

Blended Learning in the Sixth Form

At Sandringham, we have had a 'Bring Your Own Device' policy in place for years 7-11 for the past four years. The successful outcomes from this programme have led to the extension of this policy to the incoming Year 12 from September 2018. Rather than a tablet device, research and experience has shown us that sixth form students find laptops invaluable, particularly in certain subjects. This reflects the increased duration and complexity of tasks in Sixth Form that are harder to accomplish with a smaller touch-screen device, including extended writing and coursework.

Please see below the subjects for which a laptop or Chromebook are compulsory versus those where it is optional.

Laptop/Chromebook compulsory	Laptop not required
BTEC Applied Science	Certificate in Financial Studies
Art - Fine	French
Art – Photography	Further Maths
Art - Textiles	Government and Politics
Biology	History
Business	Mathematics
BTEC Business Level 3	Mathematical Studies
Chemistry	Music
Computer Science	Physical Education
Dance	Sociology
Drama and Theatre Studies	Spanish
Economics	
English Literature	
English Language	
Extended Project Qualification	
Geography	
Media Studies	
Philosophy and Ethics	
Physics	
Product Design	
Psychology	

By bringing your own laptop, you will have access to the following benefits that will support your learning:

- Password-free access to the school WiFi network throughout the school with a high bandwidth connection to the Internet (500Mb)

- A free copy of Microsoft Office 365 for up to 5 of your devices at home and school
- A Google Gmail email address to keep in touch with teachers and fellow students
- Unlimited storage on Google Drive
- The ability to collaborate on documents with teachers and fellow students via the GSuite for Education tools
- Access to learning materials and lesson resources via Google Classroom
- Access to a range of learning resources on our MySandStorm platform such as Encyclopedia Britannica, journals, eTextbooks, a Digital Learning Space for each subject and other learning apps and platforms.

Our intention is to get you used to the normal ways of working in a university or employment environment before you leave school. Your laptop may not be used for every part of a lesson, though the ability to conduct research, access online resources and complete coursework and homework and pre-reading in some subjects will be crucial. This is what we call 'Blended Learning': new technologies are combined with traditional teacher instruction and media. The choice of which approach to use at a particular point in a lesson is down to the professional judgement and experience of your teacher.

Which device should I get?

Ideally, one that you already own! (and are prepared to bring to school for lessons)

Our minimum requirements are simple:

- At least a 10" screen and keyboard
- At least a 3-hour battery life
- Wireless networking

Almost any reasonably modern laptop will suffice, particularly from the main brands of Acer, Apple, Asus, Toshiba, Lenovo, HP, Dell, Microsoft etc. Chromebooks from various vendors are also completely suitable for sixth form work and integrate well with our GSuite for Education environment, though bear in mind the limitations of these devices if you need to run dedicated software for example in Photography, Media and Computer Science.

Students are given unlimited cloud storage space on Google Drive, meaning storage space on the device itself is less of an issue.

You should consider the weight of the device (you will be carrying it to and from school and between lessons) and battery life so that you are not constantly having to recharge it. Insuring your device is up to you, but personal devices won't be covered by school insurance so you should consider coverage for accidental damage or theft if you think that is a risk. A robust carrying case is a wise investment in keeping the laptop safe.

Whilst we don't recommend specific vendors (since prices are constantly changing), we do have an arrangement with Solutions Inc. in the Maltings, St. Albans, where

Sandringham students receive a 10% discount off Mac laptops on presentation of an offer letter on headed paper from Sandringham. Vendors such as eBuyer.com typically offer good value on frequently changing stock and stores such as John Lewis have a reputation for good customer service and extended warranties.

What about affordability?

We do not want financial considerations to be a barrier to any student at Sandringham Sixth Form.

The 16 to 19 bursary fund provides support with educational expenses, and we have worked with bursary-eligible students over a number of years to equip them with laptops. The bursary application form is included in this Induction Pack and students need to apply as directed if they think that they may be eligible. It may take 6-8 weeks in September for the bursary decisions to be made and then funds distributed, all teachers will be aware of this and will not demand a laptop for use. More information on the bursary is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/overview>.

Even if you do not think that you may be entitled to the bursary but sourcing equipment may present a problem, please speak to the Sixth Form team as other options may be available (eg a loan device).

There is further information on the Sandringham School website:

<http://sandringham.herts.sch.uk/student-experience/blended-learning-byod/>

If you have any further questions, please contact Kate Mouncey, Director of Sixth Form, or Fergal Moane, Deputy Headteacher.

