

EBE/srg

July 2020

Dear New Year 7 Parent/Carer,

Thank you so much to all the parents/carers who took the time to complete our recent survey regarding IT access at home, which has shown us that there is plenty of potential interest in us providing a student computer scheme. Due to the significant level of response, we are delighted to be able to launch this scheme for parents/carers of our new Year 7 intake.

The devices (HP Chromebooks) we are selling, are for the purpose of the **student's home learning**. Based on parental survey responses, the overwhelming preference was for something at a low price point, which does not include features which are unnecessary for home learning. This device is not intended to fulfil a whole family's IT needs or support streaming home entertainment, complex video editing or social media. By making this decision about the specific purpose of the technology, and by taking advantage of the 20% VAT reduction (alongside further discounts we have negotiated with our supplier), we are able to offer interested families exceptional value for this home learning device.

Please find attached a flyer with details on the devices being offered, and pricing. Due to a six week delivery time, we require orders to be placed by no later than **1st August 2020**.

Don't worry if you are wishing to purchase a device for your child, but aren't in a position to do this by the deadline, as the School will be offering a further opportunity to parents/carers early in Term 1, and widening the opportunity to parents/carers in all year groups as well.

Please note that the scheme is limited to one device per student. We would also encourage you to pay for the device in full if possible. However, if you are unable to do this, we are happy to announce that there is also an option to pay a deposit and then spread the remaining cost over 10 monthly instalments, after the initial payment. The deposit will be payable on placing your order via ParentPay www.parentpay.com with the remaining payments via standing order. The Chromebook model options will appear on ParentPay for your child, you will need to select your preferred option and arrange payment either in full, or by paying the minimum deposit amount (as stated on the Parentpay website) and we will then order the item for you. For those parents/carers who will be paying in instalments we will then send you paperwork in order to set up standing order arrangement from September 2020. We will contact parents/carers as soon as the Chromebook devices are delivered in school, (due early September) for parents/carers to arrange collection, on behalf of their child.

Option 1

If you would like to pay for the Chromebook in full, it will be available for either £180/£205 or £200/£215 (depending on the choice of model preferred), via ParentPay. You should already have had details of your log in/password for Parentpay, but if you require a reminder please email finance@willingdonschool.org.uk

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Option 2

If you would rather set up a monthly standing order with your bank, once the initial deposit is made via ParentPay, we can send you the paperwork to enable you to do this. The cost will again be based on the model chosen, involve an initial deposit as shown alongside the Chromebook, followed by instalments for 10 months, which includes a £2 a month admin fee.

Whichever option you choose, in cases of financial hardship, particularly if your son/daughter is identified as being part of the Pupil Premium, please contact the Finance Office via finance@willingdonschool.org.uk in the first instance, and we will be more than happy to look at an alternative payment plan that suits you.

Best wishes,

Emily Beer
Headteacher

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We appreciate that parents/carers will have questions regarding the scheme. We have collated possible questions and answers below. If you have any further questions, please contact the school using the details below.

FINANCE

What about parents who can't afford the scheme? The fairest way, we believe, to identify parents who may not be in a position to afford to contribute to the scheme is if they have been on the Free School Meals Register at any time during the last six years. We are able to use Pupil Premium funds to help them to join the scheme just like anyone else.

Experience by other schools of such schemes has suggested it is important for students to have a sense of ownership and responsibility and therefore we will still be asking those families to contribute to the cost of the scheme.

What if I have more than one child in this year group? We are able to offer a small discount for twins or triplets as we recognise the financial pressure this can cause. Please contact the Finance Office for details.

How was the cost arrived at? We will be able to offer this highly competitive price to parents based on bulk purchasing devices, as well as the item being designated for school and not personal use, which means that we don't have to pass on the VAT element of the cost to our parent/carers, unlike the retail price you would be offered on the high street.

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How will payments appear on my bank statement? Payments will appear on your bank statement as Willingdon Community School.

What happens with missed payments? If for some reason a monthly payment is missed, you will initially be contacted by the school's finance team. Continual non-payment of monthly direct debits will also be referred to the Director of Student Progress for the year group, as well as the School Leadership Team. The management of the Chromebook could result in the account being disabled until the outstanding amount is cleared. Please do not hesitate to contact the finance office if you require any help.

What happens if the student leaves before the end of the scheme? As well as the number of instalments being kept to a minimum to allow payments to be made in full in a reasonable time frame, if the student does happen to leave the School during the instalment period, the amount remaining on the device will be calculated. Parents/Carers then have the option of taking ownership of the device, by paying the remaining balance owed. Parents/Carers who do not wish to take ownership of the device at that stage can return the device to the school.

Why isn't there any insurance offered as well as the Chromebook cost? Other than the manufacturer's warranty, the device does not come with any additional insurance. The recent parental survey clearly showed that a competitively priced device was a significant factor in deciding whether to purchase a school Chromebook, and a third party insurance scheme would have added significantly to the purchase price, therefore our expectation would be that parents/carers purchasing the device would add the item to their own home insurance arrangements. The device will rarely if ever, be expected to leave the family home.

TECHNICAL

Why have we opted for Chromebooks?

- Takes less than 8 seconds to boot up.
- Has a very long battery life of 10 to 13hrs.
- A large numbers of computers can be managed centrally.
- Excellent collaboration tools.
- Works seamlessly with G Suite and other cloud-based applications which all of our students and teachers already use extensively.
- Still provides access to MS Office programmes such as Word, PowerPoint and Excel through the school's Office 365 licence.
- Multiple users can set up accounts on the device, so can be used by other Willingdon students in the household if necessary.
- Supports approved Chrome Apps, Chrome Extensions, Chrome Marketplace apps and Android Apps.

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What is home content filtering? To keep your child safe from unsuitable web content and sites, we provide a powerful and strict content filtering system within school and on all student devices where offsite. It will be these settings that determine what your child can access when using the Chromebook in your home.

What about student safety and screen time? The safety of students is paramount. We have invested in web-filter and a mobile device management system which can focus permissions down to individual websites or control access to an individual app.

Is 16GB or 32Gb big enough? Between Chrome OS and the typical applications provided by the School will take about 7GB of memory. Students will have access to Google Drive, One Drive and iCloud to enable them to upload documents and other files to secure online areas on the school network. Students have unlimited online storage space.

Should I choose Touch screen or non-touch screen? Although touch screens are popular for use with Chrome and android apps, either devices will support all online resources and apps required for curriculum use. We have added the option to satisfy personal preferences.

What standard Apps will there be? Google G Suite for Chrome which includes Google Classroom, Google Drive, Google Doc and Google Meet. We also have Microsoft Office online available for all users. Additional apps can be approved and deployed at teacher's request.

What is the expected life time of support? Google will typically support new devices with updates and security fixes for at least 6 years and although Chrome OS typically does not degrade you may wish to change purchase a new device in a shorter time period. We will keep parents updated of new devices available on the Pupil Laptop Scheme.

Will the schools ICT team help with issues relating to the Chromebook? The ICT department will support the initial roll out of the scheme, including the setup of the management device. They will be unable to assist with ongoing issues relating to the hardware or physical damage. The use of school online resources required for curriculum use will continue to be supported as always via our helpdesk available to students and parents at help@willingdonschool.org.uk

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