

School Admission Appeals Service

Independent presenting officers and information sharing

This document relates to the School Admission Appeals service that is available from the Council to academies who are their own admission authority.

When academies arrange their own presenting officer in an Independent Appeals panel, it is the presenting officer's responsibility to gather information in preparation for the appeal presentation. They represent the academy and therefore should rely on them for all information that is pertinent to the case.

Historically, the LA has been flexible in our approach to independent presenting officers, employed by the academies, in their request for information from the LA, in preparation for the appeal meeting. However, the information should have been made available directly by the academy, as they have the most up to date information. E.g. data on school statement etc. This ensures the process is more streamlined and benefits all members of the panel.

Therefore, we will not be responsible for providing any additional information that may be required and presenting officers should not contact the LA teams directly for this information. The academy should directly support their own presenting officers with any information the presenting officers may require.

Reminder:

- Parents will continue to have the right of appeal for any place they have been refused, even if the child has been offered a school place via the Fair Access Protocol (FAP). Therefore, it is not appropriate for the presenting officers to request data from the FAP team or anyone in the Local Authority.
- Any information not shared in the appeals pack cannot be requested by the academy or their presenting officer.
- It is in the academy's best interest to ensure presenting officers are adequately trained to defend the academy's decision on not to admit.
- Academies and presenting officers must adhere to timescales within the Service Level Agreement (5 school days to return data / information requested). Otherwise, an appeal will go ahead with the information available at the time which may not be the most updated information that is required and relevant to the appeal case.

If a presenting officer is not able to attend panel meetings, the onus is on the academy to ensure there is a backup plan in place so that panel do not need to be cancelled. If an academy is interested in accessing training for their member of staff to perform the duties of a presenting officer, they can contact Luthfur Rahman, Education Legal Manager, by email Luthfur.Rahman@cambridgeshire.gov.uk for further information.

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