



The Marlborough Science Academy

Bring Your Own Device
(BYOD)

Chromebook Programme
2023



Dear Parent/Carer,

We operate a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programme where all incoming students are required to have a device in school for use in lessons and at home. This year we have adapted the Chromebook scheme that has now run for two successful years to ensure that the higher cost of living is factored into our offer.

We always seek to be innovative in the classroom, ensuring students benefit from a wide variety of teaching styles and learning experiences. Our teachers are a professional and highly dedicated learning community who are committed to engaging, supporting, stretching and challenging students to achieve in all aspects of life. We take a blended learning approach that takes traditional methods and skillfully combines them with modern approaches including the highly sophisticated use of technology.

This guide outlines the minimum standards that the device must meet and also provides information about ordering the school's required device (a Chromebook) via a dedicated ordering platform.

So why are we making this change? Since the launch of the original programme, technologies have developed and so have the ways in which teachers and students make use of devices to support learning. The latest generation of Chromebooks allow us to maintain the functionality of a tablet-style device, whilst also providing the capability to use technology to support the more demanding aspects of our curriculum, including the completion of extended writing tasks and more complex research activities.

We have also reviewed our social media policy in a bid to reduce young people's reliance on their phones.

We are very excited to be launching our renewed BYOD programme this September and know it will have a positive impact on your child's educational experiences throughout their time at school.



Options for equipping your child with a suitable Chromebook

There are two options for parents/carers when deciding how to equip your child with a suitable Chromebook ready for September 2023.

Firstly, our recommendation is to purchase our custom-specification device through our reseller, FreedomTech.

Alternatively, you can purchase a Chromebook device from a retailer of your choice, however, we recommend purchasing the recommended model.

Purchasing through our partner, FreedomTech



We have worked directly with FreedomTech to plan out a Chromebook specification that would be suitable.

This device is designed for an educational setting with key hardware that is powerful, durable, and rigorously tested. It has undergone drop testing, input-output port durability testing, hinge open and close cycle testing, and pressure testing on the lid and bottom of the device.

While these tests don't guarantee against breakages, they do provide peace of mind that these devices are built for an educational setting.

The negotiated cost also includes an accidental damage warranty.

Cost of the device

The cost of the Lenovo 300e 3rd gen device bundle, which includes the device itself, a stylus, software licensing, and 3-year warranty is:

- £415.18 in full
- £36.35 per month over 12 months
- £19.13 per month over 24 months
- £13.25 per month over 36 months

Order deadline and delivery

To allow appropriate time for manufacture and shipping, the FreedomTech portal for placing orders will open on Monday 17th April 2023 and close on Saturday 10th July 2023. After this date, no further orders can be accepted, this is to guarantee delivery within the first few weeks in September. The purchased device will be delivered directly to the school in early September for distribution to your child during the first few weeks of term.

If the manufacture or estimated delivery times shorten, we will look to extend the ordering window or open a second opportunity to order. However, we strongly encourage all parents/carers to place orders via the FreedomTech portal as soon as possible.

How to order

To select and place an order for a device, please visit the Tech 4 Learners portal:

www.tech4learners.co.uk - and login with the following details:

Username: Marl2023

Password: S3cure02!

If you are experiencing any difficulty logging in, please contact Freedom Tech on 0203 857 5630



Purchasing through a regular retailer

If you decide to purchase a Chromebook through a regular retailer instead of the custom specification device designed by the school and FreedomTech, please be aware of the following implications.

You will need to buy the same model that is part of the scheme (Lenovo 300e 3rd gen) to ensure compatibility with school systems.

You will be responsible for any insurance, repairs, or replacements of your Chromebook in case of damage, theft, or loss. The school will not be able to provide any assistance or loan devices in such situations.

You will need to pay £32.70 to the school for a Chrome Management license that will enable your Chromebook to work with the school software and security settings.

This will be an online payment once the school has set up an account via our MIS system and you will be able to make a payment in the summer term

The school IT team will install this license on your Chromebook when school begins in September.

We strongly recommend purchasing the custom specification device through FreedomTech as it offers more benefits and guarantees than buying through a regular retailer.

Protecting your child's device

If the device is purchased through FreedomTech, a laptop sleeve, and an accidental warranty is included with the cost.

In the unlikely event that the Chromebook needs to go back to FreedomTech for repair, the school will provide a loan Chromebook in the interim.

This will not be an option for Bring Your Own Device.

It should be noted that the loss, damage or breakage of a personal device is not covered under school insurance. The school is unable to pay for the cost of repairs or replacements.

If not purchasing through FreedomTech, we highly recommend that devices are covered by an appropriate insurance policy. It is worth checking whether gadget insurance (which can often be added to home insurance or bank accounts) may offer cover for this device.

We would also recommend purchasing a laptop sleeve to protect the device.

Students are encouraged to store their devices in lockers, particularly during lunchtimes or times when their bag is unattended.



Frequently asked questions

How will my child use a Chromebook to support their learning?

This varies from class to class, but the answer may be, 'For just about everything'. Popular G Suite tools and applications make classroom collaboration easy, and there are apps to support learning like video-making, podcasting, and coding.

A device also allows interactive activity and online research: every student immediately has access to an atlas, a French/Spanish/German dictionary, the latest statistics on the economy, a flexible musical instrument, and more!

Teachers also try to make use of Google Classroom in lessons. It is a tool used to help organise student classwork and assign homework and projects.

For students undertaking GCSEs, BTECs and A Levels it will allow access to online learning resources at home and at school, such as e-textbooks as well as platforms like Seneca Learning and other tools to support independent revision.

What evidence is there to support 1:1 device use in schools?

We are following the DFE national strategy and using the latest EEF research in making our decision. These show a net learning gain and also an improvement in collaboration and feedback for students with access to a 1:1 device.

We have in place a continued programme of professional development and training to support the roll out of these new devices for students, teachers and for parents based on the latest research.

My child already has an internet connected phone - why can't they just use that?

Smartphones and tablets are not suitable learning devices. Screen sizes are too small to be able to access eBooks, conduct research and write presentations or essays. It is a fallacy promoted by IT vendors that one device can satisfy every possible educational use. You wouldn't use a laptop to film in drama, likewise you probably wouldn't type an extended piece of writing on a tablet device.

Usage of mobile phones is restricted under the school Mobile Phone Procedures. Please see our website for further details.

Furthermore, we require access to the Internet to be filtered and therefore would not want students utilising their phone data plan for Chromebook Internet access.

Is the battery good enough? How will charging work?

Most Chromebooks have a battery life of over 10 hours. This varies depending on what the Chromebook is being used for but as long as students charge their Chromebook overnight, it will last all day. Students are responsible for bringing their fully charged Chromebook to school every day.

Are there any Chromebook guides available to support parents/ carers and my child?

Yes, there is a lot of freely accessible guidance out there. This link is a good place to start:

<https://www.google.com/chromebook/howto/>

Additionally, in the first few weeks in September, all Year 7 students will receive specialist teaching and guidance to get them up and running with their new Chromebooks and the school's digital platforms.

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

Your child will be provided with a school email address which is a Google education account. The school will use administrative processes to enable the distribution of apps to each student account; they will be automatically installed as soon as a student logs into their device.

Did you look at Windows, Apple or Android as alternatives?

Yes, very seriously. We believe that each of these devices and options have their strengths, however, the simplicity of the Chromebook overcomes the barriers presented by alternatives to allow the focus to be on learning.

The Marlborough Science Academy have been using Google Classroom for many years. As such, we are in a strong position to make the most of these devices.

If you have any questions or concerns about our Chromebook Scheme, please email us at:
chromebooks@marlborough.herts.sch.uk

Notes



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