

# School Appeals

## Introduction

This is a Fact sheet about School Admissions and Appeals complaints. It should be read together with our '[How to Complain](#)' webpage, available on the 'Making A Complaint' tab.

Complaints about school admissions should be brought to the attention of the relevant Local Education Authority (LEA) first, but complaints about admission appeals can be brought straight to us.

## What we can do

We can:

- Look at complaints about school admissions procedures in Wales and the admissions appeals process;
- Look at complaints from parents who consider an LEA has implemented its school admissions procedure unfairly;
- Look at complaints from parents who consider an Admissions Appeal Panel has acted improperly.

If you wish to complain to us, please do so as soon as possible.

## What we cannot do

We cannot:

- Compel an LEA to offer your child a place at a school;
- Overturn the decision of an Admissions Appeal Panel – however, if we believe the Panel hearing was improper or unfair, we may recommend that the appeal should be heard by a new Panel;
- Look into admissions or appeals involving Independent schools.

## Issues to bear in mind

- A child does not have an absolute right to a place at their parents' preferred school;
- LEAs must use their 'over-subscription criteria' to prioritise applications when there are more applications than places available at a school. Generally speaking, there can be no more than 30 children in an infants' class;
- Appeal panels are independent of the LEA and hear the cases of both the LEA and the parents;
- Appeal panels have to decide whether the parents' reasons for preferring the particular school outweigh the prejudice caused to the school if it admitted their child.

## Further information

LEAs and Admission Appeal Panels must have regard to the Statutory Codes on School Admissions and Appeals. Copies may be downloaded from the Welsh Government website

<https://gov.wales/school-admissions-code>

<https://gov.wales/school-admission-appeals-code>

We are independent and impartial; we cannot order public bodies to do what we recommend – but, in practice, they almost always do. Examples of cases that we

have looked at can be found on our website, [on the 'Publications' tab under 'Our Findings'](#).

## Contact us

If you are unsure whether we would be able to look into your complaint, please [contact us](#) on 0300 790 0203 or [ask@ombudsman.wales](mailto:ask@ombudsman.wales)

Also available in Welsh.

## Easy Read

School Admissions and Appeals

