

*'We value the power of education to change lives'*

## ADMISSIONS & APPEALS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why have you refused my child a place?

As has happened over a number of previous years, Highcliffe School has received more applications than places available and some children have not been offered a place.

The school only has 264 spaces available to offer in the Intake Year, with some Year Groups having a lower number of places due to a change in the Published Admission Number (PAN), which has been consulted on and changed over recent Intakes. The last change in PAN taking place in Intake 2020 from 240 to the current 264. In previous years the Pan was 230.

For Intake applications, to be considered as applying on time you must have applied to your Local Authority ie: BCP or Hampshire, by the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> October (preceding entry for the following September). All applications and any supporting documents are examined by Governors and placed accordingly into one of the categories as listed on the published Admissions Policy. These details are sent to BCP Council which co-ordinates applications using similar lists provided by all other schools and other local Councils to determine which school place to offer to which child.

Full details are published on the Council Statistics Sheet detailing which category (and distance) each school reached in its' offers and which category was the first refused. [For example for Intake 2021, Highcliffe School offered applicants down to Category 7 (Distance) to a distance of 2.033m. You can check with the Council into which Category your child was placed in and what distance they used for your application and which Category and distance the school reached in its' offers.

<https://www.bpcouncil.gov.uk/Schools-and-learning/School-admissions/School-admissions.aspx>

### Who made the decision to refuse my child?

The Governors decide on the Admission Policy for the year in question having previously undertaken a consultation exercise. Regulations ensure that they must subsequently follow that policy when allocating a category to your child. The resultant list detailing the category allocated to each applicant who applied by the closing date is then sent to BCP Council as detailed above.

BCP council (School Admissions Department) can tell you more in depth about what happens when they receive the list from the school and how, where you put Highcliffe School on your list four preferences, effects the school you are offered.

### My child is upset with the place offered – what can I do?

If you wish you can appeal against the decision not to offer your child a place using the formal appeal procedure operated by an Independent Admissions Appeals Panel for Highcliffe School. However, please be aware that you must have grounds to appeal the decision and provide those grounds in writing. Please contact the Admissions Officer at Highcliffe School if you wish to proceed with the appeals process.

You should return the completed form before the deadline (and any supporting documentation) either by email or, if you prefer, you can print it out and deliver a hard copy by post or by hand. Please refer to the school website to discover the deadline for the receipt of appeal forms and documentation. If you apply for an appeal after this date you may be allocated a later hearing. Please note that lodging and having an appeal hearing is not a guarantee of your child being offered a place at Highcliffe School.

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### **What happens after I return my appeal form?**

If you have provided written grounds for your appeal as required, your appeal form and any documents will be acknowledged and then forwarded to The Clerk to the Independent Admissions Appeals Panel who will arrange an Appeal Hearing. At least ten school days prior to the appeal, you will be informed of the date(s), time(s) and place at which the Appeal Panel will meet.

If you have submitted appeals for more than one school, it is unlikely that your appeals will be heard on the same date, you will receive a separate notification for each appeal you have submitted.

A week before your appeal hearing, you will be sent an appeal pack with copies of all the documents that have been submitted to the Appeal Panel. This will include both the Admission Authority's (in this instance, Highcliffe School's Governing Body Statement and the appeal form together with any additional documents you have submitted. You will need to bring this pack with you to the appeal hearing.

### **What happens at the appeal hearing?**

The Panel comprises three trained unpaid members of the public (one or two of whom who may have had experience in the area of education).

You are welcome to bring someone with you to the hearing and that person may speak on your behalf if that is your wish. We do not recommend that you bring any children with you to the appeal hearing.

The Chair of the Appeal Panel will welcome you and the school representatives and introduce everyone present before explaining the process of the hearing. There may be multiple appellants for the Year Group so all parties will attend Stage 1 (the case on behalf of the school) at the same time. All parents and the Appeal Panel will be able to ask questions.

Following Stage 1, the Panel will listen to your personal case (Stage 2), separately and privately (no other appellants attend this part of the hearing) other than the Panel, school representatives and the Clerk. The Panel members alone decide upon the outcome when all the appellants have been heard. Their decision is binding on all parties and will be advised at the earliest possible opportunity but maybe several days after your case has been considered if there are multiple appeals. The proposed dates set aside to hear appeals for Highcliffe School are published on the school's website on the Admission Information page.

### **If my appeal is unsuccessful can I appeal again?**

You can only make one application for appeal each academic year, except in the case of exceptional circumstances. Once you receive the refusal following your appeal, the earliest opportunity to appeal for the next academic year is from June 1st onwards, when you will also have been required to place a new application for the following academic year.

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### **If I appeal can I also go on the waiting list?**

All applicants refused are automatically put onto the waiting list for Highcliffe School by the Local Authority, BCP, but Highcliffe School would also be pleased to hear from you directly to confirm this. The waiting list is held for one academic year only until 31 August. Please be aware that we will require a new application for the subsequent Year Groups for you to remain on the waiting list for the following year, or your child's name will be removed automatically. Please contact the Admissions Officer at Highcliffe School by 1<sup>st</sup> June to request a further application form.

### **If I am on the waiting list can I also appeal?**

Yes, providing that you follow the guidance outlined above under the question 'My child is upset – what can I do?' Please note that the Panel are not allowed by law to take into account anyone's position on the waiting list when deciding upon an appeal.

### **Can someone at the school keep me informed of changes to my child's position on the waiting list?**

You can contact the School's Admissions Officer, Mrs Heathman, either by telephone 01425 273381 or email to [admissions@highcliffeschool.com](mailto:admissions@highcliffeschool.com) to find out where your child is on the waiting list at any specific time. Please be aware that places on waiting lists do not remain static as positions may change if other children join the list and go into a higher position on the list than your child.

### **What if I applied for the place late?**

The Local Authority ie BCP, will write to you at the date prescribed by them.

### **What distance did the school use and how is it arrived at?**

The Local Authority provides the school with the distance measurement which is taken from your home to the school site. They use the same distance measurement tool for all applications and the distances are taken at the same point in time for every application. Please refer to BCP Council if you require more information on this tool.

### **Who can I talk to at the school about the admissions policy, my concerns and chances?**

It is hoped that either the information on our website should be able to answer your queries about the admissions and appeal process. If you have any unanswered queries or require further clarification you can email Mrs Heathman, the School's Admissions Officer, via [admissions@highcliffeschool.com](mailto:admissions@highcliffeschool.com)

If your concerns are about the content of the Admission Policy, you should be aware that once the Admission Policy has been consulted, determined and published by the Governing Body it cannot be changed for that year.

### **What is PAN?**

The PAN refers to the Published Admission Number ie: how many children will be admitted into the Year Group. The PAN for Highcliffe School for the Intake Year is 264.



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## What is Net Capacity Assessment?

The NCA is the total number of pupils the school has been assessed as being able to admit against a National recognised system. This looks at the number and size of the classrooms (how much usable space there is for core teaching activities). Please note as an Academy, we are no longer legally obliged to comply, conduct or share the net capacity assessment. If NCA's are interpreted out of context or incorrectly it could cause confusion and lead to inaccurate assumptions.