

Poole Grammar School
Guidance notes for parents/carers on the admission appeals process

Introduction

Coastal Association of School Appeals (CAS Appeals) appoint the Independent Panel to hear admissions appeals. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three people, all of whom are independent from Poole Grammar School and independent from the Governing Body of Poole Grammar School. At least one member of the panel will have some experience in education. The panel is supported by a Clerk, who advises on procedures.

The Procedure

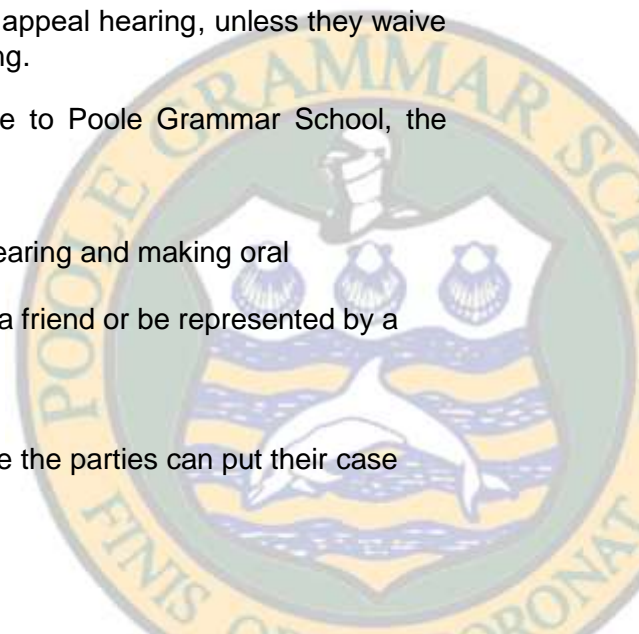
- BCP Schools Admissions Team will notify parents/carers on **Friday 1st March 2024** whether their child has been given a place in Year 7 at Poole Grammar School for September 2024.

If the application has been unsuccessful the letter will provide the following information:

- that they can give notice to appeal;
 - the name and address of the person to whom the appeal must be sent or delivered to;
 - the date by which it should be received;
 - the fact that the appeal must be in writing and that it must set out the grounds on which the appeal is made.
- It is important that parents/carers accept the school place they have been offered by their local authority, thus securing a secondary school place for their child. The acceptance of this place does not affect the right to appeal or prejudice the appeal hearing in any way.
 - Parents/carers need to lodge their appeal in writing, clearly stating the grounds on which the appeal is made. This is done through CAS Appeal's online portal: <http://www.casappeals.co.uk>. Appeals should not be sent to Poole Grammar School, they must be lodged via CAS Appeals.
 - Poole Grammar School will give the parents/carers of the appellant the reason why a place was not granted to their child and that they have the right to appeal. This will include details of the appellant's test scores and the date on which the appellant sat the entrance test. The parents/carers of the appellant will also, in due course receive, a copy of Poole Grammar School's case as to why a place should not be awarded to the appellant.
 - CAS Appeals are responsible for convening the date and time of the hearings and appointing a clerk and panel members for the hearing.
 - For applications made within the normal admissions round (Year 7 September entry), appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.
 - Appellants will be given 10 school days' notice of their appeal hearing, unless they waive this right in order to have an earlier date for their hearing.
 - CAS Appeals will communicate the appeals schedule to Poole Grammar School, the Appeals Panel members and the appellant.
 - During the Stage 2 of the appeal, the Appeals Panel:
 - shall allow the appellant the opportunity of appearing and making oral representation;
 - may allow the appellant to be accompanied by a friend or be represented by a nominated family member or friend.

Format of the Appeal Hearing

- The atmosphere at a hearing should be informal where the parties can put their case simply.



- The appeal panel will be assisted by an independent Clerk whose key tasks are to:
 - Explain the basic procedure;
 - Ensure relevant facts are presented;
 - Advise both the Appeals Panel members and the parents/carers on procedure;
 - Record the proceedings;
 - Notify parents of the Appeals Panel's decision.

The order of the hearing will be in two stages:

Stage 1: establishing the facts, at which the panel considers whether the school's published admission arrangements:

1. comply with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code and Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;
2. were correctly applied in the individual's case, and decides whether "prejudice" would arise were the child to be admitted.

If these are proved, the panel moves on to the second stage.

Stage 2: balancing the arguments, at which the panel exercises its discretion, balancing the degree of prejudice to the school against the appellant's case for the child being admitted to the school, before arriving at a decision.

The format for the two stages is normally as follows:

STAGE 1:

- Specific case for the school, given by a representative of the school;
- Questioning by the parent/carer(s);
- Questioning by the Appeals Panel;

At the conclusion of the case for the school the Appeals Panel will ask the appellants and the school representative to leave whilst they discuss whether the school's published admission arrangements were correctly applied and make a provisional decision on whether "prejudice" would arise were the boys to be admitted. Should the Panel provisionally accept the case for the School then Stage 2 will commence.

STAGE 2:

- The representative from the school is asked for any information regarding the individual student.
- The case for the student, usually given by the parent/carer(s);
- Questioning by the representative of the school;
- Questioning by the Appeals Panel;
- Any member of the Appeals Panel may ask questions at any time if they require clarification of what is being said or if they need more information in order to reach a decision, but such questions must be put before the summing-up process commences;
- Summing-up by the representative of the school;
- Summing-up by the parent/carer(s).

Parents/carers have occasionally asked if their son could present the case, or, be present at the Appeal. This is considered by the Appeals Panel to put undue stress upon the child and is not advisable.

All Stage 2 Appeals shall be heard in private.

There may be occasions when the Appeals Panel is hearing more than one admissions appeal in relation to the school. This often the case when Year 7 normal point of entry appeals are scheduled. In this circumstance, Stage 1 of the Appeals will be held with all appellants present. The Chair of the Appeals Panel will explain the process. Then, the representative for the school will present the general case in the presence of all

parents/carers, All the parents/carers, in turn, and in each other's presence, may be invited to question the representative for the school on the school's case. If the Panel provisionally believes that the school has made its case, the process moves on to Stage 2. Stage 2 appeals hearings are heard in private on a case by case basis.

If such appeals arise because of over-application for the number of places available, they should be dealt with fairly. Therefore, the Appeals Panel will adjourn its decisions until all hearings have taken place, then consider their decisions and issue them.

- The Panel, through its Clerk, encourages parents/carers to attend to present their case in person.
- Parents/carers are advised that:
 - They are encouraged to attend the Stage 1 Hearing where the school representative, puts forward the school's case.
 - They may elect not to attend Stage 2 in person, in which case the Appeals Panel would rely on their written statements.
 - If they do not attend in person, and it is not reasonably practical to offer an alternative date for their child's Stage 2 hearing to be heard, the appeal will have to be held and decided on the information that is available at that point in time.
- Unless the appellant has consented in writing to a lesser period, the appellant should be given at least ten school days' notice of the date of the meeting of the Appeals Panel at which the appeal is to be heard.
 - Substantial new issues raised for the first time at the hearing may mean the hearing has to be adjourned to allow any party taken by surprise to consider the issues.
 - The Clerk will advise the parents/carers of the outcome of the appeals hearing within 5 school days of the hearing being heard.

DECISIONS OF THE PANEL

- The Panel will consider all appeals before making and announcing any decisions.
- The decision of the Panel, and the grounds on which it was made, shall be communicated by the Clerk in writing to the appellant and to the school within 5 school days following the completion date of the appeal hearings.
- In relation to an unsuccessful appeal, the decision must state the reason that the appeal has been refused, e.g. if the admission would prejudice the provision of efficient use of resources, or as admission is based wholly or partly on selection by reference to ability or aptitude if the child does not meet the criteria. If, despite these factors, the Appeals Panel is considering allowing some, but not all appeals, it may need to compare the circumstances of one case with another to establish which appeal should succeed.
- In either event, the decision should be fully and clearly expressed and be capable of being understood by a lay person.
- The Clerk will notify the outcome of each appeal to the parents/carers within 5 working days after the conclusion of the last appeal (unless there are mitigating circumstances). The notification in writing will be a brief confirmation but if a parent/carer requires a more detailed explanation, this will be provided on request to the Clerk.
- The decision of the panel is binding on the school and the parents/carers. No further appeal by either party is possible within the approved policy and procedure, unless there are further extenuating circumstances which become known following the appeal.

Dr Amanda Smith

Headteacher

(On behalf of Poole Grammar School Governing Body 2023/24)

Updated October 2023

Parent / carer guidance notes for the appeal case

- Prepare some written notes to assist you in presenting your case, and be clear of the grounds upon which you want the appeal committee to consider your appeal. As a selective school Poole Grammar School has an approved admissions policy based on selection, but you have a statutory right to raise any issue that you wish at the appeal.
- Prepare any necessary documents you wish to refer to at the appeal and ensure that they have been uploaded to the CAS Appeals portal in advance and by the deadline stated. If your child has not met the required academic standard, the Appeals Panel tends to look for evidence that your child would cope with the pace and pressure of a grammar school education e.g. latest school reports and/or reasons why the child did not perform to expectation at the entrance exam. The Appeals Panel is always interested in the outside activities of the child but does not usually need to see certificates, awards etc. Please put your child's name on all papers and insert page numbers into documents if possible.
- Any documents uploaded after the deadline may not be considered. The Appeals Panel will make any decision about the acceptance of evidence beyond the deadline.
- It is not necessary, but if you wish to do so, you may call witnesses to support your case. These witnesses may make written observations which can be submitted with the documents in support of the appeal, or may come to the appeal to give evidence in person.
- If you wish, you may ask a friend or family member to present your appeal for you. The school does however encourage parents / carers who are appealing (or at least one of them) to attend as well.
- If either you, or anyone coming with you, require special facilities or an interpreter, please contact CAS Appeals as soon as possible - they can be emailed on appeals@casappeals.co.uk
- Please be advised that, in order to be fair and remain impartial, we are unable to discuss details of individual cases or provide specific recommendations as to the evidence to supply to support an appeal case. If you require any information or clarification regarding the appeals process itself please contact CAS Appeals via email appeals@casappeals.co.uk or call 01202 029589.
 - There is also additional information and frequently asked questions regarding the admission appeals process on the CASA Appeals website. Please visit <http://www.casappeals.co.uk>.