

Appealing a school's decision

If your child hasn't got a place, [contact your local council](#) for schools with places.

You'll be sent a letter with the decision about your child's school. You can appeal against the decision. The letter will tell you how.

You must appeal against each rejection separately.

Appeals for infant classes

In reception, year 1 and year 2, the class size is limited to 30. Your application can be turned down if all the classes already have 30 children.

You can still appeal if your child would have been offered a place. Your appeal could be successful if:

- the admission arrangements haven't been properly followed
- the admission criteria aren't legal according to the [school admissions appeal code](#)
- the decision to refuse your child a place wasn't reasonable

Help preparing your appeal

[Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) may be able to help you prepare your appeal.

When the hearing will be

The 'admission authority' for the school (usually the school itself or the council) must give you at least 10 school days' notice of the hearing.

Appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for making an appeal.

What happens at the appeal hearing

There's a panel of 3 people at the appeal hearing. The panel must be independent.

1. The admission authority will explain why they turned down your application.
2. You'll be able to give your own reasons why your child should be admitted.
3. The appeals panel must decide if the school's admission criteria were properly followed and are legal according to the [school admissions appeals code](#).
4. If the criteria are legal and were properly followed, the panel must decide if they were followed fairly and thoroughly.
5. If the criteria weren't properly followed or are illegal, your appeal must be upheld.
6. If your appeal has not already been upheld, the panel will decide if your reasons for your child to be admitted outweigh the school's reasons for not admitting another child.
7. The panel will send you and the admission authority their decision within 5 school days.

A panel's decision can only be overturned by a court. If there's a change in your circumstances which could affect the decision, you may be able to appeal again.

Complain about the appeals process

You can complain about the way the appeal was carried out, but you can't complain about the decision itself.

Maintained schools

Complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

[Fill in the online complaint form.](#)

Other schools

Complain to the Education Funding Agency about an appeal made to:

- free schools
- academies
- university technical colleges
- studio schools

[Fill in the online complaint form](#) – sign up for an account if you want to save your form.

[Contact the Education Funding Agency](#) if you need a paper form instead.

You should get a decision on your complaint within 9 weeks (45 working days). You'll be told if it'll take longer.

You'll get a letter explaining the reasons for the decision.

If the Education Funding Agency decides something went wrong with the appeals panel, it may either:

- ask the school to hold a new appeal hearing with a different panel
- recommend the school reviews its appeals process

If a maintained school becomes an academy

If you complain about an admission appeal hearing held by a maintained school that then converts to academy status, this complaint will be investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman will pass any actions to the Education Funding Agency.