DIGITAL DEVICE USE AT COLFE'S
FAQs

Glossary

Inkability – devices which support inkability have a special pen that allows the user to write straight onto the screen allowing them to make hand-written notes, annotations and diagrams.

Blended Learning – digital technology in the classroom will be blended with more traditional methods to maximise progress for all pupils. We refer to this approach as 'blended learning'.

1. Will the devices be used in every lesson?

Not necessarily; we will take a blended learning approach. This will mean that all our current high-quality teaching and learning will be retained and enhanced using technology when appropriate. The extent to which devices will be used in lessons will vary between subjects and lessons. Some lessons will involve pupils using their devices for the whole lesson, in others they will not use them at all. The vast majority of lessons will be somewhere in-between, incorporating technology as best suits each scheme of work. We recognise that handwriting on paper remains important, particularly for exams.

2. Why have you chosen to use Microsoft Surfaces?

We chose the Microsoft Surface family of devices because we feel that they are the best option in terms of longevity, flexibility and availability of resources; they are designed with education in mind. Our teaching staff have all been using Microsoft Surfaces for some time and are familiar with their capabilities.

3. Why are parents asked to buy the device through the school rather than sourcing their own?

We are asking all parents to purchase through the school system so that we can ensure that all devices are of the exact specification and so that we can manage the set-up. Prices are at cost with bulk discounts passed on wherever available.

4. What are the advantages of buying through the school?

The IT Department will set up all the devices together in readiness for the beginning of the term. They will come out of the box ready for first use with further updates done automatically, making it as easy as possible for busy parents. The Surfaces will be installed with all the educational software that the pupils need, including Windows 11 Education rather than the home version. This is important for the features pupils will be using in the classroom. The purchase bundle includes all the accessories including keyboard, pen, case and optional insurance.

5. **How will the devices be charged?**

   Pupils will be expected to bring their fully-charged devices to school every morning. This will be sufficient to last the say in most cases. If you anticipate using the device outside of lesson times you may wish to purchase a battery pack.

6. **How can my child keep their device safe and what will happen if it becomes damaged?**

   We will work with pupils to ensure that they understand how to keep themselves, and their devices, as safe as possible while travelling to and from school. This will follow on from advice already given for carrying mobile phones and other costly devices. The school will keep a bank of spare devices which pupils may borrow temporarily. The purchase scheme includes optional insurance.

7. **Will paper text books continue to be used?**

   Most text books will be accessed using the devices, saving paper and minimising the weight of school bags.

8. **Why do pupils need devices with an 'inkability' function?**

   Inkability allows the devices to be a real replacement for paper, making possible the creation of handwritten notes, and diagrams on screen. We believe that inkable devices will be widespread in education in future and therefore choosing cheaper devices without this capability will render them quickly out of date.

9. **Do I need to purchase Microsoft Office365 or any other apps?**

   No – these will be pre-installed on the device before it is issued to the pupils and further updates will be added automatically by our IT team.

10. **How will you address the well-being aspects of device use?**

    We believe that educating pupils regarding appropriate use of digital technology both in and outside of school is of the utmost importance. Through the pastoral care system at Colfe's we constantly address not only the critical aspects of e-safety but also topics such as screen time, managing the pressures of social media and emotional health and general wellbeing. In terms of physical wellbeing, it is important that we educate staff and students on the importance of posture and eye health and on the effects of screens on mental health and sleep. We will monitor and promote balanced and blended learning experiences which do not depend on screens 100% of the time, without setting arbitrary time limits.

11. **Will my child be able to use the device at home for anything they like?**

    The devices are intended primarily for educational use. They will have internet filtering and safeguarding software to prevent access to inappropriate content. This does not negate parents setting clear boundaries and expectations for use at home in the same way as if it were their own computer.

Students will not be able to install additional software on their device unless it has been published to Colfe's Microsoft Store by the IT team. Only software required for education will be made available.

12. **What is meant by an enrolled device?**

We will enroll student and staff devices onto Intune, a mobile device management system. This enables us to push applications and updates out to devices without collecting them in and ensures that data is protected.

13. **What if my child is in receipt of a means-tested scholarship?**

There will be an assistance scheme in place for pupils who are in receipt of means-tested scholarships of 50% or greater. Parents will be contacted separately with details.