Independent day and
boarding school for
boys and girls aged 3-18

Dear Parent

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

As we all know, technology is now a significant part of all of our lives. The way we do things around the home and the way we do things at work are 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?

The current plan is that within two years most students in the Senior School will be expected to have their own IT device that they bring into school for use in lessons. The full BYOD Strategy can be found here.

In line with this strategy from **September 2020** all **Upper Sixth, Lower Sixth**, **Upper Fifth**, **Lower Fifth and Upper Fourth** students **will be required to have an IT device** that matches the specification below. Many will already have a device; if students or parents are unsure whether it meets the specification or is appropriate, please email byod@sidcot.org.uk where the team will be happy to advise and help.

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

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:

- **10" screen or larger**
  10" is the minimum to ensure students can see the work they need to complete easily.

- **Can use a stylus**
  This is so notes can be taken in the lessons and any work requiring to be handwritten could be done on the device.

- **Can use a keyboard**
  A keyboard is needed to assist with tasks that require more typing e.g. essays or project write-ups.

- **Be able to run Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Teams/OneNote**
  These are the core apps needed in school. The mobile version and online version are suitable for most tasks. If more is required, remote access can be used.
- **Be a Microsoft, Mac (including MAC OS and iOS), or Android OS based device**
  These are the operating systems we know work well with the school systems.

- **Battery life**
  5 hours or more to ensure that only minimal or no charging is needed during the day.

- **IMPORTANT: Does <u>not</u> have mobile data eg. 4G/5G etc.**
  In line with recommendations previously published to parents and available in the [Parent Handbook](#) on Firefly.

Please note: Choose a device your child and you are familiar with e.g. if you know how to use Windows please select a Windows device and not a Mac or vice versa.

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 BYOD Acceptable Use Policy which is available [here](#).

We are not championing any one device; we do recommend some devices, more information can be found [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 our normal way of working in lessons will be with the use of IT, to qualify for use in public exams will require a child with a specific learning need. 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 the scheme please contact James Russell, IT Development Director, at BYOD@sidcot.org.uk

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely

James Russell
IT Development Director