INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS OF SCHOOL APPEALS PANELS

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National guidance can be found at: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/ChoosingASchool/DG_4016309>

1. A brief guide to school admission and exclusion appeals

**WHAT DO SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEAL PANELS DO?**

They hear appeals by parents/guardians against decisions of admissions authorities (this is the council for community schools and the school itself for voluntary aided and foundation schools) to refuse them a place at a school they applied to for their child to attend.

Admission appeals come in two forms: those made after the primary/ secondary admissions round and in year appeals. These are commonly referred to as summer and in year appeals respectively and will be throughout the rest of this guide.

Summer appeals relate to pupils being allocated entry level places in year seven.

In year appeals can be submitted at any time and for any year group. They relate to either:

* pupils whose parents/guardians apply for them to change schools within the Ealing Borough and have been refused a place at their preferred alternative school; or
* pupils who have recently moved into the Borough and been refused a place at their preferred school.

**WHAT DO SCHOOL INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANELS DO?**

They hear appeals by parents against decisions to exclude a pupil from a school permanently.

**WHO MAY SERVE ON THE PANELS?**

Our panels consist of three members.

*Admission appeals*

Each Panel must have at least one lay member. This is someone who has not been involved professionally in running of a school or teaching in one. This does not stop someone who is (or has been) a school governor, or been involved with a school in a voluntary capacity from being a lay member.

Each panel must have at least one member who either:

* Has experience in education (such as a teacher, active or retired); or
* Has knowledge of educational conditions in the local area - e.g. a social worker or an experienced school governor; or
* Is a parent of a registered pupil at a school.

**WHAT’S THE TIME COMMITMENT?**

Appeals take place during working hours. Admission appeals generally take around 30 minutes each.

Summer appeals are held in May and June each year. The time commitment can vary according to the school, as all the appeals for a particular school need to be heard by the same panel members. We currently hold 6 days of appeals for each of our schools in May and June. Others can take half a day.

Given the time commitment, as much notice as possible is given of the dates of summer appeals.

We hold 8 In-Year appeals each year and usually a morning or a day is set aside each month to deal with them. Panels will hear a mixture of appeals from different schools. Panel Members would normally be given at least two weeks notice of in year appeals, we normally have a timetable for our appeals for the academic year ahead which is sent out in July/August.

Papers to be read before appeal hearings are sent to you about seven days beforehand.

**WHAT SUPPORT DO THE PANELS HAVE?**

A clerk attends all panel meetings. S/he is present throughout and provides independent procedural advice to the panel and writes decision letters to appellants.

The administration of panel meetings is provided by the Clerk’s Office at Twyford C of E Academies Trust. The Senior Clerk organises panel meetings and the Admission Administrator is responsible for the distribution of papers. The Senior Clerk will contact you to request your availability.

The Senior Clerk is completely independent of the school admissions department.

**WHAT DO I DO NEXT IF I'D LIKE TO BE A MEMBER OF A PANEL?**

There is an application form below. Please complete it and return it to:- Val Drake, Senior Clerk to the Board of Directors & Governing Body, Twyford C of E Academies Trust, Twyford Crescent, Acton W3 9PP. vdrake@twyford.ealing.sch.uk

If you meet the person specification to sit on an education appeal panel we will contact you to invite you to attend a briefing/interview session.

Person Specification

**School appeals panel members are expected to have the following attributes:**

1. Ability to analyse facts, identify relevant evidence and reach reasonable and sustainable decisions.
2. Possession of tact and strong interpersonal skills.
3. Ability to listen, comprehend facts and, if necessary, ask relevant questions in order to clarify issues.
4. Ability to respect the need for appropriate confidentiality.
5. Be prepared to commit sufficient time to the duties of the role, including sometimes lengthy day time meetings and occasional evening meetings.
6. An interest in education.
7. Experience of decision-making, ideally in sensitive cases.
8. Broad understanding of the principles of natural justice, equalities issues and of human rights.

## 3. Application form

## TWYFORD C OF E ACADEMIES TRUST MEMBER OF SCHOOL APPEALS PANELS – APPLICATION FORM

**i. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

|  |
| --- |
| TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Other (Please indicate) |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **FULL NAME:**  |

|  |
| --- |
| **FULL ADDRESS:**  |

|  |
| --- |
| **E-MAIL ADDRESS:**  |

|  |
| --- |
| **HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER:** **DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER:**  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Please indicate your preferred contact method:**  |
| In writing to your home address |  |
| Email |   |
| Home telephone number |  |
| Daytime telephone number |  |

**ii. PERSON SPECIFICATION**

|  |
| --- |
| Please set out why you would like to become a school appeals panel member, what qualities you would bring to the role and how you meet the requirements of the person specification (continuing on additional sheets if necessary).  |
| **Ability to analyse facts, identify relevant evidence and reach reasonable and sustainable decisions****Possession of tact and strong interpersonal skills.****Ability to listen, comprehend facts and, if necessary, ask relevant questions in order to clarify issues.****Ability to respect the need for appropriate confidentiality.****Be prepared to commit sufficient time to the duties of the role, including sometimes lengthy day time meetings and occasional evening meetings.** **An interest in education** |

**iii.** **CONNECTION WITH TWYFORD ACADEMIES TRUST SCHOOLS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Do you have a connection with any schools in the TWYFORD ACADEMIES TRUST or Ealing LA?** (this does not affect your application, but you will not be able to hear appeals for the school(s) you list below) | Yes  |  |
| No | No |
| If yes, are/ were you a: | Name of the school(s) |
| Parent/ close relative of a child  |  |  |
| Teacher |  |  |
| Head teacher |  |  |
| School governor |  |  |

# iv. DECLARATION

I have read the background information provided. I wish to be considered for membership of the Twyford Academies Trust pool of appeals panel members.

I am willing to attend a training session on appointment and then at least every two years thereafter.

I am not a councillor or an employee of Twyford C of E Academies Trust or the London Borough of Ealing Council, other than a teacher or teaching assistant.

The information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO:**

Valerie Drak

Senior Clerk to the Board of Directors & Governing Body

Twyford C of E Academies Trust

Twyford C of E High School

Twyford Crescent

Acton

W3 9PP