



16/6/2026

Dear parent / carer,

September 2026 Year 7 Chromebook Programme

Firstly, we are delighted to welcome your child to Duke's in September as they begin this exciting new chapter in their education.

At Duke's, we are proud of how we use Educational Technology (EdTech) to enhance learning and help students achieve their best. Research shows that combining technology with traditional teaching approaches can have a significant positive impact on progress. As part of this, we provide all students with 1:1 access to a device, helping us to deliver a high-quality learning experience.

We recognise that many students share devices at home, which can make completing schoolwork more difficult. Our Chromebook Programme ensures that every Year 7 student has access to their own Chromebook throughout their time at Duke's. This supports organisation, independent and collaborative learning, communication with staff, and access to learning both in school and at home (home use is subject to the parental contribution outlined below).

We use Google Classroom and other online platforms and applications for Independent Study (homework), lesson resources and revision materials. Alongside the Google Workspace tools, this enables staff to provide timely feedback, streamline assessment and make use of a wide range of effective teaching strategies.

As you can appreciate, this programme is a significant investment. While the school funds a large proportion of the costs and has seen a very positive impact since its introduction, we are unable to sustain the programme without contributions from parents and carers.

We are asking parents and carers to consider supporting the programme through a monthly contribution over 36 months. Where this is in place, students will be able to take their Chromebook home **each day** from the start of the programme, with secure monitoring and filtering software active for safe home use. By the end of Year 9, the Chromebook will usually be fully paid for and can be transferred to your ownership at no additional cost; otherwise, only a small balance may remain. Students will continue to use their Chromebook throughout Years 10 and 11.

As a fully inclusive school that recognises the challenges faced by many families in our community, no child will be denied access to the programme. However, where it is not possible for contributions to be made, Chromebooks will remain the property of the school and will need to **stay on site** at the end of each school day.

Parent and carer contributions

To ensure the programme remains accessible to all Year 7 students, we are asking you to consider a contribution of **£12.50 per month for 36 months**. A reduced, subsidised contribution of **£6.25 per month** is available for students eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Pupil Premium is a national funding strategy to support qualifying students in improving progress and attainment. Should you wish to receive further information about the possibility of making the full level of donation at the start of the programme, please contact admin.dss@dukes.ncea.org.uk

We are aware of the changes to Pupil Premium and Free School Meal support from September. For now, the reduced donation amount will be based on **current** Pupil Premium eligibility and will be reviewed in December 2026 once the new arrangements are in place.



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Why do we run this programme?

- To provide every student with access to a centrally managed device
- To integrate seamlessly with Google Workspace and other cloud-based learning tools
- To include warranties and repairs (subject to a repair cost cap)
- To maintain high standards of online safety and digital safeguarding

The programme is operated on our behalf by Freedom Tech. Payments, licensing, warranties and insurance will be organised and supported by Freedom Tech.

What's included in the package?

- A brand new, fully expensed Chromebook with a protective case and a Google Licence.
- Device insurance (subject to a £20 claim excess, payable by parents / carers)
- Monitoring Software (offering the same high level of protection as school devices, which can identify misuse and report back to school pastoral staff)
- Filtering Software (again, to the same high level of protection as in school)
- Cost of the package spread over 36 months with on-going dedicated school and parent support from Freedom Tech.

We understand that there may be concern that the overall cost for the package is greater than for an individual Chromebook that could be purchased separately. However, the package includes all of the essential benefits outlined in addition to the cost of the device. An external device would not be able to be used in school due to the inclusion of specialist monitoring software, firewalls and network compliance. The Chromebooks used for our programme are also designed to help withstand rigorous use in a school setting.

The format of our Chromebook Programme has been extensively researched, the benefits assessed and evident in school, and we are confident that with continued parental support, will continue to be successful in improving achievement, communication, independence and preparation for future learning and employment.

FAQs

A brochure addressing all aspects of the Chromebook programme, including Frequently Asked Questions accompanies this letter.

Next steps

You will soon be sent a link to the FreedomTech portal from where you can place the order for your child's Chromebook. This will also contain information about how you can apply for the reduced level of donation for parents and carers of children who qualify for pupil premium funding.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Thompson
Assistant Principal

