

Tower Hamlets Transition Service

School Admission Appeals (COVID-19)

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will impact on the ability of admission authorities (that is, local authorities, academy trusts or school governing bodies, depending on the type of school) to carry out admission appeals in the usual way.

This is because the appeal panel would usually be held in person, which would break the current restriction on gatherings of more than 2 people. There may also be problems securing sufficient independent panel members and partial school openings and closures may impact on meeting certain appeal deadlines.

The new changes relax some of the current requirements set out in the [School Admission Appeals Code 2012](#) which come into force on 24 April 2020 until 31 January 2021.

What are the changes?

The panel will be permitted to hear your appeal 'online' using video conferencing through zoom video platform or telephone conferencing or considering your appeal form and evidence:

1. You will be invited to attend a virtual hearing by video conference from a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone. Computers and laptops must have a camera and microphone
2. If you do not have a smart phone, the appeal can take place by telephone conference
3. You can opt for your appeal to be heard in your absence using your application and evidence submitted
4. Alternatively, you can ask for the hearing to be postponed, until after the government decides it is safe to hold face to face hearings; this could be some months away
5. The decision as to which method used is yours, BUT if Pupil Services do not hear back from you, the hearing would be heard in your absence using your appeal form and evidence submitted

What will happen at my appeal hearing?

1. You will connect to the panel via zoom video platform with a secure and meeting identification number
2. Introductions of those present would be made
3. The representative of the admission authority will then read out a statement to explain why your child has not been offered a place at the school
4. The panel will ask if you have any questions for the admission authority representative
5. The panel will then invite you to give a statement explaining your reasons for wanting your child to attend the school
6. The panel may ask you questions about your statement
7. The panel will ask you if you have anything else to add
8. The admission authority will give a summarising statement
9. You will be invited to give a summarising statement
10. Your appeal hearing will then end

When will I find out about my appeal date?

You will be given at least 10 school days' notice of an appeal hearing

When will I find out the appeal decision?

You shall receive an outcome letter 5 school days after the appeal hearing, but this is not always guaranteed

Where can I get support about school admission appeals?

Tower Hamlets Transition Service provides impartial advice, information and assistance regarding admission appeals:

Contact:

Bernadette.Ogazi@towerhamlets.gov.uk

07940 462 447

Gillian.Archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk

07720 684 207

Aleha.Khanam@towerhamlets.gov.uk

07908 456 660

Produced by Tower Hamlets Transition Parent and Family Support Service

Schools representatives can attend the online hearings

Can I still lodge a complaint if I was unhappy with the way my appeal had been administered?

Yes - there will be no relaxing any of the requirements set out under Section 5 of the [School Admissions Appeals Code](#) which covers complaints about appeals

To lodge a complaint, if you have evidence of maladministration, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman