

WADDES DON CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS REGARDING THE APPEAL PROCESS

1. RETURNING THE APPEAL FORM

If your application is refused you will automatically be offered the opportunity to make an appeal. **You should notify the school in writing** as quickly as possible once you have received the letter of refusal so you can be sent the relevant appeal form to return. Appeal forms should be returned to Waddesdon School and **NOT** to the Local Authority. **YOU HAVE A TOTAL OF 20 SCHOOL DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE LETTER OF REFUSAL IN WHICH TO SUBMIT YOUR APPEAL.** If appeal forms are submitted late the Governors will ask Oxford Diocese to arrange the appeal as soon as they are able to but if it is close to the end of term the hearing may take place at the start of the following term.

Once your appeal form and documentation have been received Waddesdon School will then arrange for appeal forms to be sent to the Clerk to the Appeals Panel, together with relevant documentation. See Section 6.

2. CHILDREN WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The appeal procedures for a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs differ. This is because the appeal is to a Special Educational Needs Tribunal. Further advice about this is available from the Local Authority.

3. WHEN WILL THE APPEAL BE HEARD?

You will normally be given 14 days' notice of the time, date and place for the actual appeal hearing.

If the case is urgent, for example if the school term is about to start, it may be possible to offer you a hearing at shorter notice. In this case please make a note on the appeal form if you do not need 14 days' notice of the appeal date.

4. THE APPEAL PANEL

The appeal will be heard by a three-member Appeal Panel. The Panel will be convened by Oxford Diocese who will be responsible for administering the Appeal Process. Members of the Appeal Panel are those who have some knowledge of education but who have no association with Waddesdon School and are therefore totally independent. The Panel will also include at least one lay member who will also be independent of the school.

5. THE VENUE

Appeal Panel hearings will either be held at the school or at Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington. The majority of appeals for admission to Year 7 will be held during the first full week of May and at Waddesdon School. Late appeals can be held at either venue.

6. THE CLERK

The Appeal Panel will have an Independent Clerk whose job it is to make sure that all the relevant facts are established and that the appeal hearing is fair. The Clerk is employed by Oxford Diocese and provides independent advice on the procedure and evidence and takes brief notes of the hearing. These notes belong to the Appeal Panel and remain confidential. Neither parents nor governors are allowed to see or have a copy of them.

After the hearing, the Independent Appeal Panel Clerk will write to tell you about the Appeal Panel's decision. S/he is not part of the Appeal Panel and does not take any part in discussion of the case with members of the Panel who are responsible for the decision.

7. INFORMATION WHICH WILL BE SENT TO THE CLERK FOR THE INDEPENDENT APPEAL PANEL

Copies of the Appeal form you have submitted, together with any supporting evidence, will be sent to the Appeal Panel members prior to the hearing, with a copy of your original application form and any documentation or correspondence between you and the school. A set of these documents will also be copied to you.

At least 7 days in advance of the hearing you will also be sent details of the Governors' case for refusing admission to the school. If you wish to submit any additional evidence you will be asked to liaise directly with the Clerk to the Appeal Panel.

If parents are unable to attend the hearing on the given date they should advise the Clerk to the Appeals Panel and it may be possible to fix a further date. If parents choose not to attend, the case can be heard in their absence and will be determined on the basis of the written information that has been provided.

8. THE DECISION

The Appeal Panel will consider each case on its merits. It is not bound by the admission criteria and can take other factors into account.

The Independent Appeal Panel Clerk will usually write to parents within 7 days of the hearing to advise them of the Panel's decision and the reasons for it. This may be delayed if there are a number of appeals for the same year group which are being held over several days.

The decision of the Appeal Panel is binding on the Governors.

9. WHAT NEXT?

There is no appeal against the decision of the Independent Appeal Panel. The decision is final and there is no provision for a re-hearing.

The only circumstances under which a second appeal could be heard would be if there was a material change of circumstances which could not have been foreseen at the time of the initial appeal. An example of this might be where the family unexpectedly found themselves in the position of moving into the catchment area of the school.

However if a parent whose appeal has been heard believes that the Panel has acted improperly or unreasonably in handling a case, the parent may make a complaint to the Young People's Learning Agency.

10. THE WAITING LIST AFTER APPEAL

The waiting list is not affected by whether or not parents have submitted an appeal. Governors will continue to offer any place which becomes available to the pupil considered to have first right to the next available place on the waiting list in accordance with their published admission criteria.