



Sapphire

ELITE

2023-2024
Information Pack



SHINE LIKE A SAPPHIRE

OUR FAMILY

Cheerleading is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK, combining gymnastics, acro, dance & jumps to create a showstopping routine, whilst also being one of the most inclusive, having something for everyone.. It's also full to the brim with sparkle too!

Sapphire Elite is part of Affinity Academy, who also offer Parkour & Gymnastics in a fun, confident-building environment, with a heavy focus on athletes having fun and learning life skills along the way.

VISIONS & VALUES

Here at Sapphire, our mission is to build self-confidence, self discipline, team building and everlasting friendships. We take pride in watching our athletes grow, and are honoured to be a small part of what helps to shape their future.

Our coaches are passionate and driven, and are continually looking for ways to keep progressing and encouraging our athletes to be the best they can be. With most having grown up through Sapphire themselves, they strive to build individual relationships with each athlete, whilst always providing an encouraging environment for them to thrive in.

In our information pack, you'll find everything you need to know about our programme. Cheerleading is an ever changing sport, so please take the time to read everything carefully, as we are implementing some changes for the season ahead. This is to ensure we have something accessible for everyone, whether that means a recreational, low commitment team, or teams suitable for our athletes who strive to be elite in this sport. Regardless of what you would like to gain out of cheerleading & Sapphire, we are sure the season ahead is going to be a successful one!

SAPPHIRE PATHWAYS

This season, we are splitting our teams into 3 different pathways: Bronze, Silver & Gold. This is so we can allow our teams to train to their full potential, whilst also maintaining a level of accessibility within our club. In our tryout form, you'll be able to opt for which pathway you would like to be considered for, and we'll do our best to accommodate. It's important to note that our pathway is NOT just decided by one component - As well as athletes/parents being able to select which pathway they'd like to be considered for, our coaches will also look at things such as commitment in previous years if a returning athlete, current skill levels, areas of development, and more, to determine where that athlete will progress and be the best fit for the season ahead. This is so we can ensure our teams are in the strongest possible position for competition, as well as each athletes' individual needs also being met too.

Please note, that if commitment to your pathway does drop, athletes will be moved accordingly. It's also important to note that all pathways are just as important as the next, and it's about looking at what divisions an athlete will thrive in the most and feel their most successful.

BRONZE

Our Bronze Pathway will be aimed at athletes brand new to the sport or those who do not want the commitment of a regular competition season. These teams will still train weekly, but will have a more relaxed policy when it comes to attendance, and also won't require things such as uniforms. They will still work on the same skills, work towards a routine, and showcase these regularly. It's a great stepping stone for those working out if this is the sport for them, and learning about how it works. We'll also aim for the team to compete/showcase at a local competition within the season if workable!

SILVER

These teams will be competitive teams, but will be for those athletes who are still developing their skills across the board and still want to compete as we currently do. Due to the change of levels offered at some competition EP's, our Silver teams will now also likely be our Novice & Prep level teams. A high level of commitment is still required, but they will do one or two less competitions than our Gold Pathway teams and have slightly less additional trainings. Novice & Prep divisions will be utilised affectively so that athletes get the most out of the divisions and get to compete, whilst still working on their core skills.

GOLD

Our teams that fall within this pathway will be our 'Elite' teams, in terms of commitment, skill & work ethic. Most Gold teams will have minimum tumble requirements, unless exceptionally strong in other areas. Athletes on a Gold team will be expected to show commitment to other classes, such as tumble and our stretch & flex class, to continue to work on their skills outside of their core sessions. These teams may also compete at competitions slightly further out, but also will have more competitions in the calendar. Our monthly non-tumble team will fall into our Gold Pathway, but competitions will be finalised when placements are released, but we will do our best to keep this inline with the rest of our Gold pathway teams. We are also looking to add more teams such as a Non-Tumble 3 to this pathway.

TEAM PLACEMENTS

WHAT ARE TEAM PLACEMENTS?

Team placements are the opportunity for athletes to show off their current skills, as well as try new ones. Cheerleading is split in lots of ways, from ages, to skill level, to work ethic... Everything plays a part! Our coaches place athletes on their teams; it's not a case of choosing what team to be on, as our coaches know what is most suitable to get the most out of each athlete, and where they will thrive the most.

Anyone looking to join a Sapphire Elite team MUST attend team placements, or arrange an alternative slot if they are not able to attend. This applies to those looking for serious commitment, as well as those looking to be a part of our development Bronze teams.

HOW ARE ATHLETES PLACED?

Due to a change in our set up this season and the implementation of our pathways, how athletes are placed will be affected slightly. However, what our coaches value and look at the most hasn't changed: **Work ethic, attitude, coach-ability & commitment** are still absolutely vital.

These are things we focus on in all pathways, and try to encourage with all our athletes, so they can learn valuable life skills both in and outside of cheerleading and get the most out of the sport.

With our pathways, it means we are able to place everyone on a team no matter what age, skill level or how experienced they are - There will be something for everyone. It's important to remember the team you are placed on is for the athletes benefit, and it is where we feel they will thrive the most and be the most confident in their skills.

Both our Silver & Gold teams do have a focus on skill, but most of our Silver teams will not have a minimum skill requirement (some still may). All of our Gold teams will have minimum skill requirements in tumbling where applicable, however exceptions will be made at the coaches discretion.

Due to these changes, some of our current athletes may find they have moved to a different level/age division for the upcoming season, which may also be impacted by the recent changes to the SportCheer age grid for the new season, but it's important to understand that there is also a reason why our coaches feel that that is the best place for you to flourish. We are treating this season as fresh start for our athletes, and want all of our competitive teams to go into competitions feeling confident in the divisions they are competing in, with a focus on being all strong round athletes.

WHAT HAPPENS AT TEAM PLACEMENTS?

Athletes should arrive 5 minutes early, and wait outside the main entrance of the gym building. Please come in suitable sports wear, with your hair tied up, no jewellery and suitable indoor trainers... Please also bring plenty of water! Minimal excess belongings are encouraged, as we do not have much storage space in the gym for personal belongings.

In the session, athletes will be casually assessed on stunting, tumbling, jumps and dance! But don't worry, we keep the environment super relaxed, and the most important thing is that everyone feels comfortable and has fun. Just do your best and everyone is always placed on a team!

If you have any additional questions or needs, please don't hesitate to reach out to our coaching staff, either prior via email, or in person at the sessions.



TEAM PLACEMENTS CONT.

WHAT SESSIONS TO ATTEND...

Athletes should attend their correct age sessions, as per the timetable, as a first session. If an athlete is hoping to make an older team as a crossover position, you should attend that aged session in addition to your age group.

If you are unsure, please speak to our coaches and they can best advise what to attend.

Please remember that the ages are based on the athletes' age as of August 31st 2023, not their age at the time of the session.

Travel Team ages vary due to the international division, so please check the age grid on that page to see if you qualify.

PLACEMENT COSTS

New Athletes: £10
Current 22-23 Athletes: Free

Athletes can attend as many sessions as they feel applicable to their desired teams.

ALL athletes must complete the placement form - You can find the link in the email or on our social media pages. Please ensure you use the correct forms for current vs new athletes.

Sunday 9th July

Travel Team & Golden Girls Session

4pm-6pm

Travel Team: Born 2005-2012

Non-Tumble Teams: Born 2008 or before

** See Page 9 for more info

Monday 10th July

Senior Sessions

7.15pm-9.15pm

Ages 12+

Tuesday 11th July

Tiny Session

4.45pm-5.30pm

Ages 4-6 years old

Mini Session

5.30pm-7pm

Ages 7-8 years old

Wednesday 12th July

Youth Session

5.30pm-7pm

Ages 9-11 years old

Junior Session

7pm-8.45pm

Ages 10-14 years old

Callbacks for Platinum & Golden Girls

Thursday 13th July

Travel Team: 6pm-7.30pm

Golden Girls: 7.30pm-9.15pm

Callbacks are an opportunity for athletes hoping to make our Travel Team, Platinum, or Golden Girls, our Monthly Non-Tumble 5 team, to come along and try higher level skills than they may get to in the original session, as well as seeing how different athletes work together.

If you would like to be considered for one of these teams, you should attend the Sunday session as a first session. We also encourage you to attend the senior session too if you are still hoping to be placed on a senior team as a back up.

BRONZE PATHWAY

JOINING COSTS

INSURANCE £15.99

Insurance

The insurance fee is yet to be set by the IGA, and will renew for all athletes in September 2023. Previous season cost was £15.99 for reference.

TRAINING COSTS

45 MIN TEAM £40

1 HOUR TEAM £45

Monthly Subs

Subs are paid monthly via direct debit. Costs for all training sessions are distributed across the season so that it is a one set fee. Even if a child misses a session, it will not be rolled over or reimbursed, as although this is a lower commitment pathway, subs are determined by numbers within the class and to cover costs.

UNIFORM COSTS

PERFORMANCE T-SHIRT £15

BOW £15

Uniform

As our Bronze athletes are unlikely to attend competitions, they will not require a uniform like our other teams. However, they will still showcase their routines, with the aim of these teams also attending local events and fetes in which training kits will be required so the athletes all look the same.



SILVER PATHWAY



JOINING COSTS

MEMBERSHIP	£35
INSURANCE	£15.99

Membership Fee

This is applicable to accept your place on all competitive teams (per athlete, NOT per team) and covers additional admin fees & processes, contribution to music, and also includes our training T-Shirt.

Insurance Fee

The insurance fee is yet to be set by the IGA, but the previous season cost was £15.99 for reference - It will likely increase slightly.

TRAINING COSTS

	FIRST TEAM	CROSSOVER
1 HOUR TEAM	£45	NA
1.5 HOUR TEAM	£48	NA
2 HOUR TEAM	£51	£35.70

CHOREOGRAPHY TBC

Monthly Subs

Subs are paid monthly via direct debit. Costs for all training sessions are distributed across the season so that it is a one set fee pro-rata. Even if an athlete misses a session, it will not be rolled over or reimbursed.

Choreography

This is a one-off fee that covers music and additional training hours. The cost is determined by the amount of athletes on each team to help keep it as low as possible.

COMPETITIONS

Please ensure to check all the costs for Competition Entry Fees on our competition page below.

Athletes on a Silver team are required to be able to attend to ALL competitions in the Silver calendar. If not, please speak to our coaches at Team Placements prior to teams being released.

UNIFORM COSTS

TINY/MINI TOP & SHORTS	£75
YOUTH-SENIOR COMPETITION TOP	£97
YOUTH-SENIOR COMPETITION SKIRT	£45
BOW (ALL SILVER TEAMS)	£15

ADULT LARGE AND ABOVE SIZES DO HAVE ADDITIONAL VAT COSTS.

Uniform

This season we are getting new uniforms, and therefore all athletes will be required to pay these costs. Silver teams will also require plain white trainers, ideally cheerleading shoes.

If you currently own a WHITE cheerleading bow, you will not require a new bow.

GOLD PATHWAY

JOINING COSTS

MEMBERSHIP	£35
INSURANCE	£15.99

TRAINING COSTS

	FIRST TEAM	CROSSOVER
2 HOUR TEAM	£51	£35.70
2.5 HOUR TEAM	£56	£39.20
MONTHLY TEAM	£44	NA
CHOREOGRAPHY	TBC	

UNIFORM COSTS

COMPETITION CROP	£87
MESH INSERT*	£20
COMPETITION SKIRT	£45
BOW	£15
BLACK TRAINERS	£75-£90

ADULT LARGE AND ABOVE SIZES DO HAVE
ADDITIONAL VAT COSTS.

Membership Fee

This is applicable to accept your place on all competitive teams (per athlete, NOT per team) and covers additional admin fees & processes, contribution to music, and also includes our training T-Shirt.

Insurance Fee

The insurance fee is yet to be set by the IGA, but the previous season cost was £15.99 for reference - it will likely increase slightly.

Monthly Subs

Subs are paid monthly via direct debit. Costs for all training sessions are distributed across the season so that it is a one set fee pro-rata. Even if an athlete misses a session, it will not be rolled over or reimbursed.

Choreography

This is a one off fee that covers music and additional training hours. The cost is determined by the amount of athletes on each team to help keep it as low as possible.

Uniform

This season we are getting new uniforms, and therefore all athletes will be required to pay these costs. If you already own a BLUE bow, you will not require a new one.

Non-senior teams will be required to purchase mesh inserts to wear with the crop in the relevant divisions at competition (e.g. youth/junior).

Gold Teams will also be switching to BLACK Trainers this season, which will be available via our online shop (Varsity brand) or sourced personally.

MINIMUM SKILLS

Please be aware that our Gold Pathway teams have minimum tumble and stretch requirements for most teams. Some exceptions will be made, but these are at the coaches discretion. If you'd like more information on what skills are required for specific teams, please speak to our coaches, or check out our social media pages.

EXTRA CLASSES

All athletes on a Gold Pathway team are expected attend extra classes to work on their individual skills; Either our Tumble Classes or Stretch & Flex Classes.

COMPETITIONS

Please ensure to check all the costs for Competition Entry Fees on our competition page below.

Athletes on a Gold team are required to be able to attend to ALL competitions in the Gold calendar. If not, please speak to our coaches at Team Placements prior to teams being released. Please note, ad-hoc competitions may be added for some teams throughout the season if agreed by the team as a whole.

COMPETITIONS

Please note, all competitions are **PROVISIONAL**, and will be confirmed within the athlete pack once Team Placements have been released.
Costs below are based on the 2022-2023 season, and will be confirmed once released by the Event Providers.

SILVER TEAMS

LEGACY JUST BELIEVE - STRATFORD

17TH-18TH FEBRUARY 2024

FIRST TEAM: £52 CROSSOVER: £34.50

LEGACY DREAM EXTREME - BIRMINGHAM

23RD-24TH MARCH 2024

FIRST TEAM: £52 CROSSOVER: £34

CHEER CITY - HATFIELD

DATE TBC - MAY 2024

FIRST TEAM: £35 CROSSOVER: £26

JAMFEST EUROPE - LIVERPOOL

21ST-22ND JUNE 2024

FIRST TEAM: TBC CROSSOVER: TBC

PLEASE NOTE, DUE TO FUTURE CHEER NO LONGER OFFERING NOVICE/PREP DIVISIONS AT THE MAJORITY OF THEIR COMPETITIONS, OUR SILVER TEAMS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND FC BOURNEMOUTH - THIS IS UNFORTUNATELY SOMETHING OUT OF OUR HANDS, HOWEVER WE WILL INSTEAD BE ATTENDING JAMFEST EUROPE WHICH IS A FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE TO FINISH THE SEASON ON.



GOLD TEAMS

LEGACY JUST BELIEVE - STRATFORD

17TH-18TH FEBRUARY 2024

FIRST TEAM: £52 CROSSOVER: £34.50

LEGACY DREAM EXTREME - BIRMINGHAM

23RD-24TH MARCH 2024

FIRST TEAM: £52 CROSSOVER: £34

FC BARCELONA - BARCELONA

1ST JUNE 2024

FIRST TEAM: £40

(Travel Team ONLY)

CHEER CITY - HATFIELD

DATE TBC - MAY 2024

FIRST TEAM: £35 CROSSOVER: £26

JAMFEST EUROPE - LIVERPOOL

21ST-22ND JUNE 2024

FIRST TEAM: £00 CROSSOVER: £00

FC INTERNATIONALS - BOURNEMOUTH

5TH/6TH/7TH JULY 2024

FIRST TEAM: TBC CROSSOVER: TBC

EXTRA CLASSES

STRETCH & FLEX

What are 'Stretch & Flex' classes?

Our Stretch & Flex classes are new for the season, with a core aim of developing flexibility across our teams. It will allow athletes to have regular flexibility check ins, as well as teaching them exactly how to push their flexibility.

Who can attend 'Stretch & Flex'?

These classes will be mainly aimed at flexibility, with a focus on flyer shapes in particular. These skills will also help support athletes in jumps and tumble skills too, so you do NOT have to be a flyer to attend! It will however also focus on core strength and stability, as well as drills for flyers.

If you are a flyer on a Gold pathway team, you are expected to attend a 'Stretch & Flex' class weekly.

How long are the sessions?

Sessions will be 45 minutes, and will run along side our other classes (such as tumble) so we will aim to offer multiple options.

What age should athletes be?

We aim to have 2 sessions across the week as a minimum, with broad age ranges. These will be confirmed in the athlete pack.

Costs of classes will be confirmed in our Athlete pack, and places will be on a first come, first serve basis.

TUMBLE CLASSES

Our Tumble Classes are back this season, and we once again encourage all our athletes to attend these to develop their tumble skills!

Cheerleading is becoming ever more tumble dominant, with more and more need to have the skills if you want to progress through the levels. Some of our teams this season will also have a minimum tumble requirement in order to be considered.

We have something for everyone, from complete beginners still working on cartwheels, all the way up to our Elite class suitable for athletes working layouts and full twists!

We are hoping to be able to add some more tumble classes once our team timetable is confirmed. Timings and costs for these classes will be confirmed in our Athlete Pack, as well as how to sign up.

PLATINUM & GOLDEN GIRLS

Travel Team & Monthly Non-Tumble Open Level 5

PLATINUM

Barcelona 2024

We are hoping to once again take a team abroad to represent Sapphire Elite, and this year the aim to attend Future Cheer Barcelona on 1st June 2024.

We are unsure what aged team we will field yet, either U16 or U18, so athletes must be born in or between 2005-2012.

Minimum Tumble Requirements:

Back Walkover
Forward Walkover
Switch Leg Back Walkover
Valdez

** All performed with high levels of technique.

There are also minimum shape requirements for anyone wanting to be a flyer on our travel team.

Please remember, our Travel Team is a bigger commitment in both time and finances, so please only try out if you know you can fully commit to the whole season. This will mean sourcing your own flights and accommodation for the trip, and all athletes under 18 will require a legal guardian.

GOLDEN GIRLS

Monthly Non-Tumble 5 Team

Golden Girls are our Monthly Training Team, and train one Sunday a month, 10am-4.30pm.

The team is a non-tumble team, meaning its focus is on Stunting, Jumps and Dance, and therefore requires a high level of stunting skills. It's also aimed at older athletes, born 2008 or before, who still want to cheer to a high level, without the commitment of a weekly team. It also allows those from further to join the Sapphire Family too.

After an extremely successful season at level 4, building solid foundations, the aim is for our Golden Girls to move into the International Open Non-Tumble Level 5 division.

Self discipline is also needed, and stunt groups are encouraged to train separately. Although this team trains less, if an athlete misses even one session, they will unfortunately be replaced. All dates are sent out at the start of the season, and any changes throughout the season will be agreed with the team, so you should only commit to the team if you can make every single one.



HOW TO REGISTER!

Current 22-23 Athletes

Our current athletes returning for the new season must register via their current LoveAdmin account using the necessary form, also linked [HERE](#).

You must complete the form before you attend placements so our coaches know who is attending, and what your aims are for the new season ahead.

New Athletes

If you're new to us, then we're already looking forward to meeting you and welcoming you to the Sapphire family!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our coaches via email at sapphire@affinityacademy.co.uk and we'll be more than happy to help with any questions you may have.

Please use the link [HERE](#) to register now.

Team Placements are £10 per new athlete, payable when you complete the form. Please ensure you have read the pack fully before completing it!

PLEASE REMEMBER, EVERYTHING IN OUR PACK IS A GUIDE BASED ON THE CURRENT INFORMATION WE CAN PROVIDE. EXTERNAL COSTS AND DATES FOR THINGS SUCH AS COMPETITIONS MAY VARY, BUT WILL BE CONFIRMED WHEN PLACEMENTS ARE RELEASED.