



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Appealing an Admission Decision - Procedures

If you have been refused a place at the Sparken Hill Academy, you can appeal. You cannot appeal against the school you have been given by the Local Authority.

The appeals process is run by the Academy, who are separate to and independent of the Admissions Team at the Local Authority.

Your appeal will be heard by a panel of three trustees (the appeal panel), and wherever possible you can attend the appeal hearing to tell the appeal panel why you would like a place at this school for your child.

The appeal panel will look at how the places at the school were given and why you could not be offered a place including any relevant law (the admission authority's (Academy's) case). The appeal panel will also consider your individual circumstances (your case).

The decision of the appeal panel is binding on both parties which means that this is your only appeal against the original decision, and whatever decision the appeal panel makes will be final.

Once we have received your appeal, we will arrange your appeal as soon as we can. There may be a while before we contact you once we have received your appeal as it takes time to set up a hearing. More information on the deadlines is in the Timetables section.

You can still appeal after you accept the school place you've been offered. Rather than risk having no place at all, you should secure a school place for your child in case your appeal isn't successful.

How to appeal

Sparken Hill Academy is responsible for appeals.

You can appeal by one of the following options:

- [Appeal online](#)
- [Download a printable appeal form \[PDF\]](#)
- Call 01909 534060 to request an appeal form.

Please make your appeal online if you have internet access and an email address. You can make your appeal or appeals and download additional evidence to go with your appeal when needed.

If you are unable to submit your appeal online, please contact the school office (01909 534060) for a printed appeal form.

Things to remember when completing your appeal form:

- Your completed appeal form is your case for wanting a place at Sparken Hill to the appeal panel, so everything you include on it will be seen by those at the appeal hearing. More information on who will be at the appeal hearing can be found under 'At the appeal hearing'.
- You will be asked how you would like to attend your appeal (via video call / face to face / not attend). Please tell us which option you would prefer and select all options you are happy with in order to help us arrange your appeal as quickly as possible. Please note, if, during the process, you change your mind about how you would like to attend your appeal, we may need to rearrange your appeal hearing to a later date.
- The address you put on the form is the address we will send the appointment letter and paperwork to, so please make sure it is the correct address.

- If you move home during the appeal process, remember to inform both the School Appeals Team (via the office at the above number) and the Admissions Team (by calling 0300 500 80 80).
- Please provide at least one telephone number and an email address so we can contact you quickly if we need to.
- There is space on the form for you tell the appeal panel why you want a place for your child at the school. You should include anything you think the appeal panel should know about. You can also add in supporting information if you have any, for example a doctor's letter.
- You can also choose to send additional information and evidence later, up to ten days before your appeal hearing. Please send your information to us by using the account you will have set up when you first made your on-line appeal. If you are unable to do this, please email (NB – there may be a limit on the size of the file that can be sent). If you send more than this limit, we will not get your information and will not know that you have tried to send it to us. If you need to send more than the permitted file size, please either split it across more than one email or contact us to discuss an alternative way it can be submitted. If you have sent the information to us by email or post, we will acknowledge that we have received it so if you don't hear from us within three working days, please telephone on the number above to make sure we have received what you have sent.

Timetable for admission appeals

2024/25 Academic Year – In-Year Transfers

For appeals within the 2024/25 academic year (for your child to move from one school to another between September 2024 and August 2025), please

return your form within four weeks of the date of your refusal of the school place, wherever possible. Once we receive your appeal we will endeavour to arrange and hear it within 30 school days.

Before the appeal

You will be sent a letter telling you when your appeal hearing will be, at least 10 days before it (unless you have agreed to a shorter period than this).

Before your appeal we will also send you the paperwork relating to your case, which will include all of the written information we have received from you and all of the written information the admission authority have submitted to us. We do not expect you to provide a written response to the admission authority's case as you will have the opportunity to ask questions of their representative at the hearing. This information is often sent to you at the same time as your appointment letter, or it may be sent out a few days later.

Submitting additional information

If you wish to submit any information which wasn't included with your appeal form, please send it at least ten days before your appeal hearing. This helps us get the information to the panel members and the presenting officer before the hearing, so that they can read it in advance. If significant information is received less than ten days before the appeal, we may have to move your hearing to a later date. Please send your information to us by email but please note the file size limit on attachments per email. If you send more than this limit we will not get your information and will not know that you have tried to send it to us.

Please note that if you submit written information to the appeal panel on the day of the hearing the panel may decide they need to rearrange your appeal hearing to another date so they have time to read and consider it before continuing with the appeal.

Disabilities

Do please let us know if you have any disabilities and need assistance. We will try and meet these requests as far as possible.

Interpreter or signer

If you need an interpreter or signer you can have one at your appeal hearing. If you would like us to arrange this for you please tell us which language you require on the appeal form. Or, you may wish to arrange your own interpreter. If you are doing this, please let us know as soon as possible before the hearing.

Types of appeals and appeal hearings

If your child is of infant school age (Reception, Year 1 or Year 2), then Infant Class Size Legislation may apply for your appeal. Please [read the guidance for infant age children](#) for more information on this before completing your appeal form. Be aware that you are less likely to be successful in an Infant Class Size appeal than a non-Infant Class Size appeal.

We'll send you an appointment letter with the date and time for your appointment with the appeal panel. The letter will give you the names of the panel members who will be hearing your appeal. If you think you have a connection with any of them, please let us know as soon as possible. The letter will also explain how you can join your appeal hearing. If you have two appointments how you join each stage is different, the letter will explain this to you.

The clerk, at the appeal hearing, will tell you when you can expect to get the letter with the outcome of your appeal. More information on the types of appeals and the different processes can be found in the guidance notes.

The appeal hearing

Appeals can be heard via video call, in person, or a mix of both (hybrid). For those attending in person (including for hybrid appeals) they will be held at Sparken Hill Academy where specialist ICT equipment is available to allow all attendees to participate in the appeal equally, whether they are joining in person or via video call.

How you will be asked to attend your appeal will be based on what preferences you have given us, so it is vital you let us know which option you would prefer and select all options you are happy with, to help us arrange your appeal as quickly as possible.

If you're attending your appeal in person, we will arrange for the panel and clerk to be present with yourself in a room.

If you are unable to join a video hearing or attend in person but would still like to attend your appeal, please let us know on your appeal form and we will contact you to discuss alternative options.

You may also select not to attend your hearing, if you choose this option, the panel will consider your appeal based on the written information you provide.

The people in the hearing

Your appeal will be heard by an independent panel of three people and their decision is binding on all parties.

Also, in the hearing will be someone from the admission authority (the school) known as the presenting officer who will be telling the appeal panel why a place could not be offered to your child.

There will be the clerk to the appeal panel present, who will be taking notes of the hearing (for the appeal panels use only), a note of the decision of the

appeal panel and to advise all parties on any legal or procedural matters which may come up during the hearing.

How long the appeal hearing will take?

Appeal hearings vary in length but usually take no more than an hour. However, we do not have a fixed time so if you need longer this will be allowed. As the appeal panel will be considering a number of cases each day this might mean that the hearings are running late so we ask that you understand that we will be with you as soon as we can and you will not be limited in your time even if your appeals is late starting.

Attending your appeal hearing via video call

If you are attending your appeal hearing via a video call, your appointment letter will tell you the date(s) and time(s) of your hearing and that you will be joining via a video call. You will be sent a separate email with the Microsoft Teams / Zoom link you will need to join the hearing. If you do not receive this within two days of your appointment letter, please let us know. Please use this link to join the meeting five minutes before the time you have been given. You will be put in to a virtual waiting room and the clerk will let you in to the hearing when the panel are ready.

If you are attending via video call and lose your connection to the appeal hearing you will need to re-join using the link again. If you have problems re-joining, you will be able to contact us for help. Full details will be in the guidance we send you.

Attending your appeal hearing in person

If you are attending your appeal hearing in person, your appointment letter will tell you the date(s) and time(s) of your hearing and that you will be

attending in person. The letter will give the address of the venue which will be Sparken Hill Academy, Sparken Hill, Worksop Notts S80 1AW. Please arrive at least ten minutes before your hearing time and report to reception. They will ask you to wait until the hearing is ready to begin. The clerk will collect you and take you in to the room where the hearing is being held.

How you'll receive the decision

You will be sent the decision in a letter which will be posted out within five school days of the panel making their decision, wherever possible.

If your appeal is part of a group hearing, the panel will not make their decisions until all the appeals have been heard. The clerk will tell you when you can expect to receive your letter.

Remember to read the guidance which includes information about the whole process.

What If I'm Not Happy with The Outcome of My Appeal?

If you feel your appeal hearing wasn't conducted properly you can submit a complaint to either the Education and Skills Funding Agency (for free schools, academies, university technical colleges and studio schools). Please be aware that these bodies can only examine how your appeal or application was processed. This is not a further right of appeal if you are unhappy with the panel's decision.

Details about how to make a complaint about the way your appeal was conducted can be found at: www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has the following factsheets which provide some general information about the most common types of complaints which you may find useful:-

<http://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint/fact-sheets/education/school-admissions>

If anyone concerned with the appeal (you as the parent/carer, or the Admission Authority) believes that the decision of the Appeal Panel was legally in error, they can seek to challenge the decision of the appeal panel by means of what is known as judicial review. If you wish to consider this course of action you should take independent legal advice.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

ACE is an independent education advice centre which provides information on the education system - <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/advice-about-education-for-parents>

Coram Children's Legal Centre

Coram Children's Legal Centre provides free, independent advice on all areas of child, family and education law <http://childlawadvice.org.uk>

County Council Admissions Team

If you want to find out about where places are available at alternative schools you need to speak to Admissions on 0300 500 80 80 or email admissions.ed@nottsccl.gov.uk

Useful Links:

Making a school admission appeal:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-admissions/making-a-school-admission-appeal>

Appealing a schools decision (Government guidance):

<https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision>

School Admissions Code:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>

School Admission Appeals Code:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>

Guidance on the changes to the admission appeals regulations during the coronavirus outbreak:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code/changes-to-the-school-admission-appeals-code-regulations-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>