

Admission Appeal Panel Guidance for Parents



If your child is due to start secondary school in **September 2026** you will be offered a place on **2nd March 2026**. The deadline for accepting or refusing the offer directly with the school will be **16th March 2026**.

Please see answers to some FAQ's regarding Admission appeals.

What do I do when my child has not been offered a place at the school I applied for?

If you are unhappy with the school place you've been offered, you can appeal for any of the schools you named in your application.

We recommend you still accept the place your child has been offered. This will not affect your appeal and will guarantee your child has a school place if your appeal is unsuccessful. If your appeal is successful you must remember to tell the school you were originally offered that you no longer want the place.

If you weren't offered your chosen school, this is usually because the school is full and there were other children who more closely met the school's oversubscription criteria.

Alternatively, if you applied for a grammar school and your child did not achieve the entrance criteria a place has been refused as your child does not meet the admission arrangements for the school.

When will the appeals be considered?

If your child is due to start secondary school in **September 2026**, you can appeal if you are refused a place at one of your preferred schools on National Offer Day (**Monday 2nd March 2026**).

You must submit your appeal before **Monday 30th March 2026** for it to be considered by **12th June 2026**. Any appeals received after this time will be heard within 40 school days from the deadline, or where reasonably possible in line with updated guidance from the Department for Education.

Consultation evening (part 1) will take place on **21st May 2026 at 6pm** at Barton Court Grammar School, this is for parents to attend and helps to provide more time at the appeal hearing.

Barton Court Grammar School Appeals will take place on **1st June to 4th June 2026**.

For late applications, appeals should be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging appeals where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged where reasonably possible in line with updated guidance from the Department for Education.

What are the Objectives of the Admissions appeals?

The fundamental objectives of admission appeals are to:-

- a. Provide an independent, impartial and informal but structured forum for appellants and the admission authority concerned, to present their respective cases and to be confident that they will be given a fair hearing;
- b. Ensure that appeal panels weigh up all the evidence presented to them carefully and objectively before reaching a final decision on the appeal;
- c. Operate within education and other relevant legislation, including the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. Appeal panels are also required to have regard to guidance in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Code of Practice for Schools when determining an appeal. Appeal panels are carrying out a judicial function and must apply the principles of natural justice;

- d. Operate in accordance with the mandatory provisions of the School Admission Appeals Code, having regard to all relevant guidance in conducting appeals arrangements, including this Code and the School Admissions Code; and
- e. To provide a system which is clear, consistent and easy to understand by everyone involved, particularly by parents and children



What is the role of the Independent Appeal Clerk?

There will also be a clerk in attendance who is independent of the school and will deal with administration for the appeal, keep the official note of what is discussed and give independent and impartial advice on the appeals process and admissions law to the panel members.

Who will consider the Admissions appeals?

The Appeal Panel must have at least three members and will be made up of 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 authority area, or who are parents of registered pupils at school
- The Panel is independent of the local education authority, of the School and its Governors. It must make sure that the hearing is fair and not biased.
 - None of the Panel will have had anything to do with your case prior to you submitting your appeal.
 - You will be advised in advance of the hearing of the names of the members and administrator who it is anticipated will hear your appeal.

The Panel members will be sent copies of the appeal papers in advance of the hearing. At the same time a set of the papers will be sent to you and the Independent Clerk. The appeal papers will include your letter, any accompanying documents, as well as information giving reasons why your child has not been offered a place at the school in question.

There is no provision to make Power Point, video or other audio/visual presentation about your child.

What information should I give to the Panel?

It's important that you clearly set out the reasons why your child should have a place at your choice of school.

You can make an appeal because you want your child to attend a particular school over any other, but the stronger your reasons, the better chance you have of your appeal being successful. You should focus on what the school can offer that meets your child's needs.

This can include;

- what the school can offer that other schools cannot
- what the impact will be on your child in not attending the school of your choice. Every school has a Published Admission Number (PAN). The PAN is the maximum number of pupils that they will admit to each year group. You may believe that the school could take additional pupils, if so, you could ask the school to provide you with information to help you make your case.
- You can also appeal if you believe that the admission authority did not apply their admission arrangements properly and if they had applied them properly, they would have offered your child a place at the school. You should explain why you believe this is the case and refer to the part of the admission arrangements that you believe has not been applied properly.
- Any exceptional circumstances such as health reasons, family health reasons that impacted the child prior or during the Kent Test

- Any exceptional circumstances that impacted on the child's ability to perform during the Kent test such as stressful family situations, bereavement, moving country or area.



If your child did not meet the required standard in the Kent Test/entrance test, the Panel will firstly consider whether there is sufficient evidence that the child is of grammar school ability.

To support your appeal, you could include school reports/assessments and references from your child's current school that show your child is of grammar school ability.

School work cannot be submitted.

In addition, you may wish to incorporate answers to some of the following questions that Panel Members would usually ask when relevant.

- The scores he/she attained in the Kent tests/own entrance test were some way below that of children assessed as suitable for admission to the school. If he/she were to be offered a place, can you tell the Panel how he/she would cope working with children who may/will be of greater ability and probably working at a much faster pace?
- Did he/she have any additional tuition to help them with the tests?
- What support did the school provide in terms of special arrangements if requested for the tests?
- Please explain why you think your child did not meet the required standard in the paper where they scored lower than the required level.
- You mention a health issue in your appeal, please explain how this affected his/her education at primary school? Please include a clear chronology of events with dates if possible.
- If English is an additional language? You may wish to address this in your appeal, particularly if it is not the language spoken at home. If the Panel find sufficient evidence that the child is of grammar school ability, they will move on to the second stage of the appeal to consider and balance the prejudice to both the school and the appellant based upon the school's defence statement.

Some other areas to consider when submitting your appeal and written statements:

- Have you visited the school?
- What did you like about the school?
- When you looked round other schools what was it about this school that makes you believe it's the right/only school for your child?
- What can the school you want provide for your child that the offered school cannot?

What documents will the appeal panel not accept?

Examples of school work your child may have undertaken will not be accepted as the Panel will not be able to make a proper judgement about its quality.

The panel members would have nothing to measure it against and would not know the depth of the work submitted. Also, they would not know whether the work had been carried out unaided.

All paperwork will be issued to you electronically via Microsoft Teams, Email and a paper copy via 1st Class Post (if requested) and further instructions will be issued to you nearer the time.

How your appeal will be considered.

The Panel will consider all the information it has been provided with and will then follow two stages in reaching their decision: -

- **Part 1:** The Panel must first decide if the School's admission arrangements have been correctly applied. In cases where a child did not pass the Kent Test/School Admissions Test the panel must consider academic attainment. If they are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence of grammar ability then they move to the second stage and consider the balance of



prejudice to both the school and the appellant. If this prejudice is not found then the appeal must be allowed at this stage. **(see consultation evening above)**

- Only when they agree that the arrangements have been correctly applied and, where appropriate, they do believe prejudice would arise, then they must consider whether your case is sufficiently strong to outweigh the Governors' case.
- The appeal hearing at Barton Court Grammar School, in person. (please order of proceedings)
- You will be told of the Panel's decision in writing very soon after the hearing. You will be given the reasons for the Panel's decision but you do not have a right to see the notes of the hearing. Both you and the school must accept the decision of the appeal Panel.
- If your appeal is successful, the school must offer your child a place. If not, then the school will not offer your child a place, and you can't lodge another appeal to the same school for the same school year, unless you can show your circumstances have changed since the first appeal.

Order of proceedings

The appeal hearing is the chance for both the School and parent/guardian to state their case.

The order of the hearing will be as follows:

1. Welcome from the Chair who will introduce the Panel members, representative for the School, Independent Clerk and parent/guardians.
2. The Chair will explain the proposed order for the proceedings.
3. The Chair will ask the School to summarise why your child has not been offered a place
4. The panel and you may then have some questions about their case:
5. The Chair will then ask you to provide the panel with a summary of your key reasons for appealing, and the panel and the school might have some questions. This is your opportunity to set out your reasons and refer to any evidence.
6. Once everything has been discussed, the Chair will ask the school and yourself to provide them with a final summary before the meeting is closed.