

Brief Summary of the Process and Guidance for Appeal process for Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend Academic Year 2024/2025

The Process

The Local Authority/School informs you that a place is not available either because the year group in which you are seeking a place is full and/or you do not meet the criteria for entry to the school. The letter will explain your right of appeal (Friday 15th March 2024).

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Your appeal must be submitted at least 20 days from the date of notification that your application for a place was unsuccessful.

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You appeal in writing giving the reason/s you wish to do this. (Without a reason, however brief, your appeal will not be valid). At this stage you may choose not to provide any detail and email this to the school later. Deadline: Thursday 28th March 2024.

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At least 10 days before your appeal for this school you will be sent all the information you require for it. (If appropriate, you can waive your right, in writing, to this number of days.) The letter will include the names of the Panel Members, Clerk and Presenting Officer representing the School and the date and time of your Hearing. In addition, the 'Case for the School' outlining, if appropriate, how places were allocated in March, the reasons why the school had to refuse a place for your child and the effect on the school if a place were to be offered.

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Confirm your attendance and that of anyone else who may be attending to support your appeal. **The school will hold face – face appeals but if you prefer, your appeal could be heard, in your absence, on the basis of the information you provide. Please notify the school via email Appeals2024@mgsg.kent.sch.uk if you would prefer this to happen.**

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Normally 5 days before the hearing, by the date as specified in the letter above, you submit, by email, any additional material to support your case. This gives time for it to be circulated. (No originals please if sent by post.) No school work will be looked at since the Panel will not be in a position to assess it. Anything submitted late may cause your appeal to be adjourned.

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The appeal has to be heard within 40 days of the deadline for lodging appeals for the 'normal' admission round or within 30 days for any others.

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Day of Appeal Hearing. Order as follows.

A – Case for the Admission Authority, (School) and questioning by you and the Panel

B – You present your case and questioning by the School and Panel

C – Summing up by the School and finally you.

The Clerk is present to make notes.

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Within 5 working days from the last appeal to be heard you will be notified in writing of the decision and the next step forward.

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If you think the appeal wasn't held properly, you may write to the Education and Skills Agency.

Where to go for additional advice?

The school to which you are appealing, your child's current school, consultants and/or web-sites. The full School Admission Appeals Code from which the above is taken may be found on the DfE web site <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>.

General Advice

What do I /we need to do having decided to appeal?

Write/Review the appeal letter you have written. (A side and a half of A4 is enough) Does it explain clearly why you think your child is of grammar school ability despite the 11+ scores or even though you have a grammar school assessment that a place should be offered. The Panel will consider the issue of space to admit more children.

The pace of work in this school is fast and challenging and your child's well-being is important. If your child does not have a selective assessment think very carefully about placing your child in this school unless you truly believe your child is academically capable. If your appeal is successful but the school is full, your child may be placed on a waiting list with places allocated as and when one is declined and according to the over-subscription criteria if there are other children in the same position. **Evidence to support your case and overturn the original decision is very important.**

Should I/we have visited the school?

Not essential but it is helpful to have first-hand knowledge of a school especially if you are one of many. 'Virtual' tours of the school may be available on the school's website. It is helpful to include in your appeal letter your personal reasons, appropriate to your child, for wanting this school.

How long will my/our appeal last and where will it be held?

An appeal normally lasts 25 minutes. The appeal may be held in this or another school or off-site.

What is an appeal like?

The room is arranged formally because this is part of a legal process. Your case will be heard by a panel of 3 who are independent of the school. Someone from the school will be present and also an independent clerk to see that the process is carried out properly and to record what happens.

What actually happens?

- Everyone is introduced and the Chairman directs the process as described earlier.
- The school explains why a place has not been offered and you and the Panel are able to ask questions about this. (if no one present, then on the basis of the Case for the School sent to you in advance)
- You present your case and the Panel questions you for more detail.
- The school and then you sum up.

What do I have to do?

The 3 Ps – Prepare, Practise and Present.

The Panel will know your case in detail and so you may only wish to present any additional information/ pick out main points if you intend to be present.

- Prepare – think about the main points you want to say at the Hearing.
- Practise what you want to say and consider either writing a statement that you will read out or speak to bullet points. (You do not need to read your letter/documents as the Panel will have done this and taken it all in.)
- Present your case – no more than 3 minutes recommended. You are now bringing 'your child to life' plus any additional information. .

You will probably be one of many. You are trying to make your case stand out and convince/persuade the Panel that your child should be given a place.

How is each case decided?

The Panel will consider the school's admission arrangements plus what was said at the appeal and sent in advance. The Panel has to confirm firstly that the school acted correctly in refusing a place, secondly decide/confirm whether your child is of grammar school ability and thirdly whether the arguments/case you put forward been so strong that they outweigh the problems of an admitting an extra child to the school in terms of space, equipment, resources and facilities.

Marylyn Atkins, Independent Appeal Administrator – March 2024.