Appeals timeline 2026-27

There are two types of appeal: in-year admission appeals and appeals for a Reception place.

In-year admissions only 2026/27

- If your appeal **relates to an in-year admission**, you should submit your appeal within 20 school days of being told that your application was unsuccessful.
- Your appeal will be heard at an independent hearing at which a decision will be made. The appeal outcome will be communicated via letter.

2026/27 application round

- If your appeal is for a child starting a primary academy in **September 2027** and you are told of the decision on 16 April 2027 (National Offer Day), you should submit your appeal by 14 May 2027.
- If you are told of a primary academy decision after 16 April 2027, you should submit your appeal within 28 days of being told that your application was unsuccessful.

	DATE
Application process starts – online application form	1 September 2026
Closing date for applications	15 January 2027
Deadline for receipt of supporting documentation	15 February 2027
Offers made	16 April 2027
Deadline for accepting or declining places. The Local Authority reserves the right to withdraw places not accepted	30 April 2027
Waiting lists prepared and vacancies re-allocated. Waiting lists will be held in criteria order. Parents offered places on this basis will be required to accept or decline the place offered within 10 school days	After 30 April 2027
Appeal application deadlines	
Closing date for appeals applications.	14 May 2027
Appeal hearings (on time applications) (as far as possible)	By 9 July 2027
Appeal hearings – late applications	Within 40 school days of the appeal deadline where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.
Appeal applications – in-year admissions	Within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful.
Appeal hearings – in-year applications	Within 30 school days of appeal being lodged.

How to appeal – in-year

To make an appeal, you need to complete the appeals form found on the school website. Your appeal should be emailed to admission@leadacademytrust.co.uk

Your appeal, once submitted, will be forwarded to an Independent Clerk and a date will be agreed for the hearing to take place within the mandatory guidelines. You will receive acknowledgement that the appeal has been received, an update on the situation and contact details for the appeals clerk who will manage your appeal and keep you informed of progress, date and outcomes. Appeals will be held in line with the DfE's School Admission Appeals Code (October 2022)

Appeal hearings - the process

Appeal hearings are informal and are generally held online.

First, the academy's representative, known as the presenting officer, will explain why it was not possible to offer a place at the school. The presenting officer will need to show to the panel that further admissions to the school will result in 'prejudice to the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.'

You will be invited to ask questions about the case presented and to challenge this view. The independent appeals panel will also ask questions of the presenting officer.

You will then have the opportunity to present your case, including any personal information that you feel is relevant. The presenting officer will then be invited to ask questions and the panel will also ask questions. No other parents will be present when you present your own case.

You do not have to attend the hearing although many parents choose to do so. The panel will allow you to be accompanied by a friend or to be represented, although government advice is that legal representation should not normally be necessary.

Whilst appeals can be considered on the basis of your written information alone, the presence of a parent or representative at a hearing will normally enable the panel to obtain more information about a child's circumstances than is contained in written information alone. Such information, which a parent may not have considered to be relevant when he or she filled in the appeal application form or submitted documents in support of the appeal, could have a bearing on the outcome of the appeal.

If you are unable to attend the appeal then it is important that you send in the fullest possible information about your reasons for wanting a place at the school in question

Appeals involving infant class sizes (reception, year 1 and year 2 classes)

There are separate and different rules for appeals which involve limiting infant class sizes to a maximum of 30 pupils. Apart from some very limited exceptions, no infant class may contain more than 30 pupils being taught by one teacher. Any admissions which would increase a class to more than 30 pupils would require what are called 'qualifying measures', such as organising an extra class, appointing an additional teacher, providing an additional classroom or introducing or extending mixed age group teaching.

The excepted pupils are:-

- children admitted outside the normal admissions round with an Education, Health and Care Plan specifying a school;
- looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
- children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
- children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school

When the Admission Authority can show to an Appeals Panel that any further admissions would require qualifying measures your appeal could be upheld only if the appeals Panel decided either that:

- A mistake had been made in the allocation of places according to the admissions criteria which had deprived your child of a place and if the criteria had been applied correctly your child would have received that place, or
- The child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, or
- That the decision to refuse admission was 'unreasonable' in the circumstances of the case. 'Unreasonable' as defined by the Courts is construed as being perverse or irrational and is a very high threshold for an appeal to be successful.

Further Department for Education information about infant class size appeals may be useful.