



Northern Lights
LEARNING TRUST



**Venerable Bede CE Academy
Admissions Appeals Policy
And Appeals Timeline for
Entry in 2025 - 2026**

Review Date: Autumn Term 2023
Next Review Due: Autumn Term 2025
Person in Charge: Head of School
Governance: Chair of LGB

Northern Lights Learning Trust
Signed off by: Chair of Board
Date from: Autumn Term 2022
Review Date: Autumn Term 2024

The quality of relationships between all members of school staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of the schools in our Trust. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. In the Church schools in our Trust, we follow the teachings of:

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.

‘This is my commandment: love each other’ – John 15:17.

In our schools we believe every pupil is an individual who is valued for who they are.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks including in our Church schools in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that both Christian and spiritual love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environments are created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the schools are organised and the policies are written and implemented.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. This note provides further information on the appeal procedures and the following paragraphs indicate the action you should take if you wish to appeal. Please keep this sheet for your information. If, at any stage, you decide not to pursue the matter, I should be grateful if you would inform the Clerk to the School Admission Appeal Panel (Tel: 0191 5611059).
2. A School Admission Appeal Panel is empowered to consider appeals from parents who are not satisfied with Sunderland Local Authority's response to their expressed preferences. The School Admission Appeal Panel is independent of the Local Authority and Academy and the decisions of the School Admission Appeal Panel are binding on the Authority. Equally, the decision of the School Admission Appeal Panel is final, subject to a review by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills or the High Court, in either case this would occur only in the most exceptional circumstances. All appeals are heard in private.
3. An appeal should be made in writing on the form attached, stating the grounds for the appeal. The School Admission Appeal Panel will have the original reasons for your preference so there is no need to repeat these on the form. You can, however, use the form to add to your original reasons, if you so wish. If you decide to use any medical reasons in support of your appeal, it is helpful if any medical certificates, a letter from your doctor, or any other document in support of your appeal can be included with your appeal form when you send it to the address shown below. **Please note that it is not possible for the School Admission Appeal Panel to obtain this information.** Parents are encouraged to attend School Admission Appeal Panel hearings and if they do, they will have the opportunity to speak and, at the discretion of the Panel, be accompanied by a friend or be represented by someone else. If a parent does not attend the hearing, the appeal will be decided by the Panel on the basis of the information on the written statements including the appeal form. If parents, who have said they will attend, do not, and there is no reasonable explanation, the appeal will be decided on the information available to the Panel at the time fixed for the appeal.

If you wish your appeal to be considered by the School Admission Appeal Panel, you should complete the attached form and return it to The Clerk to the School Admission Appeal Panel PO Box 100 Civic Centre SUNDERLAND SR2 7DN within 14 days of receipt of the appeal forms, from whom further advice can be obtained on the arrangements for the hearings. If no reply is received within 14 days, it will be assumed that you do not wish to pursue the matter.

4. You will be given at least 10 working days' notice of the hearing, which will be held at a local venue. Please note that you may waive this notice by stating clearly on the form that you wish to do so. At least 7 working days prior to the hearing, the Clerk to the School Admission Appeal Panel will send to you (the Appellant) by post, a written statement summarising the application of the Local Authority's School Admission policy to the case in question and the reasons for the decisions taken. Please ensure that any change of address by you is notified to the Clerk to the School Admission Appeal Panel to enable relevant correspondence to be sent to you.
5. As explained earlier, the decision of the School Admission Appeal Panel is final and binding on the Local Authority. The Clerk to the School Admission Appeal Panel will communicate the decision and the grounds on which it is made, to you in writing, as soon as possible after the hearing.

Admissions Timeline

See Local Authority website for further details: <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/schools-admissions>

September 2024	Preference period begins and parents/carers should have received their information packs.
October 2024	Closing date for secondary applications.
March 2025	Parents/carers will be able to log into their application to confirm whether a place has been offered, if they applied online. Letters will only be posted where a paper application is received or it has not been possible to offer a place at a preferred school. Details of how to appeal will be explained in this letter.
March 2025	Acceptance form should be returned by this date.
March 2025	First reallocation of places begins.
April 2025	Appeal forms must be returned by this date.
May 2025 – July 2025	Appeals held – parents/carers will be notified of the outcome within 5 working days of the hearing.
May 2025 – August 2025	Reallocation of places.
December 2025	Waiting lists cease to operate.