

## **Volunteers required – Appeal Panel Members**

Coventry Schools is a group of six academies across Coventry, comprising schools in Castle Phoenix, Finham Park and Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trusts, who work together for their appeals. They are seeking volunteers with experience in education or lay people with non educational backgrounds who would like to serve on the appeals panel for Coventry Schools.

Would you like to become involved in a vital and impartial service provided to parents and schools? Do you have any friends or family that would like to get involved? Then why not apply to become a member of the Coventry Schools independent appeals.

### **What is required of a panellist?**

Panel members follow a process, extracting and weighing up relevant information from all parties to make a decision. Panel members deal with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds, negotiating situations where appellants may express anxiety or anger. Excellent communication skills and the ability to navigate information and understand legal and policy documents is essential. The ability to reach clear, methodical decisions which may be scrutinised and challenged is integral to the role, and impartiality to both the schools and parents is also necessary, as is confidentiality. In coming to a decision, it is important that the Panel keeps in mind the requirements of the School Admission Appeals Code.

Appeals are timetabled to last about half an hour. During the main Appeals period between March and July, appeals can be heard throughout the day. There may, however, be only one or two appeals on a particular day. During June and July there may be multiple days of appeals. A panellist can decide on each occasion whether or not to accept the invitation to serve on a particular panel. Some panellists only want to do one or two appeals a year, others hear them more often. There is no obligation to accept a particular hearing. Lunch and travel expenses are provided. Training is provided.

These are unpaid roles but expenses will be reimbursed. Appeals take place during the working day, mostly during the school term time, and you are free to accept or refuse any panel dates offered to you. Full training will be provided.

For an informal discussion please contact Jackie Thompson by email: [Jackie.thompson@castlephoenixtrust.org.uk](mailto:Jackie.thompson@castlephoenixtrust.org.uk)