

Appeal Guidance Notes:

All schools are required to abide by the School Admissions Code and School Admission Appeals Code.

When a local authority or an admission authority informs a parent of a decision to refuse their child a place at a school for which they have applied, it must include the reason why admission was refused and information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. Parents must be informed that, if they wish to appeal, they have to set out their grounds for appeal in writing. Admission authorities must not limit the grounds on which an appeal can be made. School Admission Appeals Code 2012

Before considering whether to appeal for a place at the school, please take some time to read the information below and the Frequently Asked Questions.

Your son/daughter has been considered for a place at Bullers Wood School for Girls or Bullers Wood School for Boys under their published admissions policy but has not been offered a place as there were other applicants who had a higher priority as per the criteria below.

- i) Looked after Children – Children in Local Authority Care
- ii) Siblings
- iii) Children of Staff
- iv) Straight line proximity – children will be prioritised according to the distance they live from the school. The last distance measurement that each school was able to offer under this criterion went to an applicant who lived:
Bullers Wood School for Girls – 1.266 miles
Bullers Wood School for Boys – 1.465 miles

Therefore, if your child has not been offered a place at the school, it is because they live further away than the last place offered under the proximity criterion.

The School received:
Bullers Wood for Boys – 733 Year 7 applications
Bullers Wood for Girls – 894 Year 7 applications

The Appeal Process

The closing date for completed appeal forms is 31st March.

School Admission Appeals will be heard during the week commencing 16th May.

You will be given at least 10 days' notice of your appeal hearing date.

School Admission Appeals will be heard by a panel of three members. They are completely independent of the school and recruited by Sharon Oliver Consultancy Ltd. Neither the appeals clerk nor the panel members will have any connection to the school.

The Clerk will send you a letter which will advise you of the date and time of your appeal hearing and include all of the documentation you have sent for your appeal, plus the school's statement as

to why they are unable to admit additional students and their admissions policy. You will be given a date in the letter to send in any further supporting documents.

The Panel will receive a copy of the above-mentioned documentation and any further supporting documents that you provide.

Process for the appeal hearing

Stage 1

- The School will present their case as to why they cannot accept more children.
- The Panel and the School will be able to ask you questions about their generic case.

Stage 2

- Parent/Carer will present their case as to why it is important for their child to attend the school.
- The Panel and the School will be able to ask you questions about your case.
- The School will sum up their case as to why they have not been able to offer your child a place.
- The Parent/Carer will sum up their case - this is your opportunity to have the final word as to why your child should be given a place at the school.

In attendance at the appeal hearing there will be:

- Three panel members who are independent of the school.
- A clerk who is independent of the school and who will take confidential notes during the hearing for the panel and record the panel's decision. The Clerk will email you a letter with the panel's decision within 7 calendar days after the appeals hearings for the school have been completed.
- The School representative who may ask you questions about your case and will sum up as to why they were unable to offer your child a place. ***The school's representative is not part of the decision-making process and is not present for deliberations or decisions.***

Stage 1

When making their decision as to whether the school has met Stage 1 of the Appeal process the panel must consider the following:

- a) whether the admission arrangements (including the area's co-ordinated admission arrangements) complied with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code and Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;**
and
- b) whether the admission arrangements were correctly and impartially applied**
- c) whether the admission of additional children would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources**

Parents/Carers should read the school's statement and consider if there are any questions that you would like to ask the school about this statement.

N.B. Questions raised at this stage are restricted to those regarding the school's general statement. Keep all questions about your own case until your individual appeal hearing.

Stage 2

The Panel must balance the prejudice to the school against the parent/carer's case for the child to be admitted to the school.

You will be given a date and time to present your individual case to the panel. This is your opportunity to tell the panel why it is important for your child to attend the school, even if it is full, and the prejudice to their education/difficulties they would face if they had to attend another school.

Remember schools are not allowed by law to hold places in case an appeal is upheld. If a vacancy occurs in the required year group it will be offered as per the published admissions policy. Appealing for a place will not change your child's place on the waiting list.

You may bring a member of your family, a friend, or a representative along with you, either to help you say what you want, or to speak for you, or to simply give you support. The friend/adviser may be a locally elected politician or an employee of the local authority such as a social worker, special educational needs adviser or learning mentor, provided there is no conflict of interest. ***Please notify the clerk in advance if you intend to call any witnesses or be represented at the hearing as they will need to be invited to the meeting.***

The Panel will not make any decisions until they have heard all of the appeals.

The decision of the Independent Appeals Panel is binding on all parties. If they decide to uphold an appeal, the school will have to offer the child a place and it will be over and above the published admission number.

Parent should consider the following in preparation for the appeal hearing:

Writing down what they want to say, or bullet point specific points, this may help you to feel more confident and ensure that you have said everything you want to say.

Send in any supporting documents that you would like the panel to take into consideration for your case within the time stated in your invitation letter.

You have a statutory right to appeal. **However, you should be realistic. Appeals can be stressful and you need to consider carefully if you have sufficient grounds for an appeal.**

Please note that Appeal Panels cannot take into consideration the academic ability of the child unless the school is a grammar school.

If you wish the appeal, please complete the appeal form which is available from the school website and return via email to:

Mrs K Oliver Bullers Wood School Admissions koliver@bwsgirls.org 020 8467 2280	Mrs K McCarthy Bullers Wood School for Boys Admissions kmccarthy@bwsboys.org 020 8016 0710
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We will acknowledge receipt of your form by email. **If you do not receive a response within 7 days please contact us.**