**Admission Appeals at St Oswald’s School – Procedure and Timetable**

As a Voluntary Aided school, the Governing Body is responsible for admissions and appeals. This is different to Voluntary Controlled or Community Schools. Places in our reception class are allocated according to our Admissions Policy, which is available on our website or by contacting the school office on 01913868029 or stoswalds.ce@durhamlearning.net

Durham County Council (the Local Authority) co-ordinate the admissions process and all applications should be sent to them by 15th January 2019. The LA will notify parents of allocated places on 16th April 2019. If you have not been successful in obtaining a place at St Oswald’s School you have a statutory right of appeal. You can also join our school’s waiting list and should contact the school office to be added to this.

Information from Durham County Council’s website regarding appeals:

Before deciding whether to appeal, you will probably want to think about the admission policy for admitting pupils, your reasons for wanting your child to attend the school and how strong a case you have. You may also want to consider visiting the school/academy where you have been offered a place or alternative schools/academies that still have places available. We will also be able to advise further on the availability of places at other schools/academies.

If you decide to appeal, your appeal will be heard by a panel which is independent of the school/academy and us, and the decision made will be binding on all parties.

You can appeal for more than one school/academy in order of priority. You may want to attend an appeal for more than one school/academy. The outcome of one does not affect the other.

You can appeal once for admission of your child to a particular school/academy for any given academic year. An admission authority will only determine a second appeal for any given academic year where it accepts there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school/academy relevant to the question of admission.

How to appeal

You must contact the school office to obtain an appeals form (or download from our website). The completed form must be returned to the school office. We will then send this to the LA who will arrange a panel hearing on our behalf.

Appeals Timetable

You have 20 school days from the offer date to prepare and lodge your written appeal. Your appeal will be heard within the following timescales:

* For applications made in the normal admissions round, appeals will be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.
* For late applications, appeals should be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging appeals where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged if it is later.
* For applications for in-year admissions, appeals will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.
* Any appeals submitted after the appropriate deadline will still be heard within 40 school days.

You will be informed of the date and place of the hearing in writing at least 10 schools days in advance of the hearing, unless you have waived this right. Seven working days before the hearing you will be sent copies of the Statement of Case that will be put before the appeal panel in support of our decision not to offer your child a place.

Appeal hearing
You are recommended to attend the appeal hearing, where you will be given the opportunity to put your case forward and to ask questions. You can take a friend or an advisor if you wish. This person can be a locally elected politician\* or an employee of the local authority such as an educational social worker, Special Educational Needs (SEN) advisor or learning mentor, provided that this will not lead to a conflict of interest.

*\* In the case of a locally elected politician, this must not be an elected member of Durham County Council who has a direct role in relation to school admissions in Durham Local Authority area.*

If it is impossible for you to attend, you can make your case in writing and this will be considered in your absence. In making your case, you will probably want to refer back to your original reasons for choosing St Oswald’s and put as much information as you can on the appeals form.

If you want the panel to take any additional information into account you should, if possible, submit any supporting documents with your appeal form or email them to stoswalds.ce@durhamlearning.net or post to the school address. Make sure you send them as early as possible so that we, and the members of the panel, have time to consider them properly.

The school’s representative will be at the hearing to explain to the panel why it is not possible to offer your child a place.

At the end of the hearing, the clerk should be able to give you an idea of how soon you can expect to receive the panel's written decision, but in any event, this will be within five school days of the appeal. This decision is binding on all parties.

Please note that if your appeal is successful you must take up the place within a reasonable time period three weeks (or start of Autumn term 2019) and if it is not your nearest suitable school/academy, you will be responsible for transporting your child to school in line with the LA’s Home to School Transport Policy (see the LA’s [School Transport](http://www.durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=891) page for more information).