

Panel Members Guidance.

Do Panel members receive training?

Yes, all panel members are trained before sitting on a Panel and then receive refresher training at least every two years.

Can anyone be a Panel member?

Yes, unless they are:

- a) A member of the local authority which is the admission authority or in whose area the school in question is located.
- b) A member or former member of the governing body of the school in question.
- c) Employed by the local authority or governing body of the school in question, other than as a teacher or teaching assistant.
- d) Any person who has, or at any time has had, any connection with the local authority, school or any person in sub paragraph c) above which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about that person's ability to act impartially.
- e) Any person who has not attended training requested by the admission authority arranging the appeal panel.

What skills do Panel members need?

The choice of school is very important for a child and their family. Not being offered a preferred choice of school or being excluded from a school can be an emotional experience for those involved. Panel members must be able to approach each appeal with impartiality and independence. You therefore need to be able to listen to each side and put people at ease so that they can present their case fully. You will also need to follow a fair process; ensure that everyone is heard and be able to make a balanced decision based on all the information presented to you.

How much time would a Panel member need to give and where are hearings held?

The appeals are arranged so that they are heard for half a day or a full day depending on the number of appeals received. The number of appeal hearings usually increase during the early summer, after parents/carers are notified of primary and secondary schools allocated to their children. Appeal hearings are held virtually using Microsoft Teams.

Do Panel members get paid?

Panel members provide a very important volunteer service which is unpaid. However, Panel members are entitled to expenses, such as travel, when attending panel hearings and training in person.

How can I become a Panel member?

If you are interested in submitting an application, please contact the School Appeals Service by calling **020 8379 3422** or emailing: sai@enfield.gov.uk. You may also access further information on the Council website – www.enfield.gov.uk