

## **DIGITAL LEARNING: CHROMEBOOKS**

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



*For parents and carers of y7 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 7 attending Duke's Secondary School to use a Chromebook.

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 about our scheme is within this parent brochure and on our school website. You can contact us anytime via the school email address [admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk](mailto:admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk). Please include 'FAO Mr S. Thompson' in the subject line of your email.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

# The Chromebook Package

We have worked hard to ensure that parents are offered the best possible package in terms of robustness of the device, insurance cover, repairs and additional software and licencing etc. Please note, appropriate use of the device outside of school remains the responsibility of parents / carers.

The Asus C204MA Chromebook has been fully evaluated and is the device that we are offering through the scheme.

## The Chromebook package includes

### The Chromebook

**In consultation with Edutech / the Learning Foundation, the Asus C204MA Chromebook has been selected by the school due to the robust and rugged design, specification, battery life etc.**

*'Built to meet demanding military-grade standards, the classroom-ready durability reassures teachers and students alike. It's packed with clever features to protect it in the real world, such as the all-round rubber bumper, spill-resistant keyboard and ultratough I/O ports. And with its school day-long battery life and time-saving, easy-to-service modular construction, ASUS Chromebook C204 is ready for anything!' (Asus)*

**The Chromebook package also includes a case and charger.**

### Insurance

**There is a three-year return to base warranty included in the package and insurance against accidental damage. All aspects of insurance will be managed by Edutech / the Learning Foundation.**

### Repairs

**If your Chromebook breaks you can arrange repairs / replacement as necessary via Edutech / the Learning Foundation. Details on how to arrange this will be provided.**



## 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.

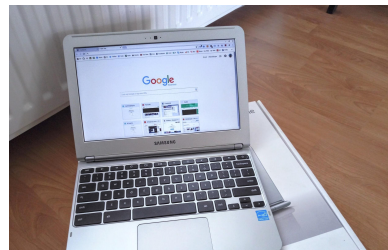
A Chromebook looks like a laptop but operates in a very different way. Services and apps are accessed online. The operating system is produced by Google who provide a wealth of apps and services which are specifically designed to support students in education.

Chromebook devices boot up in a matter of seconds and have a battery life of up to 11 hours (C204MA, depending on use). 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

#### *Asus C204MA*

- *Up to 11 hours battery life*
- *Durability tested for classroom use*
- *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
- This device has been chosen largely due to its rugged and robust design, anti-scratch, rubber bumper and tamper resistant design. It is unlikely that other devices will be robust enough to endure the level of use we anticipate that the C204MA will have in school and at home.
- The device login and monitoring systems will not be managed by the school and therefore will not be manageable as a class learning tool

## 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. The C204MA device has a battery life of up to 11 hours, dependent on use. 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 programme is run as a leasing programme through Edutech and the Learning Foundation, the duration which is over a term of 36 months. At the end of this period we anticipate that the device can be purchased outright by yourselves at the residual cost, or returned to school. Until then it remains the property of Edutech / the Learning Foundation, or dependent on funding arrangements, Duke's Secondary School.

### **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 believe that a Chromebook's simplicity is also its strength, overcoming the barriers associated with the other devices mentioned meaning that the greater focus will be on learning that is taking place.

### **Could we buy a cheaper Chromebook and 'opt out' of the Duke's scheme?**

No. There are other Chromebooks on the retail market, but our suppliers will be bulk purchasing a model that we believe offers good value for money. We will be offering a device that is robust enough for use in a school setting, and one that comes with the required licence, as well as technical and warranty support

### **Why can't the school provide these devices for free?**

Although from 2021, year 11 and 6f students will be allocated a device from existing school resources, we do not have the resources to be able to do this for all year groups. The leasing scheme will allow for year 7 students to have an up to date, brand new Chromebook to take with them throughout Key Stage 3, making full and effective use of technology for learning.

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

If a Chromebook is lost or stolen, it is important that this is reported to Edutech as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for reporting and replacing. The insurance will cover the Chromebook for theft and accidental damage.

### **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.

## HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

A separate 'Home-School Agreement' document is to be read and signed by parents/ carers and students. This will be sent to parents and carers closer to the start of the new school year.

As well as general expectations around appropriate use of the device in and around school, this agreement also provides details of the Chromebook Programme and how to contact our programme partners in the event of any damage or should you have any questions relating to voluntary donations, gift aid or anything else related to the programme.

