



24 October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Post 16 college guidance meetings

This week I spoke to the whole year group about college applications, and they all had time during the day to start or continue with their own applications. Some have progressed very well and have submitted applications already. As a reminder, the deadline for MyChoice16 applications (Cambridgeshire colleges) is Tuesday 10th December. No Cambridgeshire college will receive applications submitted via MyChoice16 before this date, and so if students haven't submitted via MyChoice yet then they are not behind schedule.

For colleges outside of Cambridgeshire, students are aware that they are to apply direct via the specific college's website. For West Suffolk College and Abbeygate Sixth Form, the sooner students apply, the greater their chance of securing a place on their chosen course. These colleges have no set deadline. A number of students have applied already and have their guidance meeting date set before Christmas.

To help support these students who secure early guidance meetings, I have enclosed some guidance on what these meetings involve and how to prepare for them. I will write again in the New Year with additional information for the Cambridgeshire colleges.

School absence

It has been agreed that for virtual or telephone meetings that take place during the school day, students are able to be at home so they can either access a suitable device for the virtual meeting or be in a quiet calm space for a telephone meeting. It is expected that students are only absent from school on the day of their meeting for the absolute minimum amount of time, unless other arrangements are agreed beforehand with your child's form tutor or Head of Year. If your child is away from school for even a short period of time in the morning, please ensure that you use the official school absentee procedure.

Your sincerely

Mr Nick Oakhill**Trust Manager for Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance**noakhill@soham-college.org.uk

Soham Village College
Sand Street, Soham
Ely, Cambridgeshire
CB7 5AA

Tel: 01353 724100
Email: svc@soham-college.org.uk
www.sohamvc.org

Other schools in our Trust:
Kennett Primary School
The Shade Primary School
The Weatheralls Primary School

**'Guidance Meeting' – it sounds big and intimidating;
but just breathe, it's not as scary as you think.**

Applying for college is a big moment in your life, but there's no need to be nervous. By inviting you to a meeting, you will receive the best possible advice on choosing your college, your courses and your future career paths.

The most important thing to remember is to ***just be yourself***. Guidance meetings aren't here to catch you out or ask you trick questions, they just want to get to know ***you***. Colleges can then give you tailored advice about the college and the courses you want to study. It is also your chance to get a feel of what a college is like and to ask any questions you have.

Still a bit nervous? Don't worry, that's completely normal. To help make the process as stress-free as possible here is some guidance on what to expect from your meeting.

What to expect

You may be asked questions similar to:

- Why have you chosen this course?
- Do you have any career aims or future plans?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What are your subject strengths/likes and weaknesses/dislikes?
- Are there any personal issues or difficulties that may affect your studies?

You may be given information on:

- Entry requirements for your chosen courses
- Information on your chosen courses (topics covered, assessment, work experience)
- College expectations of behaviour and attendance
- Student support (academic support, student welfare & wellbeing, progress coaches)
- Student enrichment activities (EPQ, student clubs, student sports teams)

At the end of your meeting, your interviewer will either make you a verbal conditional offer or you will receive an offer a short while after your meeting via email or post. You should be told exactly what will happen as each college have different processes.

FAQ's

What is the purpose of these meetings?

To ensure you are happy with the subject/course choices based on your intended future plans, highlight any possible entry requirement issues, and giving you the opportunity to ask any questions

How long is the meeting?

They usually last around 20 minutes.

Will it be in person or virtual/over the phone?

This is dependent on the college. They will inform you of the process when the meeting is arranged.

In person

Is there a dress code?

There is no set dress code, come in whatever you feel comfortable wearing. School uniform or smart casual clothes is acceptable.

Can my parents/guardians come with me?

You're welcome to bring parents/guardians with you. Some students prefer for their parents to stay in the waiting areas, while others prefer for their parents to sit in with them. College's don't mind either way, whatever makes you feel most at ease.

Will there be parking?

Depends on the college. Visit the college websites for more details.

What happens if I'm late?

If you're late don't panic. Still come along to your meeting and you should hopefully be seen by an interviewer as soon as possible.

Do I need to bring I.D.?

It's helpful if you bring some I.D. such as a passport or birth certificate so the college can identify you. The college should tell you what you will need to bring.

Virtual/telephone

Nature of meeting

Make sure you understand how the meeting will be conducted, and that you have the correct Team/Zoom links or that your phone is charged and ready to take the call.

Be prepared

Make sure you are in a quiet place with no potential disturbances. If you know you have poor internet or phone reception, try and be in a place where service is better.

Don't panic if.....

.....your virtual call or telephone call is cut short due to a technical issue. If reconnection cannot be made, the college will make arrangements for a new date

And don't forget you can accept any offers you get and hold them until you get your results in August. Colleges expect students to hold multiple offers so you can keep your options as wide as possible until the last minute.