

FAQS: GOT A QUESTION? WE'VE GOT THE ANSWER!

Take a look at our Frequently Asked Questions below!

You may find it useful to Ctrl+F to search for keywords you are looking for!

If your question isn't here then don't worry, email the Sixth Form Team who can help via
sponnesixthform@sponne.org.uk

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General Common Questions

Will we get email confirmation that our sixth form application has successfully been submitted?

When you submit your Google Form application you will receive an automatic response informing you that your form has been submitted.

If the subjects I want to do are in the same block, who should we talk to about this?

Please enter this on your application form. All clashes will be looked at after the deadline date and if it is possible to accommodate subject choices we will - however there is no guarantee.

If 2 of the subjects that I want to choose are in the same column, when do we hear if there may be a possibility that I can do both?

You will be contacted by the end of March about any clashes.

I want to do 3 sciences and am targeted 6 to 7 for these, however I am doing foundation maths with a grade 5 as the highest grade - science requires a grade 6 but this is not possible. How do we handle this?

This would need to be discussed with the relevant subject leader who would be able to advise. It might be possible to do Core Maths to support the maths aspects of the science course.

What happens if my English is likely to be a 5, but a subject requires a grade 6? / What happens if I don't get the required grade in GCSE English?

The criteria for a 6 in English is to ensure that students have the level of literacy to access the course. If a student satisfied all other aspects of criteria, but has just missed a grade 6 in English then we would review each case on an individual basis. This would be discussed on results day.

What additional support is available from the SEN Department during A-Levels for those who already have SENCO support for their GCSEs?

Students who are currently attending Sponne and have SEN support will continue to receive support. External applicants should make us aware on their application of any previous SEN support. Exam access arrangements are usually reviewed and in some cases students are re-assessed to determine their needs. If applicable you will be contacted early Year 12 by a member of the SEN team.

When is the deadline for applications?

10th February 2022. We may accept late applications, but will prioritise on-time applications.



If I get the grades required, am I automatically in Sixth Form?

If you satisfy the entry criteria then yes your conditional offer is met and you do have a place.

Would you recommend taking 4 over 3 A-Levels if able to, even if the university course being considered only asks for 3?

Some students find it very difficult to only choose 3 subjects to study at A-Level. We suggest that if this is the case, then start on 4 subjects (sometimes 5) with a view to dropping down to 3 by the end of the first 2 cycles (4 weeks) Students will know after 18 lessons whether a subject is right for them or not, In very few instances, student can stick with 4 subjects for year 12 and enter an AS in the summer of year 12. HOWEVER not all subjects are able to offer this as the A-Level topics do not fit the AS level. A small number of students continue on 4 subjects. 3 subjects are the standard requirement for university entry.

If I am not sure about 6th form or college, do I still put an application in regardless?

Yes! It is much easier on results day to accept/refuse offers rather than having to research and apply on the day. We encourage all students to have a back up plan "just in case".

Should I be looking ahead into University course requirements for A-Levels?

This is not essential, but if students have a career plan in mind (e.g. Law, medicine, veterinary, dentistry) then it is important that their A-Levels are in line with those courses. UCAS.com is a good place to start.

If you don't currently have a career plan in mind, we will support you with that and would advise you to choose subjects you enjoy and have an aptitude for.

Can you explain how conditional offers are made - what is taken into consideration?

Conditional offers will be made on the basis of the data we currently have. For Sponne students this will be data from G4S. For external applicants this will be the predicted grades that you have entered on your application form. Most students will be offered a conditional place dependent on their GCSE grades on results day.

When (date) do you find out about conditional offers?

We hope that we will be able to send out conditional offers by email by the start of the Easter holiday.

For English - is it a combined grade for Lit & Language? or just Language grade?

The English grade required for entry to Sponne Sixth form is a 4 in either English literature OR English language. However the individual subject criteria may require a grade 6 in English language.

Do all Sixth Forms make conditional offers at the same time in the year and what month of the year does this happen in?

Each Sixth Form will have their own timeline. You would need to contact them to find out.



What happens if I don't get a grade 6 in any of my subjects?

We would review this on an individual basis, IF your grades meet the criteria for your chosen subjects and your results are predominantly grade 5.

Can I do 2 BTEC courses?

Yes - students can choose to do only A levels, a mixture of A level and vocational courses or 3 vocational courses

What would happen if a course is oversubscribed if you want to change to that course on results day?

We operate on a first come first served basis. Should a course be oversubscribed by results day you would be unable to start that course. However please bear in mind that not all students who apply actually come to Sponne Sixth Form so spaces may become available. Please get in touch if you change your mind on results day.

What time does school start?

Lesson 1 starts at 8:45am. Students are expected to be in school by 8:40am. Students can access school from 8am.

Is there secure parking for student cars or motorcycles?

Unfortunately not. There is no onsite parking for students.

What UCAS support is offered?

The UCAS process is introduced by tutors and the PSHE team. We have visiting presenters from local universities to talk through the process and focus particularly on personal statements. We have a designated Post 18 planning day in the summer term where students are taken off timetable to start the application process - for both UCAS or apprenticeship preparation. Year 12 have the opportunity to visit the UCAS and apprenticeship fairs held at local universities

What charities do Sixth Form support?

This is very much student led. Recent charities have included Teenage Cancer Trust, The Hope Centre and Air Ambulance. The student Leadership Team decides through consultation with both year groups which charities they would like to support.

What size is the Sixth Form year group?

This varies from year to year. In recent years we have had around 150 Year 12 students and 130 Year 13 students

What is the process following the application?

You will receive a notification that your Google Form has been submitted; we will review all applications after the deadline date; we will be in touch regarding any clashes of subjects around mid March; you will receive a



conditional offer by the start of the Easter holiday; we will send out details of our induction days to be held in July (hopefully attending in person, but virtually if not); on results day your place will be confirmed.

How does Year 12 differ from Year 13 with respect to required attendance?

Year 12 attend school from 8:40am to 3:05pm. They can leave the premises at breaktime (20 minutes) and lunchtime (35 minutes). They will have supervised study periods on their timetable in addition to non-supervised study periods. These should be used to study independently. We do allow driving lessons to take place during this time (evidence required) as well as medical appointments if they cannot be made out of school time. Year 13 are allowed more flexibility and are allowed to leave the school site when they do not have a timetabled lesson.

How many students are likely to be in the English lang/lit class?

This varies from year to year. As a guide, current Year 13 has a class size of 14 and Year 12 a class size of 6.

Is it possible to change your Sixth Form options if your results are better than expected?

Yes! Please contact us on results day to discuss. As previously mentioned the only barrier here would be if a course was oversubscribed.

What is the strength of Sponne Sixth Form?

We are an open access Sixth Form. We are not selective in any way. Our entry criteria is such that students are able to access level 3 courses which are suitable for them. Our pastoral support is excellent. The Sixth Form team work within the sixth form area and have an open door policy. Students can - and do - pop in with any issues during the school day. We have a designated group of tutors who have a wealth of experience within Sixth Form. All of our level 3 courses are taught by subject specialists. In case of staff absence, cover lessons are set which are often supervised by a member of staff.

How many students typically study food technology?

Our numbers are generally quite low. Currently 3 students in Year 12 and 7 students in Year 13. To allow this course to continue Year 12 and 13 have common timetabled lessons. This allows them the opportunity to have designated practical sessions and theory lessons with supervision.

Will there be an Open Evening in school?

No, all information on applying to Sponne Sixth Form for September 2022 entry is available on the school website.

Will the entry requirements for Sixth Form change due to Covid-19?

Sponne's standard entry requirements will not change (6 GCSEs or equivalent, grades 9-4, including a grade 6 in one subject). However, individual subjects may have some flexibility with their entry requirements on results day.



Can I change my mind on subjects on results day?

Yes, you can. As long as the subjects you choose fit into the option blocks and you meet the entry requirements for them, they can be changed on results day.

What if I have a clash with the option blocks?

Please make a note of the subjects and block in the box provided after the option blocks selection of the on-line application form. Once we have received all applications we will look at the clashes to see if any can be resolved. This is not always possible due to staffing numbers together with the number of students selecting the subject.

Am I allowed to change or drop subjects?

Once timetables are issued students will not be allowed to change or drop a subject unless there are exceptional circumstances. A form for changing/dropping subjects during the first four weeks of term is available from the Sixth Form Team and must be signed by parents, the subject teacher and Head of Sixth Form. Following the first four weeks of term, requests to drop or change subjects will not usually be considered.

Is there any preparation that I can do for my new A-Level subject choices?

Currently, you need to continue to focus on your Year 11 work, as the government is working on some form of exam/assessment before the end of the school year. Closer to the end of this academic year, you will be allocated transition tasks for your particular subjects.

Will I have an interview for Sixth Form?

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we will not be conducting face to face interviews. The information you provide in your application will be used to determine whether or not we will make you a conditional offer of a place. You must complete your application form with accuracy and as much detail as possible to show yourself at your best. If we require any further information or clarification on your application, we will contact you directly.

Will there be induction days in school?

We are hoping that our induction days will run in the summer term. However, we cannot say for certain, due to the current pandemic situation. If induction days do not happen in school, they will happen online.

What happens if I apply but I don't meet the entry requirements?

All applications that meet the entry requirements will be considered. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are applying to alternative providers in line with your predicted grades, to ensure that you receive at least one offer of further study/employment/training.



Do I need to have studied the subject at GCSE in order to study it at A-Level?

It will depend on the subject. Some subjects such as psychology are often not available at GCSE and so there is no expectation that you have studied it previously. This is something that is best discussed with individual Heads/Faculty subject teachers as they will be able to explain the demands of their course and allow you to make an informed decision.

How will I know if I have received a conditional offer of a Sixth Form place?

After the application deadline (10th February 2022) we will review all applications and conditional offers will be sent by the Easter holiday.

I'm currently taking BTEC Sport in Year 11, am I able to take A-Level PE and what are the entry requirements?

A minimum of merit for BTEC sport is needed. The nature of BTEC assessment is very different to A level PE so please contact Mr Maybury to discuss.

Is there financial assistance or transport provision available?

Some students may be eligible for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. The Government's 16-19 Bursary Fund provides support to the school for students who face financial barriers to participation in education. For more information please visit the section of our website and scroll down to find the [16-19 Bursary](#).

Further information on Post 16 transport can be found by visiting the [NCC - Post 16, Travel Assistance](#).

Where can Sixth Form students go in school?

Sixth Form students at Sponne School are fortunate to have their own designated Sixth Form Study Centre. All students are expected to use this facility sensibly. Students also have access to the LRC, canteen extension and some faculty areas during study periods.

Anyone found misusing the Sixth Form area will be subject to disciplinary procedures and in the case of wilful destruction/vandalism, will be liable for the cost of repairs or will be requested to undertake community service.

What are Structured Study sessions and non-contact sessions?

Students will have Structured Study as part of their Sixth Form timetable. These lessons are planned to support students to achieve their best. These lessons will take place in the Sixth Form Study Centre and are registered by Miss Elliott. It is expected that students will arrive fully prepared for the work they need to complete. Students will also have non-contact periods on their timetable that are not registered. These should not be regarded as 'free' lessons but should be used to ensure work is completed to deadline, being improved on or revision/wider reading is being undertaken.



Are Year 12 students allowed off-site?

Year 12 students are expected to attend from the start to the end of the school day inclusively, signing in before Period 1 (even if they have a non-contact period) and then signing out at the end of the day. There is more flexibility on leaving the school site in Year 13. If you are someone who prefers a more flexible/part-time timetable, then college may be a more suitable option.

What if I do not achieve grade 4 in maths or English?

Grade 4 in maths and English are part of our minimum entry criteria. However if you achieve all other entry criteria, but achieve grade 3 in either maths or English then you may be accepted into Sixth Form, but must retake the GCSE. This is a timetabled lesson and a retake opportunity will be available in November 2022. A second retake will be available in June 2023. Please be aware that this may affect your choice of subject if there's a clash between maths retake and one of your chosen subjects.

Is there a dress code?

Yes. It can be found here [Sixth Form Dress Code](#). If there are any specific questions regarding this once your place is confirmed, please contact the Sixth Form Team: sponnesixthform@sponne.org.uk

Provision/Support for existing exam access arrangements/SEND/EHCP

Sponne School has a wealth of experience of working with students with a whole range of needs and have a specialist Learning Support team who work with individual students.

If you have an Education Health and Care Plan and intend to put Sponne as your first choice centre for post-16 study, you will be offered a place providing you meet the minimum entry and subject specific academic requirements.

Similarly, if you currently have any kind of exam access arrangement, we will work with you to review that evidence and to provide the most appropriate support.

Can students park or smoke at school?

There are no parking facilities available to Sixth Form students on the school site. Sponne School is a non-smoking site. Sixth Form students must not smoke on site or anywhere near the school gate. If students are seen smoking on or near the school site, parents will be contacted and students could lose their place in the Sixth Form. This includes the surrounding roads within ¼ mile radius of the school.



External Applicants

What proportion of the Sixth Form are external students?

This varies from year to year. Typically we receive between 12 and 40 external students.

How are external students integrated?

Induction days are a great time for students to meet. Our Year 12 forms are a new start; previous form groups are not continued. So, many of our Sponne students are with other students they are not familiar with. Form tutors work through ice breaker activities with the whole form and during the taster subject sessions students can meet others with similar interests. We also have an inter-form activity which allows students to work in small groups. In September we have a “buddy” system for the first few weeks which helps students new to the school to find their feet. Teachers ensure that external students are integrated within lessons for group activities.

How many external applicants apply?

This varies from year to year. Typically we receive between 40 and 100 external applications.

As an external student, how likely am I to be offered a place? / What proportion of external students are given conditional offers?

All students who have predicted grades meeting our entry criteria will be given a conditional offer, regardless of being internal or external students.

I am entered for iGCSE in the summer. Will that make any difference to my offer?

No, your conditional offer will stand until you send us your results. Satisfying the entry criteria will make your offer unconditional.

Are there video tours of the site - eg science labs and Sixth Form Centre?

The main promotional video shows glimpses of these areas. We will endeavour to take some footage of faculty areas over the next week or so and upload them. Please bear in mind that areas of the school are being used as “bubble areas” and so do not necessarily look as they will in “normal” times.