School Admission Appeals Guidance

For parents and carers applying to Bridge Learning Campus

This guidance explains how secondary school admission appeals work, what to expect from the process, and how independent appeal panels make decisions. It is intended to help you understand your rights and prepare your appeal.

About Admission Appeals

Bridge Learning Campus is part of **Amplify Education**, which is the **Admission Authority** for the school. This means Amplify Education is legally responsible for determining admission arrangements and allocating school places.

The appeals process is administered on behalf of Amplify Education by **Democratic Services at Bristol City Council**. Appeals are heard by an **Independent Appeal Panel**, which is completely independent of the school, the Trust and the local authority.

You have the legal right to appeal if your application for a school place has been refused.

School Appeals (Ordinary Prejudice Appeals)

Secondary school appeals are considered under what is known as **ordinary prejudice**. This applies where the year group you applied for is full and has reached the school's **Published Admission Number (PAN)**.

If admitting additional pupils would cause prejudice to the **efficient education** of pupils already at the school or the **efficient use of resources**, a place can be refused.

How the appeal panel makes its decision

The appeal panel follows a **two-stage process**, set out in admissions law:

1. **The school's case**

The panel considers whether the school has demonstrated that admitting additional pupils would cause prejudice to the efficient education or efficient use of resources.

1. **Balancing the cases**

If prejudice is established, the panel weighs this against your reasons for wanting a place at the school and your child's individual circumstances.
An appeal can only be upheld if the panel decides that **your case outweighs the prejudice** identified by the school.

Preparing Your Appeal

You may submit additional written information to support your appeal. This could include:

- Evidence explaining your child's individual needs
- Information showing why this school is particularly suitable for your child
- Letters or reports from professionals involved with your child (for example medical practitioners, educational psychologists or social workers)

Please make sure that **all supporting documents are submitted by the deadline stated in your refusal letter**, as appeal panels cannot consider new information after the hearing.

It may be helpful to prepare notes in advance so that you can clearly explain your reasons during the hearing.

Attending the Appeal Hearing

You will be given **at least 10 school days' notice** of the date, time and format of your appeal hearing.

Appeal hearings are normally held **remotely via Zoom**. If you have access to a computer, tablet or phone, you will be able to take part.

Before the hearing begins, you will join an online waiting room where the **Clerk to the Appeal Panel** will explain the procedure and provide technical support if required.

Amplify Education, Trust House, Teyfant Road, Bristol BS13 0RF T 0117 462 0499 E info@ampedu.co.uk

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You may:

- Attend and speak for yourself
- Be accompanied or represented by a friend or representative
- Arrange for an interpreter if English is not your first language

If you require reasonable adjustments or accessibility support, please contact Democratic Services as soon as possible.

What happens at the hearing?

1. The school's case

- Presentation by the Admission Authority's representative
- Questions from parents/carers and the Appeal Panel
- Summing up by the Admission Authority

2. The parent/carer's case

- Presentation of your reasons for appeal
- Questions from the Appeal Panel and Admission Authority
- Summing up

Where multiple families are appealing for the same school, the school's case will usually be heard once in a group session. Individual appeals are then heard in private and remain confidential.

Children do not normally need to attend appeal hearings.

After the Hearing

All parties will be asked to withdraw while the Appeal Panel considers its decision. You will receive the panel's decision **in writing**, sent by the Clerk.

Appeal panel decisions are **legally binding** on both the Admission Authority and parents/carers.

Key Points to Remember

- Read the school's admission arrangements for the relevant year
- Submit your appeal form and evidence by the stated deadlines
- Focus on your child's individual needs and circumstances
- Explain why this school is particularly suitable for your child

- Support your case with clear evidence where possible

Further Information and Contacts

Clerk to the Appeal Panel (Democratic Services)
Email: school.appeals@bristol.gov.uk

School Admissions – Bridge Learning Campus
Email: join@blc.school

Useful guidance:

- Department for Education – *School Admissions Code* (2021)
- Department for Education – *School Admission Appeals Code* (2022)

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