

ADVERT



Job Title:	Panel Members for School Appeals – Volunteer
Accountable to:	Head of Compliance
Remuneration:	Volunteer position – Casual Hours
Start Date:	For school admission appeals (ongoing vacancy)
Closing Date:	No end date (ongoing vacancy)
Interviews:	To be advised

We are looking to form a pool of volunteers to support our admission appeals in Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch (BCP) area.

Why volunteer?

Volunteers become panel members for a variety of reasons:

- They are **interested in education.**
- They **enjoy meeting and working with people** with similar interests.
- They want to be of service to parents/carers and schools.
- They have relevant experience and skills that they wish to use.
- They may have been through the appeal process as parents themselves.
- They have a background in education or law from other roles such as a teacher or headteacher or as a school governor or magistrate.
- **Have time available on weekdays during term time.**

To maintain the impartiality of the independent appeal panel, the panel member role is entirely voluntary and not paid, however, travel expenses will be reimbursed, and we will provide refreshments at appeal hearings (including lunch where appeal hearings last a full day).

Please note that we work in partnership with HISP Multi Academy Trust and therefore volunteers may hear appeals for Hamwic Education Trust (HET) schools and also Highcliffe School, part of HISP.

ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY:

If a child is refused a place at a school, due to the year group being full/oversubscribed, a parent/carer can appeal that decision. You will be volunteering to hear cases and reaching a decision with panel member colleagues as to whether the case made by a parent, guardian or carer should result in a successful (upheld) appeal, or an unsuccessful (dismissed) appeal, based on a balance of the evidence of prejudice heard from all parties.

These panels can sit throughout the year, although the busiest period is between June and July. During this peak period in the summer, appeals may take more than 1 day if there is a high number of appeals for the school/year group; these must be heard by the same panel members.

Appeal hearings will be held during the day, face-to-face, in schools in and around the BCP area. In exceptional circumstances they may be conducted online.

We are seeking 'lay' (no experience of being employed within the education sector) and 'non-lay' (experience of employment within the education sector) panel members to sit on our appeal hearings.

SUPPORT AND TRAINING:

Ideally, we are looking for panel members who are experienced in this role with up-to-date training. However, comprehensive training will be provided to all new volunteers.

Ongoing support and training will also be available from HET to all panel members throughout the year.

TASKS AND DUTIES:

Panel member duties include:

- Reading appeal packs prior to hearings in order to understand the case being put forward by the admission authority and the parent, guardian or carer.
- Considering the written evidence in advance of the meeting and drafting questions you may wish to ask at the hearing.
- Attending appeal hearings until all appeals have been heard and taking part in pre-meeting briefings and post-meeting deliberations. Listening to both cases made during the appeals hearing and making a judgement on the evidence heard and previously received.
- Taking an active part in appeal hearings with panel member colleagues, including making notes, asking questions, and contributing the outcomes of appeals.

WE ARE SEEKING A PROFESSIONAL INDIVIDUAL WHO:

- Would be able to put nervous parents at ease and make balanced decisions to ensure that parents and schools receive a fair appeal hearing.
- Can ask clear and relevant questions in a calm, non-confrontational manner to elicit the relevant information and facts.
- Will fully participate in the decision-making process by considering all the relevant information, to form reasoned decisions based on the relevant law and facts.
- Can understand and apply the rules of natural justice (fairness).
- Will be sensitive and respectful of the need for confidentiality.
- Can recognise and disclose any potential conflict of interest.
- Has excellent attention to detail.
- Has good interpersonal skills.

- Can travel to appeal venues.

WE CAN OFFER:

- Training relevant to this volunteer position.
- Hard working and supportive HET colleagues.

If you would like to discuss the role further, please contact our HR team by emailing recruitment@hamwic.org to arrange an informal chat.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Should you wish to volunteer please complete our School Panel Member application form which can be found at www.hamwic.org/vacancies/managed-services, and return to recruitment@hamwic.org **CVs will only be accepted with a completed application form.**

HAMWIC EDUCATION TRUST:

Hamwic Education Trust (HET) is the Trust for schools that form part of Jefferys Education Partnership, Edwin Jones Partnership, Ridings Partnership, Greenway Partnership, Mayflower Partnership and Hillary Partnership.

HET is fully committed to developing an outstanding workforce. We are a friendly and supportive community of professionals working hard to ensure that our schools are enabling children to grow and develop for the future.

We have talented staff working in leadership, teaching and support roles throughout our schools and committed professionals working in the Managed Services team covering education, safeguarding, HR, IT, finance and estates. This experienced team supports our schools and is responsible for the successful delivery of our multi-academy trust.

As an employer, we support our staff to grow through continuing professional development and there is a range of apprenticeships and other opportunities available throughout the Trust to extend your knowledge, skills and career prospects.

HET celebrates the uniqueness of our pupils, our staff and our schools and we aim for everyone to achieve their full potential through the pathways of opportunities available.

SAFEGUARDING:

All schools within HET are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks along with other relevant employment checks.