

A guide to Iqra Slough Islamic Primary School Admission Appeals

How do I submit an appeal?

The clerk will acknowledge receipt of your appeal form within 15 working days.

If you do not hear anything within that time, please telephone 01753 520018 to check that the form has been received.

A copy of your appeal form will then be sent to the admission authority (Iqra) who will prepare a statement detailing how the school's admission criteria have been applied and the reasons for not offering your child a place at your preferred school.

The admission authority also supplies to the Clerk copies of any relevant previous correspondence, including your application form, if applicable. All this information will be circulated to you and the Panel before the hearing.

You can submit written material in support of your appeal up to the appeal date, although it would be helpful if you submit the material as early as possible.

You will receive ten school days notice of the date and time of your appeal. You will be informed of the venue and the procedure to be followed at the appeal. You will also be sent a copy of the admission authority's statement before the hearing.

Who sits on an Appeal Panel?

Panels are made up of three members. None of the Panel will have any connection with the school you are appealing for, the school that you have been allocated or will have been involved in the original allocation decision.

Who attends the appeal?

You have a right to attend the hearing and it is very helpful if you can attend to put your case. A friend or another family member may also attend to support you or help you put your case. Legal representation is seldom required and you should be aware that the Panel is unable to pay any of your costs.

If you decide not to attend the hearing and do not request an alternative time or date, your appeal will be heard in your absence based on the written material you have submitted.

A representative from the admission authority Iqra School, sometimes supported by the school's Headteacher, attends to put the school's case.

The clerk to the Appeal Panel will be present throughout the hearing. The Clerk has no role in the decision making process but is an independent source of advice and takes a note of proceedings.

What will happen at my appeal?

Hearings should be as informal as possible but the normal procedure is as follows:

- I. The chair will welcome you to the appeal, outline the procedure and introduce to you the other Panel Members, the admission authority's representative and the Clerk.
- II. The admission authority's representative will begin by explaining why your child has not been offered a place at your preferred school. If you or the Panel wish to ask any questions on what has been said this is the time to do so.

- III. The Chair will then ask you to put your case. You will be given as much time as you need and it is important that you tell the Panel everything that is relevant to your case. The Panel and the admission authority's representative will then ask you questions on what you have said.
- IV. The Chair will give both parties the opportunity to sum up their case before being asked to leave the room.
- V. The Panel will then discuss the appeal in private and come to a decision which will be recorded by the Clerk.

Appeals are timetabled and every effort is made to keep to your appointed time. Please note that there is occasionally some delay if previous appeals have taken longer than expected.

How is the decision made?

Infant class size appeals-Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 states that there cannot be more than 30 pupils in an infant class (Reception, Year 1 or Year 2). In most cases, the admission authority will have refused to admit your child because to do so would cause a class to breach the legal limit of 30. If yours is an infant class appeal, this will be explained in the papers circulated before the hearing. If you are unsure, contact the Clerk.

It is important to note that for this type of appeal, the powers of the Appeal Panel are extremely limited and Panel Members are only allowed to consider strict criteria as set out by the Appeals Code.

An infant class appeal may only be allowed if any of the following criteria apply:

- a) The admission of your child would not breach the legal limit
- b) The admission criteria were not lawful
- c) The admission criteria were incorrectly or partially applied and your child would have been offered a place if they had been correctly and impartially applied.
- d) The decision to refuse was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

The threshold for finding that the decision to refuse admission was not one that was a reasonable authority would have made is high.

To find a decision 'unreasonable', the panel would consider that, given all the information available to the admission authority at the time *"no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question could have arrived at it"*

It is only in rare cases that an Infant Class Appeal is allowed.