

Dear Parent,

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) – Digital Technology in the Classroom

As we all know, technology now plays a significant part in of all our lives, even more so in the current climate. The way we do things around the home and at work is constantly changing as the technology develops. There is plenty of research evidence to support the value that technology brings to the educational experience. Some key areas are communication, practical research, collaboration, self-management and digital citizenship.

Who is required to have an IT device at Sidcot?

All students in the Senior School and Junior School Year 6 must have their own IT device, that they bring into school for use in lessons.

We offer a service of procuring an appropriate device for your child and then configuring them so that they are “ready to go” from your child’s first day at school (subject to availability) or simply configuring their current device (subject to it meeting the specifications required for Sidcot) This cost of the device will then be added to your next bill – there is no charge for configuration.

If you already have a device and are unsure whether it meets the specification, is appropriate or would like help with purchasing a new device, please email byod@sidcot.org.uk where the team will be happy to advise and help.

If budget is a factor, we can also advise on the purchase of “refurbished” equipment which normally includes a 1-year warranty.

To maintain a safe and secure learning environment, a filtered Internet connection is provided for all students. They will not be permitted to use a personal broadband connection such as a 3G/4G/5G phone network.

If you wish Sidcot to purchase a device on your behalf, please go to this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/Y8tBA17p3v> and you can see the list of devices that we can offer. (Please note that apart from the Microsoft Devices, all laptops are subject to availability, and potentially price changes as the special offers change regularly.)

Who is responsible for IT devices in school?

Students are solely responsible for their device. They must bring it fully charged to school. As with other personally owned items, the school is not liable for loss, damage, misuse or theft. Please arrange your own insurance cover for your child’s personal belongings either through the Personal Effects Insurance (offered by the school) or by your own arrangements.

Device specification:

- **Must be a Microsoft Windows based device** Microsoft Windows 11 (not running in S mode) is the best operating system to use at Sidcot as we run the Microsoft 365 suite of programs. Students can download the Office applications whilst they are a student at Sidcot. **Non-windows devices are not supported by our IT Team.**
- **Can use a stylus – this is a critical feature**
This is so notes can be taken in the lessons and to enable any other handwritten work that needs to be done on the device.
- **10” screen or larger**
10” is the minimum to ensure students can see the work they need to complete easily.
- **Can use a Keyboard**
A keyboard is needed to assist with tasks that require more typing, eg, extended writing or project write ups.
- **Be able to run Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Teams/OneNote** *These are the core apps needed in school.*
- **Battery Life**
5 hours or more to ensure that only minimal or no charging is needed during the day.
- **IMPORTANT: Does not have mobile data eg. 4G/5G etc.**

If you provide your child(ren) with a device that has a data connection through a contract eg 4G/5G etc then they will have access to all sites and the school cannot moderate its use. This falls to you as the parent/guardian to ensure they are only accessing what they should be. Sidcot school cannot be held responsible for anything they do through this connection.

Below are a couple of links to software available that allows you to monitor your child(ren)s devices. Whilst these are not school approved solutions, they give a starting point for you to be able to do your own research and find the right solution for you.

[The best parental control apps for Android and iPhone 2021 | Tom's Guide \(tomsguide.com\)](#)

[Family | Parental Control Software](#)

The product that fits this specification and one that we would recommend you look at is either the Microsoft Surface Go (J6 – Y9) or the Microsoft Surface Pro (Any year). These devices are excellent and in the long-term good value for money, as they will last at least 4 years if not longer. They integrate well into the school systems and have enough ‘power’ to achieve nearly everything you can throw at them for school. The only exception would be high end video editing, photo editing or CAD/CAM in KS4/5 where you will require at least an i7 processor and 32GB RAM.

Although we recommend the Microsoft Surface range of devices, **any** touch screen **Windows** tablet/laptop that can use a stylus and meets the **minimum** specification of 8GB RAM and 128GB hard drive will be acceptable.

Please note that Apple, Linux devices and Chromebooks are not supported at Sidcot.

Resources will be provided to help students connect their device to the school network. Your child must be familiar with how to use their device. Teachers will incorporate the use of your child’s device into learning. However, they will not provide technical support.

Clear guidelines have been placed around the use of BYOD in school. This is documented in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) which is available [here](#).

Free access to Microsoft Office for all Sidcot BYOD users:

This can be downloaded and used **for free** from the school whilst your child is a student at Sidcot.

Can your child use their device in examinations?

Please note that, even though IT will be used appropriately in lessons, only those students with a specific learning need that requires the use of a device will qualify for their use in exams. This can only be done with the approval of our SEN Coordinator. The “normal” default is IT will not be used in public examinations.

If you have any questions about our BYOD policy, please contact me on byod@sidcot.org.uk and I will be happy to help and support you.

Yours sincerely,

Allison Clark
Head of IT Services