

Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School

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Dear Parent,

I am sure that many of you are aware that we are a Chromebook school and students in years 7 to 11 bring a device to all lessons. I would normally run an information evening for year 7 parents in late November before introducing devices towards the start of the spring term. For this year only we have decided to introduce devices at the start of the academic year instead due to the possibility of some lessons being taught remotely in September.

There are a number of ways to order a device through the school. They can be bought outright without insurance through Parent Mail or leased with insurance through the Freedom Tech portal. Students are also welcome to source their own Chromebook although we would ask for a voluntary contribution for a Google license so we can manage the device whilst in school. I would like to make it clear that the school makes no money from this scheme from either the devices sold or insurance.

I would strongly recommend you watch the following presentation for more information on the scheme, its background, and the reason we have put it in place. It also gives more information about Pupil Premium students who will have a device bought for them from a pot of money provided by the Government:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CANq1Tr0QNpXzMIOgW9Yywx-SdmP3U21/view?usp=sharing>

Further information including a link to the Freedom Tech portal can be found on the Chromebook section of our school website here:

<https://www.sirhenryfloyd.co.uk/curriculum/chromebooks-at-shfgs/>

There will be two separate windows for ordering a device. Please be aware we do not get given an exact date for devices arriving at school until a couple of days beforehand:

Window opens: 26 June 2020
Window closes: 10 July 2020
First payment: 25 July 2020
Device delivered: Early September 2020

Window opens: 11 July 2020
Window closes: 10 August 2020
First payment: 25 August 2020
Device delivered: Mid September 2020

Please could I also ask that you fill in the following Google Form stating your intentions to buy or not buy a device below to help with the school's planning for September:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNTReniutbHwMWTyNsuzzhjvW0Jy43qm0dP0vSDPQAsbK3uQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

We are aware that some parents are concerned that students using different devices may be subject to negative comments. Therefore, we will of course reiterate our already established school ethos of mutual respect and understanding. We have already run assemblies for all year groups on 'We respect who people are, not what they have'. We would like to reassure you that we have carefully considered the possibility of any kind of reactive social exclusion or peer pressure in the same way as we have considered it with the introduction of any other piece of kit that can have impact on peer pressure - from trainers for PE to school trips. We believe that we handle peer pressure and any negative relationships that would result as effectively in this scenario as we would any other. Parents and students have repeatedly rated our handling of bullying as 'outstanding' in that it is swift and effective - students rate their safety in school as 'outstanding'. We see this scenario as very similar to the devices which are already brought into school - mobile phones. There is a vast range in the phones that students have and we know very well from parents that it is their child's most valued asset - as it is the first to be confiscated as a sanction at home. Again we feel we have an inclusive policy and an atmosphere which allows everyone to respect diverse backgrounds and deal swiftly and effectively with that. We understand that parents come under pressure to buy the latest iPhone and trainers and we feel that the range of devices on offer while of varying functionality - do look very similar and are harder to tell apart than an iPhone 8 versus a 5, for example. We also know that students can customise cases and 'outerwear' which again will make the device more individualised but less conspicuous in terms of make or model. Just like in life, students have to understand that different people have different resources, and we respect people because of who they are not what they have. We will continue to instil those values in our school community.

I would again thank you for your continued support of our endeavour to increase technical literacy in our students so that they will excel as candidates in a digitally saturated world.

Ross Collins
Assistant Headteacher

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Appendices:

Social exclusion

We have considered this in the same way as we have considered the introduction of any other piece of kit that can have impact on peer pressure - from trainers for PE to school trips. We believe that we can handle peer pressure and any negative relationships, which could result, as effectively in this scenario as we would any other. Parents and students have repeatedly rated our handling of bullying as 'outstanding' in that it is swift and effective - students rate their safety in school as 'outstanding'. We see this scenario as very similar to the devices which parents already encourage students to bring into school - mobile phones. There is a vast range in the phones that students have, and we know very well from parents that it is their child's most valued asset - as it is the first to be confiscated as a sanction at home. Again, we feel we have an inclusive policy and an atmosphere which allows everyone to respect diverse backgrounds and deal swiftly and effectively with that. We understand that parents come under pressure to buy the latest iPhone and trainers, and we feel that the range of Chromebook devices on offer, while of varying functionality, do look very similar and are harder to tell apart than an iPhone 8 versus a 5 for example. We also know that students can customise cases and 'outerwear' which again will make the device more individualised but less conspicuous in terms of make or model. Just like in life, students have to understand that different people have different resources, and we respect people because of who they are not what they have. We will continue to instil those values in our school community.

Some students will not have a device

We have been working in 6th form lessons like this for a number of years - where students' learning is dependent on 'computer' access - school devices can be booked. However, in many cases technology facilitates learning and sharing of information but is not the basis of the teaching. In lower school, we have individuals with special requirements whose normal way of working is to use a device while everyone else doesn't, again teachers plan for that. Teachers also already plan lessons where technology is used for part of the lesson, often having to share devices perhaps even on a 1:3 ratio and it is simply a part of what we already do. For example, part of a lesson might be group research where each group has a different topic, then the groups present to the rest of the class and the class peer assess presentation style and fluency while the teacher assess subject knowledge and understanding. This could easily be done with limited devices, pen written notes and an oral presentation with technology or it could be done with technology used at every stage. Or even - somewhere in between - based on student choice. The process will of course be one of learning, adaptation and student feedback - but that is what outstanding practitioners do already. We do feel student choice is a key factor here even with technology some students will still want a paper planner and a pen and book because it is their preferred way of working and we want to be able to individualise in that way. Students who do not have a Chromebook will still have access to technology in school, at home and even in their pocket! Just as they do now. The fact that we already use Google Drive to store all student work and that it is accessible at home, in school and on phones means all students access their work. We don't see a disadvantage in this. It is obviously something that we will need to monitor as with any new system. We would also reiterate as we said on the night - the pen and pencil for that matter are not dead! I am an English teacher and Mr Collins - an artist - so we are keen to sustain the 'handcraft' alongside the 'tech'.

Impact on Teaching and Learning

Our pilot showed teaching and learning was improved in many ways but most significantly through:

- Increased feedback and an increase in instant feedback to student due to the use of Google classroom

- Increased incidence of collaboration between peers and increased quality of collaboration – again due to the use of google classroom and many students being on a device at the same time

- Increased reflection and self-assessment – student where able to improve this by actually filming their own performances and annotating film or recording commentary over the top so they could see themselves rather than having to accept peer or teacher feedback 'blindly' so to speak

- Writing was improved in some subjects through an 'app' where the process of writing and drafting can be viewed by the teacher and the student's thinking process and time spent can be seen

The first three of these have been shown by very influential Sutton Trust/ Education Endowment Foundation research to have the most impact on attainment and are what we are working on in Teaching and Learning in other ways also. Chromebooks will be used in some way in every curriculum subject. Obviously, technology lends itself to some more than others but with more and more subject specific apps appearing almost daily, Google classroom which enables teachers and students to share materials and feedback and Show My Homework all currently in use, it will be relevant at least in these ways.

Consultation

With regards to consultation, we feel we have involved all stakeholders. The need for more devices has been raised in our main method of consulting parents - the parent surveys – every year over the last number of years. Ms Cochrane began the process towards one-to-one in 2013. We feel our exploration of how to increase our ratio of computer per capita is a response to that and in that sense parents have been consulted and prompted our actions. The decision on the device is an educational decision which has been made based on student feedback and extensive research in the field related to what works best for improving learning and teaching. We decided on either an iPad or Chromebook and trialled both - with students – and their parents - contributing to our thinking on what works best for them again in terms of school work, collaborative learning and teacher feedback. Teachers have also contributed to the decision. Governors have also been consulted in terms of the strategic direction and budget of the school; parents as to the level of access to IT and quality of teaching in the subject, teachers and students on which device has most impact in learning and finance partners on how we can do this in the most cost effective way for parents and ourselves. We feel we have carried out a comprehensive process consulting all relevant stakeholders in the areas that are appropriate to them.

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