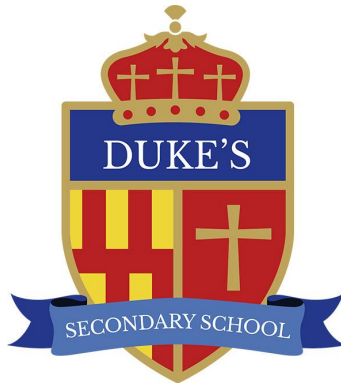


## **DIGITAL LEARNING: CHROMEBOOKS**

### **Parent / Carer Handbook with FAQs**



*For parents and carers of y11 and 6f students from September 2021*



Dear parent / carer,

We are delighted to announce that we are launching our 'Digital Learning: Chromebooks programme' for Duke's Secondary School students. It will be an expectation for every student in Year 11 and in 6f attending Duke's Secondary School to use a Chromebook in lessons and in home learning activities from September 2021.

We are excited by the possibilities this brings to have a significant impact on our students' learning, and have found in recent weeks and months that the benefits of using digital learning as an embedded part of our curriculum has led to many successes and to many new, interesting and exciting teaching and learning opportunities.

Our students' daily lives are filled with technology, and we recognise their ability to quickly embrace new technological developments. Recognising also that there are many new and innovative ways in which technology is being used in education, we feel that it is important to reflect and integrate this further into our provision.

Chromebooks are a great way of helping our students to embrace these opportunities. We need to make full and effective use of technology for learning and with this comes the need to ensure that students learn safely, effectively, and productively.

I hope that all the information you need will be found within this parent brochure and on our school website. However, if you have further questions, you can contact us anytime by emailing [admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk](mailto:admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk). Please mark your email 'FAO Mr S Thompson'

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## What are the benefits of Education Technologies?

Students need to be prepared for an increasingly digital world. Research has confirmed that good access to technology has a positive impact on a child's educational achievements; it often motivates students to do schoolwork by providing them with more interesting and engaging ways to learn independently, in collaboration with other students and through learning activities directed by their teachers.

## Why have we chosen Chromebooks?

There are a number of tablet and laptop style devices available on the market. We did extensive research including consultation with leading Education Technology expert companies when considering the type of device which would be best suited to students in our school.

A Chromebook looks like a laptop but operates in a very different way. Services and apps are accessed online. The operating system is produced by Google who provide a wealth of apps and services which are specifically designed to support students in education.

Chromebook devices boot up in a matter of seconds and have a longer battery life than laptops.. Chromebook usage is monitored centrally by our IT support team to ensure that access is safe and secure. Internet content is filtered for inappropriate content to ensure e-safety in school.

## Chromebook Features

- *Durability suitable classroom use*
- *Long battery life*
- *Simple technology*
- *Increased and simpler sharing of work between staff and students*
- *Work seamlessly with Google Apps for Education and other cloud based applications*



## How will Chromebooks be used at Duke's Secondary School?

The following are just a few examples of what students will do at Duke's using Chromebooks:

- Create, share and collaborate using Google Suite Applications (Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Sheets etc)
- Use subject-related apps in the classroom and at home
- Use Google Classroom as a base for each subject from where assignments can be set, materials uploaded, links created, information shared etc
- Access the internet to assist with research

Traditional methods of teaching and learning will still have an important place in education and will continue in our school. Chromebooks are an additional educational tool and not a replacement for these methods, more a way in which they can be more effectively developed.

## How do I connect the Chromebook to the Internet in my house?

Chromebooks use wireless to connect to a network so you will need WiFi at home to use the Chromebook on the Internet. If you have WiFi, your network security key can be added to the Chromebook before log-on. If you don't have WiFi at home, the Chromebook will still work for many things (most apps, reading eBooks etc) but, for example, email and web browsing won't work until the Chromebook is once again connected within the School network.

If you have any concerns about home WiFi, please contact us by emailing [admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk](mailto:admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk)

## My child already has a different device. Can they use that instead?

Unfortunately not. These are unlikely to be fully compatible with the Google Apps and add-ons that we will be using for teaching and learning.

- The battery will not last up to 11 hours on a single charge
- The device login and monitoring systems will not be managed by the school and therefore will not be manageable as a class learning tool
- The programme is designed so that all students have access to exactly the same device, of the same quality, and with the same capabilities.

## What if my child already has a Chromebook?

There would be difficulties with bringing your own Chromebook into school, including insurances, connectivity, filters etc. It is also unlikely that the device has the same rugged specifications necessary for frequent classroom use.

## What technical support will there be for students?

Duke's IT support team will be able to resolve many technical issues, but one of the advantages of a Chromebook is that it rarely goes wrong.

### **Is the battery good enough? How will charging work?**

Chromebooks have a long battery life of around 8 hours plus. This can vary depending on what the Chromebook is being used for (eg browsing the internet consumes less battery power than using, for example, Youtube). If the Chromebook is charged overnight it will last all day. Students are responsible for bringing their Chromebooks to school fully charged. Costs for charging a Chromebook for a year were estimated to be 87p if charged every other night (according to a 2015 study), which gives some indication as to the relative inexpensive charging cost. **Please note that there will be no charging facilities available at school.**

### **Will my child need their own Google account? If so, how will school be able to put apps on the Chromebook?**

Your child's school email account is actually a Gmail account, and this will be used. The school will use management software to distribute apps to Chromebooks registered with this school email account.

### **Who owns the Chromebook?**

The Chromebook remains the property of Duke's Secondary School, and is to be returned on request.

### **Did you look at Windows, iPads, Mac, Linux or Android as alternatives?**

We have consulted with and taken advice from a number of EducationTechnology experts and specialist companies before deciding on the Chromebook as the preferred device for Duke's.

We believe that iPads are excellent for accessing various media but they are not as good or as compatible for creating content and allowing our students to work collaboratively. The range of applications available on iPads and Android is vast, but many of the resources that teachers currently use, and will be using in IT suites would not be available.

While Windows, Mac and Linux laptops are more powerful than a Chromebook, they are more expensive and offer shorter battery life. They are also more complex so there is greater potential for things to go wrong. We feel that the Chromebook's simplicity is also its strength, overcoming the barriers associated with the other devices mentioned, meaning that the greater focus will be on the learning that is taking place.

### **What happens if the Chromebook is lost or stolen?**

If a Chromebook is lost or stolen, it is important that this is reported to school as soon as possible so that follow-up actions can be taken, and the police informed if deemed necessary.

### **What about safety on the way to and from school?**

We have looked at research from other schools and have found that there has rarely been, if ever, report of a Chromebook being stolen on a students' way to/from school. However, it is expected that the risk of theft is minimised through some common sense measures; students are to keep their Chromebooks in their bags on the way to and school, both for road safety and crime prevention reasons. This is advisable if travelling on foot or by bus.

### **How will inappropriate use of the Chromebook at school be dealt with??**

Students, with the support of their parents, will be required to sign a Home / School agreement which sets out some simple rules to make things go smoothly. Some of the rules will concern management of the device (e.g. *'I will bring the Chromebook to school every day, fully charged'*) and some will be about positive behaviour for learning in the Classroom (e.g. *'I will stop using the Chromebook when my teacher asks me to'*), with the overall intention of creating a way that all students, staff and parents understand and agree with. Any student that misuses their device in school will have increased restrictions placed on their device use, and will also be subject to our existing Disruption Free Learning sanctions.

### **What is Duke's Secondary School doing to reduce e-Safety problems with the Chromebooks?**

Duke's has a very effective web filtering system and all devices attached to the school network go through this web filter. We will be actively monitoring students' use of Chromebooks while in school, both in the classroom in terms of actual use, and through our existing IT monitoring systems. We will be able to look at a web filter log should an issue arise. Students are already taught the importance of e-Safety in school through IT lessons as well as assemblies. This will be continually reinforced.

### **How will the Chromebook be backed up?**

The Chromebook is always backed up and our students have unlimited storage space in the Google Cloud. This is already set up and associated with their Duke's email account.

### **I'm concerned about my child's work being stored with Google, how safe is it?**

The data is the property of Duke's Secondary School - Google GSuite customers own their own data, not Google. As a school we are following DfE and ICO advice in this area. Google do not store and log information, but this is encrypted in transmission and at rest. Google is fully GDPR compliant and do not share the data.

### **Can my child put their own content onto the Chromebook (music, video, apps)?**

As per the school Acceptable Use Policy, students cannot use the school domain (dukes.ncea.org.uk) to store personal data, music, videos etc. If they have a personal gmail account they can use this to login to the Chromebook when not on the school premises.