

A photograph of three students in a classroom. Two girls in the foreground are looking at a laptop screen. The girl on the left is resting her chin on her hand, and the girl on the right is holding a blue pen. A boy is visible in the background, also looking at the screen. The laptop has a colorful patterned cover. A teal speech bubble is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

# *Bring Your Own Device*

***A Guide for Students and Parents***

## *Digital Learning*

Dover Court International School is committed to the development of teaching and learning. We also have an awareness of the changing landscape of digital technologies and its impact on the way in which we learn and work. We know that we need to prepare our young people for a digital landscape that is growing exponentially so that they can keep pace with technological developments that are changing the way we all interact.

Since August 2019, all students from Years 6-13 in Pathways 1 and 2 have been required to bring a laptop to school for use in their lessons. This booklet answers some frequently asked questions about our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programme.

### *What is the aim?*

Students should be able to use their device to better organise their digital work and to access the internet for research when needed. They should have access to applications and web-based products to allow for improved collaboration and learning opportunities during and beyond lessons. Having access to a device also replicates how students are likely to work and organise their lives at university and in the world of work.

### *Will students use their devices in each lesson?*

Teachers will use a blended approach of both traditional and technology-based learning, deciding how and when to use devices in lessons. We are mindful of screentime and direct teachers to use technology when they have identified a clear benefit. Exercise books will still be issued and used regularly.

### *What device is needed?*

Most laptops purchased in the last couple of years will be sufficient for use in school and there is a list of essential and desirable features below as a guide. Laptops are preferred over tablets as they have better compatibility with software and physical keyboards tend to be more efficient for typing and data entry. Decent battery life is key to ensure it lasts the school day without recharging and solid-state drives (SSD) are robust for storing files and applications. Students and parents can decide between Windows or iOS operating systems as both run the Microsoft Office 365 suite which the school is subscribed to.

## Device Requirements

The following device specifications are a guide for deciding which device is suitable for use in school:

| Essential  | Desirable  |
|--|--|
| Laptop (rather than tablet)<br>4hr+ battery life<br>Physical keyboard<br>Minimum 4gb RAM<br>Minimum 128gb SSD storage (or equivalent HDD)<br>Headphones<br>Protective bag /pouch<br>Windows 10 / MacOS Sierra or later | 2-in-1 / touchscreen<br>All-day battery life<br>Physical mouse and/or stylus<br>Lightweight (under 1.5kg)<br>13-15" screen<br>i5 (or faster) processor |

### *How will students access the internet and is it safe?*

Students will access the internet through our dedicated student DCIS Wi-Fi. Certain sites are already blocked and this list is regularly reviewed. Students will be asked to agree to our ICT Code of Conduct before being allowed to use their device in school. These will be issued at the start of every academic year. Students must have robust passwords and be responsible for who can access their computer; students are liable for internet access from their device. They must also backup work frequently. There are many home wireless hard drives that will do this automatically each evening. Google apps are automatically backed up. Parents must ensure that devices are kept free from viruses and malware.

### *How will you ensure the responsible use of the devices?*

Digital Citizenship is an important part of our IT and PSHCE curriculum and students are regularly reminded of their responsibility when using their devices and the internet. We also have clear responsible use agreements tailored to students in the primary and secondary school which students are expected to read and agree to before using devices or the internet at DCIS. It is important that all students adhere to these rules in order to continue to benefit from these resources.

### *Will the devices be secure in school?*

The school cannot be responsible for laptops (or other expensive items) in school. Students should keep their laptops with them during lesson time and secure them in their lockers when not in use. Parents are encouraged to insure laptops for loss or damage in the unlikely event that there is an issue. In addition to lessons, Secondary students can use their devices in the library but are not allowed to use them in other communal areas or on buses.

### *What about technical support?*

We have a dedicated team of IT technicians in school who will be able to provide some help for students accessing our systems. However, hardware issues with student devices will need to be fixed outside of school. There will be a small number of emergency laptops in school that students can borrow if their device is not working but access to these cannot always be guaranteed.

### *How has the school prepared for this?*

Over the past few years, the school has developed an expanded Wi-Fi network ensuring that all areas of the school are covered and has created a separate student Wi-Fi for increased security. The BYOD policy has been in place for children in Years 6-13 since 2019, allowing students to access many internet-based applications including Google Classroom, Show My Homework (SMHW) and Edmodo. Every student has a Microsoft 365 account allowing them to install Office 365 on their device as part of the school's license (an adapted version of MS Office is available for iOS). Students are becoming increasingly familiar and competent with the Office 365 and Google suites of applications as these are taught and used regularly during ICT and computing lessons. Staff receive regular professional development to support them with the use of applications recommended for use at school.

### *What about homework?*

Teachers will select the best method for setting homework based on the individual task. Activities will often be set and collected through Google Classroom or SMHW. These applications enable work to be paperless, feedback and gradings can be given and they reduce the risk of work going missing. A further benefit of integrating technology in this way is that it enables children to work collaboratively on activities and projects outside of school, helping to develop a wide range of skills.

### *What if I still have questions?*

Any teaching and learning questions can be directed to your child's tutor, subject teacher or Head of School.