

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

Introduction

Coastal Association of School Appeals (CAS Appeals) appoint the independent appeals 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

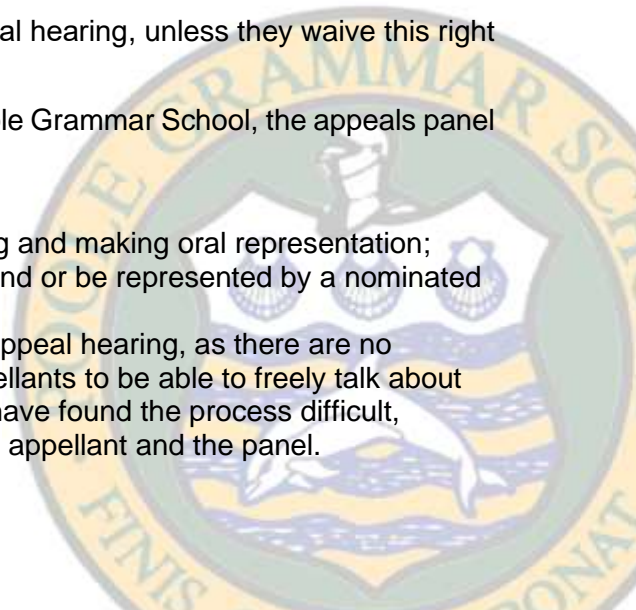
- For normal point of entry applicants, BCP schools admissions team will notify parents/carers on **Monday 3rd March 2025** whether their child has been given a place in Year 7 at Poole Grammar School for September 2025. Appeals cannot be lodged until a rejection letter has been received.
- For in-year applicants, Poole Grammar School will notify parents/carers whether their child has been given a place in the year group applied for as soon as the results of the in-year test have been received by Poole Grammar School from the external company marking the test.

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.
- For normal point entry applicants, 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. 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 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;
 - it is not recommended that any children attend the appeal hearing, as there are no childcare facilities available and the panel want appellants to be able to freely talk about their circumstances. In the past, children attending have found the process difficult, particularly if their needs are being discussed by the appellant and the panel.



Format of the appeal hearing

- The atmosphere at a hearing should be informal where the parties can put their case simply.
- The appeals 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 balancing the arguments is normally as follows:

PART 1:

- specific case for the school, given by a representative of the school;
- questioning by the appeals panel;
- questioning by the parent/carer(s);

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 child to be admitted. Should the appeals panel provisionally accept the case for the school then part 2 will commence.

PART 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 appeals panel
- questioning by the representative of the school;
- 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).

As mentioned above, it is not recommended that any children attend the appeal hearing, as there are no childcare facilities available and the panel want appellants to be able to freely talk about their circumstances. In the past, children attending have found the process difficult, particularly if their needs are being discussed by the appellant and the panel.

All stage 2 appeals are 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, part 1 of the appeals process 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 appeals panel provisionally believes that the school has made its case, the process moves on to part 2. Part 2 appeals hearings are heard in private on a case by case basis.

If 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 appeals 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 part 1 hearing where the school representative puts forward the school's case;
 - they may elect not to attend part 2 in person, in which case the appeals panel would solely 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 part 2 hearing to be heard, the appeal will have to be held and decided on using 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 10 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 APPEALS PANEL

- the appeals panel will consider all appeals before making and announcing any decisions.
- 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 school resources, or as admission is based wholly or partly on selection by reference to ability or aptitude, if the child does not meet the entry 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 appeals 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.

Mrs K Etheridge

Headteacher
(On behalf of Poole Grammar School Governing Body 2024/25)

Updated January 2025

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>.