed and you will be able to ask questions. The appeal panel may wish to ask questions, if they want to clarify something you have said, but again the aim is to be as informal as possible.

To help us with the administration and to ensure the smooth running of your appeal hearing it would be helpful if you complete questions 7 and 8.

- We have not been involved in the admissions process before this stage so it is important to put forward all your points in your appeal submission even though you may have covered them in your initial application.
- If you enclose original documents with your Notice of Appeal and would like them back, please tell us and we will copy them and return them to you.
- It is important that you cover in your reasons for appealing all factors that you feel will convince the panel to allow your appeal; unless you tell them they will not know about any factors that might make your case special.
- The appeals panel is independent of the Governing Body of the schools. They do not have to apply the same criteria as the Governors in deciding priority and will make their decision based on all facts presented to them from both yourself and the school.

CLERK TO THE APPEAL

For your information: The Clerk to the appeals panel is independent of the schools and has no say in the decision making of the Panel. It is his/her job to ensure that the School Admissions Appeal Code 2012 is followed correctly. You can find a copy of the Admissions Code on our website.

We hope that all of the information contained in this paper answers any questions you may have but if not please do not hesitate to contact us OfficeDBE@LeicesterDBE.org or Diocesan Board of Education, St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane, Leicester LE1 5PZ

COMPLETING THE FORM:

Section A – Appellant & child Details

If you are completing in pen please use BLOCK CAPITALS for Sections A – C

This section is gathering some basic information about you, your child and your appeal:

1. The school you would like your child to go to
2. The school that has been allocated to your child
3. Child's surname
4. Child first name
5. Child's gender
6. Child's date of birth
7. The name of the school your child currently attends. If your child is starting school in reception, then put N/A here.
8. The name of the person completing the form – usually a parent or carer, children 16+ can appeal on their own behalf
9. Your address
10. Your postcode – this is a really important piece of information
11. A telephone number we can contact you on
12. Please ensure your email address is correct as all communication will be through email

Section B - Year Group & Admission Details

1. Please indicate if you wish your child to start immediately (some times called an 'in-year' admission) or if you are appealing for a place for the start of the autumn term.
2. Indicate which year group you are seeking a place at

Section C – Appeal Details

1. You do not need to attend the Appeal Hearing to put your case. The Panel can, if you wish, consider your appeal on your written submission and the comments of the admissions authority. The fact that you are not present when your appeal is heard will make no difference – the appeal panel will be advised that they must give equal attention to all appeals whether or not the parent or guardian is there. If you do not wish to attend or are unable to attend go to Q4 and confirm you are happy for the appeal to be heard on your written submission.
2. If you are attending you can choose, if you wish, to bring a friend or relative with you. If you are going to do this please let us know by completing the details in Q3.
3. Only complete if you are bringing a friend / relative with you to the hearing – leave blank if you will be attending on your own
4. Only complete if you will not be attending the hearing.

Section D – Ground for Appeal

This is your chance to put forward your views – the members of the appeal panel will each receive copies of your submissions in advance of the meeting, as will the school. This allows the panel to have a picture of why you are appealing prior to the Hearing. It is important therefore to answer this section as fully as possible. Please note unless you tell us about it, the appeals panel will not know what you have said in your initial application for your child to be admitted to the school. You can attach additional information to your form such as medical certificates etc.