



APPEALS INFORMATION

Any parent, whose application for their child to attend Saint Ambrose College has been unsuccessful, has the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. Information regarding the Appeal process can be found below.

Appeal Applications

Application forms are available by contacting the Admissions Officer at admissions@st-ambrosecollege.org.uk. The deadline for applications will be stated clearly on the application form. You are advised to fill in the application form and return it promptly, providing as much relevant information as you feel is necessary to be considered.

Once the Admissions Officer has received your completed appeal form, she will acknowledge receipt of your appeal and arrange a date for the appeal to be heard. Parents will usually be given 10 school days' written notice of the appeal but, where an appeal needs to be heard earlier, this notice period can be waived by the parents. The Appeals Timetable, which can be found on the College website, sets out the timescale for appeals to be heard.

Preparing your Appeal Case

You are responsible for presenting your case and deciding what oral or written information you want to put before the Appeal Panel. The appeal form is an important part of your case and should be filled out carefully. Your written evidence should be submitted with your appeal form by the date given on the appeal form. If you then wish to submit any further evidence e.g. medical report which is not available at the time you submit your appeal form, please send it to the Admissions Officer by the date stated. The College/Appeal Panel will **not** request any information or make any enquiries on your behalf nor will the College provide any evidence on your behalf. You should therefore ensure that you submit all evidence with your appeal that you wish to be considered by the Panel. Please note that if you submit additional evidence after the deadline the Panel may decide not to consider it or adjourn your appeal to a later date which may be after the end of the other programmed appeals.

Written evidence

Please note that the documents you send to us will be photocopied (for Panel members and the College representative) in black ink. Therefore, any text which has been highlighted with a highlighter pen will not be apparent. If you wish to draw particular attention to information, please consider an alternative method such as underlining. If any of the additional documents you submit contain your home address, it would be helpful if you could "blank" this out on the copy you send to us.



You may like to write down what you wish to say at the appeal hearing, and any questions that you wish to ask. Please remember to bring with you all the information sent to you prior to the appeal, as this will contain details of why your child has been refused a place at the College.

The Appeal Hearing

It is strongly recommended that you attend the appeal hearing as it is usually easier for you to explain your case to the Appeal Panel. Alternatively, you may send someone else to represent you at the hearing. If you do not wish to attend the hearing or send a representative, then your appeal will be heard in your absence on whatever information you and the College representative have submitted. You may be accompanied or represented at the appeal hearing by a friend or representative. Details of these people should be given to the Admissions Officer prior to the hearing. Please note that government guidance (The School Admissions Appeals Code) states that an employee or governor of the College may not attend the hearing or make any written submissions in support of your appeal.

Appeal Hearing attendees

The Independent Appeal Panel will be made up of three or four members. It will include Lay Members and Members with an Interest in Education, none of whom have any connection with Trafford Council, the Local Education Authority or the College. Sitting with the Appeal Panel, will be a Clerk who ensures that the correct procedures are followed and that the appeal hearings are conducted fairly. They remain with the Panel when the hearing is finished, but play no part in the decision-making. A representative from the College will also be present to explain why your child has been refused a place at the College. At the end of the hearing, he/she will leave and take no part in the decision-making process.

Appeal Hearing format

The hearing will be as informal as possible however certain procedures have to be followed to make sure that everyone who appeals is given a fair chance to present their case. It may help you to know that the hearing will progress in the following order:

- The Chair introduces everyone present at the meeting;
- The Chair outlines the purpose and format of the meeting;
- The College presents its case;
- Parents may ask questions of the College's case;
- The Panel may ask questions of the College's case;
- Parents are invited to make their statement in support of their case;
- The College may ask questions of the parents;
- The Panel may ask questions of the parents;
- The College is invited to sum up;
- The parents are invited to sum up;
- The College representatives and parents leave;
- The Panel considers all the evidence and makes their decision;
- The Clerk will write to the parents with the Panel's decision.



Where there is more than one appeal for the College, the Panel will hear all the appeals before making any decisions. All appeals are heard in private and are treated as confidential.

How does the Appeal Panel reach its decision?

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002, says that a school which determines its own admissions must comply with parents' preference except in certain circumstances, which include:

- A. If compliance with the preference would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of the School's resources;
- B. If the preferred school is wholly selective by reference to high ability or aptitude and the admission of the pupil would be incompatible with such selection under the admission arrangements.

The procedure used by the Appeal Panel in reaching their decision will depend on whether your child has been assessed as suitable for entry to the College (i.e. passed the entrance examination). If your child has not been assessed as suitable for entry to the College, the Panel will first consider whether there has been a review.

- (i) If there has been no review, the Panel can only consider whether there is evidence to demonstrate that your child is of the required academic standard for entry to the College e.g. school reports giving Year 5 test results, letter of support from your child's current or previous primary school clearly indicating why your child is considered to be of the required standard. If the Panel is satisfied that there is evidence to demonstrate that your child is of the required academic standard, it will go on to Stages 1 and 2 below. If the Panel is not satisfied that there is evidence to demonstrate that your child is of the required academic standard, your appeal will be refused because your child is not eligible for entry to the College.
- (ii) If there has been an unsuccessful review, the Panel will consider whether the review was carried out in a fair, consistent and objective way. If the Panel is satisfied that it was, it will refuse your appeal because your child is not eligible for entry to the College. If the Panel considers that there is no evidence to demonstrate that the review was carried out in a fair, consistent and objective way, it will consider whether there is evidence of academic ability as in (i) above. If, after considering these matters, the Panel is satisfied that your child is of the required academic standard, it will go on to Stages 1 and 2 below. If the Panel is not satisfied that your child is of the required academic standard, it will refuse your appeal because your child is not eligible for entry to the College. If your child has been assessed as suitable for entry to the College (i.e. passed the examination), the Panel must apply the following procedure in reaching its decision.



Stage 1: Establishing the facts

The Appeal Panel must consider whether: -

- a) the published admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code and the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, and
- b) whether they were correctly applied to your child, and
- c) whether the College has proved that admitting another child to the College would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources at the College.

If the Panel considers that the published admission arrangements are not lawful or were not correctly applied to your child, they must then consider whether your child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been lawful or properly applied. If the Panel is satisfied that your child would have been offered a place, your appeal must be allowed unless a significant number of children have been affected and admitting all of them would cause significant prejudice.

If the Panel considers that the published admission arrangements are lawful and were correctly applied they must then consider whether, as a matter of fact, prejudice would arise if your child were admitted to the College. If the Appeal Panel is satisfied that there would be prejudice it will move to Stage 2 of the decision-making process. If the Appeal Panel is satisfied that all the appellant's children could be admitted to the College before prejudice is established, all the appeals will be allowed.

If the Appeal Panel is not satisfied that all the appellant's children could be admitted to the College before prejudice is established, it must go on to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Balancing the Arguments

The Appeal Panel will consider the reasons you have given for requesting a place at the College and balance them against the prejudice that would be caused if your child was admitted to the College. If they decide that the reasons you have put forward in support of your appeal outweigh the prejudice, they will allow your appeal. If they decide that the reasons you have put forward in support of your appeal do not outweigh the prejudice, they will refuse your appeal.

Is the decision of the Appeal Panel final?

Yes, the decision is binding on both you and the College.



If my appeal is unsuccessful can I appeal again?

1. You only have one right of appeal in each academic school year for a particular school unless, in exceptional circumstances, the school has accepted a second application because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school, and refused admission.
2. An appeal for your child's admission to the College in September can be held before the end of the previous school year so that the admission can commence at the start of the new school year. However, such an appeal will be classed as relating to the school year commencing in the September.
3. You may, however, submit an appeal for more than one school during the same academic year.

What if I have any other questions?

The Admissions Officer at the College will be happy to answer any questions you may have relating to admission to the school.

Contact Details:

Email: admissions@st-ambrosecollege.org.uk

Telephone: 0161 980 2711 (Option 3)