



Frequently Asked Questions

Why do our children need their own tablet device?

There are three major reasons for this. The first is that having good ICT skills is becoming a basic requirement of any employer. Children need to be prepared for an increasingly digital world and this will give them a unique opportunity to be highly skilled ahead of many other children.

Secondly we believe that if our students/your child are equipped with their own personal device to support their learning in-school, it will add to an already outstanding learning experience for them, which in-turn will raise their aspirations, achievements and outcomes.

The third main reason is that research has confirmed that good home access to technology has a positive impact on a child's educational results; it often motivates them to do their schoolwork, their work is better presented so their self-esteem grows, and they can explore subjects that interest them in their own time.

Why now?

Our Year 9 students are one of the first year groups who will face the challenges of learning new specifications in all of their subjects as well as the change to the new 1-9 grading system. There is an increase in the amount of content a student needs to know, understand and apply in the subjects as the new specifications come with an increase in challenge and rigour. At Sedgefield students take their option choice in Year 8 and begin their Key Stage 4 courses in Year 9 and we see the tablet device being an effective tool in supporting them with their studies from this point onwards.

Does this mean my child will be staring at a computer screen all day? / Will this have an impact on their handwriting and general writing skills?

The answer to both questions would be a resounding 'No!' We see the tablet computers as a tool which will enhance the learning of the students. As a school we believe we have an understanding of what has the greatest impact on student progress. Various large scale meta-analyses have been carried out over the last decade, namely Hattie's work on effect sizes and the Sutton Trust Report and the top three approaches that have the biggest impact on student progress are effective feedback, meta-cognition & self-regulation and peer assisted learning.

Staff training has been focused on how the tablet device might support these approaches to further develop teaching and learning and a number of the approaches involve short-term use of the tablet device rather than a sustained period of time. It will not be used in every lesson, and when it is it will not be for the entire lesson and should also not be in use on a break-time or lunchtime unless in a supervised area for educational purposes.

We are also very aware that the final exam a student will sit has not changed and that their handwriting skills are imperative in performing well in their exams as well as of fundamental importance in their future life. Students will still have exercise books and will be expected to write just as much, if not more, than they already do in them.



How will we ensure students are not simply playing games and accessing social media sites in lessons instead of working?

We have purchased a Mobile Device Management solution which allows us to control which apps are installed on each individual device and even which app or apps are accessible at any one time. The devices are for educational purposes and therefore there is no reason for the Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat apps etc. to be installed on the devices.

The use of the device in lessons is also at the discretion of the teacher. If there is no use for them they will remain in the student's bag. The nature of the devices means they will often be used in short bursts for specific tasks in an engaging lesson in which the students will be focused on making the necessary progress. The teacher will still be in charge of the classroom and in charge of the timings, tasks and direction of the learning that drive the focus of the class just as they do now.

Through the Mobile Device Management solution, a teacher will have complete control over each individual device in the classroom allowing them to lock the tablet devices, perform commands such as clear passcodes, and lock the class, a group or individual student into a particular app, shared content or website.

The student's will also be required to sign an 'Acceptable Use Policy' which will explain the need to refrain from using the devices for social / non-educational means during the school day, we believe many of our students will follow the policy they have agreed to follow. For any students that choose not to, they will unfortunately receive consequences in-line with the school's behaviour for learning system as they currently do if they behave in an inappropriate way in any other aspect of their school life.

What will happen at break-time and lunchtime?

Primarily students will not be permitted to use their tablet devices at break-time or lunchtime during the trial. It is a device to be used for educational purposes in lessons while in school. However, it would be naïve to have such an effective useful tool available to students and not make use of every opportunity to use them. We do have plans to open up supervised 'study rooms' in the year group area of the school to allow the students to use their devices for revision / completion of work etc.

What if I have 2 or even 3 children at the school?

We appreciate this is the third year group we have ran the scheme with now and as such there may be parents with multiple siblings in different year groups which would multiply the cost. Please contact the school at the time it becomes an issue and we can discuss individual circumstances and see what support can be put in-place.

What if we don't want to take part?

While we would encourage all families to take part, it is your right to choose not to do so. Please be fully aware however that by opting out your child will not be provided with their own device to take home, and may end up sharing in the classroom with others pupils in the same situation while those who have opted in will have their own.

Once you have opted out it may not be possible for you to change your mind. The school only has finite funds and may not be able to buy more devices for this group of pupils. We do have a minimum percentage take-up target for the programme to go ahead and if this is not achieved we will not be able to proceed.



Who owns the Device?

During the term of the lease, the devices are the property of the school but the ownership will be transferred to yourself at the end of the scheme once the final payment has been made.

Your payments are a charitable donation towards the programme, not a payment towards the device. To make the scheme affordable to all, the amount we are suggesting does not cover the full cost of running the programme. Additional money will be provided from school funds, and grants we may win from other sources. However, the school has no intention of keeping the devices after the three years is up, and we will then make them available to students as described above.

Why is the device a Samsung Galaxy Tab A and not an iPad or other device?

We have chosen the Samsung Galaxy Tab A device as it is the most affordable device that provides all of the benefits we need to make our e-learning approach work. The size, speed, operating system, software, camera quality and overall functionality is of sufficient quality for what we need in-school.

While an iPad device would be just as effective, and arguably more so, it is also two to three times the price and we have worked extremely hard to make this scheme as affordable as possible for parents.

We tried, tested and evaluated around a dozen devices and any devices that were cheaper than the Samsung Galaxy Tab A did not deliver the performance and functionality we needed to make this approach a success.

My child already has a tablet device; can they not just bring this in?

If your child has the exact same device we use for the scheme (a Samsung Galaxy Tab) we will be able to use this device for the 1:1 scheme. Please contact myself (c.hutton@sedgefield.cc) on an individual basis and we will let you know what is required for this to happen and we can discuss how to proceed.

Due to a recent upgrade in our AirWatch MDM solution, there may be the potential for students to bring in and use their own tablet device if they already own one or have access to one within the family, rather than to donate and receive one through the school. However, we would need to seek assurances on the age, model, specification and app store of the device. We would also need permission to install our MDM solution on to the device and the apps/software we intend to use in-school to support learning. If anyone is wanting to query whether a tablet device at home is appropriate to use again please simply email myself on c.hutton@sedgefield.cc

We do encourage you to consider purchasing a tablet device through the scheme when and where possible. Please bear-in-mind that any device purchased from a retail outlet would simply be for the device itself.

The devices purchased through the school for the scheme would be for the device, the case, two-year TAD insurance, Microsoft Office suite plus all school apps installed. We also offer a warranty / insurance service in which we will take care of the admin and delivery / return collection of any devices needed to be sent away for warranty and insurance purposes plus issue your child with a loan device whilst theirs is being fixed. Finally for any technical problems with the device, all 'school bought' devices are covered to be looked at by our own ICT technicians on-site in the first instance to see if they can quickly fix the problem whereas they are unable to do this on 'shop bought' devices for fear of infringing the warranty conditions.



Any 'shop bought' devices would therefore naturally incur additional costs further along the line to ensure they are set-up and ready 'for learning' and to be used extensively over a two and a half year period in-school. Plus any warranty or insurance claims would need to be arranged by yourselves with your child then not having their device for this duration.

What happens if the device gets damaged or stolen?

The tablet devices will be insured for accidental damage and theft. However, we may have to pay an excess on any claim so it is important that the children learn how to take good care of their equipment. Families may have to pay towards the cost of replacement or repair caused by inappropriate use or lack of care.

Why can't the school provide these for nothing?

The school receives some funding for ICT in school, and this gets spent on our WiFi network, the website, the Learning Platform, ICT suites, printers, etc. Equipment for use at home and for personal use by your children is over and above this, which is why we have to ask our families to make a contribution. Without that support the programme would not be able to go ahead.

What happens if I can't make the regular donations?

No child will be excluded from the programme because of their financial circumstances so please come and talk to us so we can ensure your child is included.

Can I donate by cash or cheque?

Collecting cash involves a lot more work and administration costs for the school so our overwhelming preference is for you to sign a direct debit. However, if this is not possible then the school will be able to make arrangements to make sure you can contribute in a way that works for you and the school.

What happens if I change my mind in a few months' time?

This would give the school a big problem as our decision to go ahead and buy the devices for the children will be based on the initial level of support from our parents. Changing your mind halfway through the programme would compromise the school's finances. This is a commitment to the children that needs to be seen through.

Can't I go and buy a cheaper device on the High Street?

As discussed earlier, any cheaper devices did not deliver the performance we needed. To find the exact same device and model cheaper is unlikely but may be possible but it is important to remember the e-learning programme we are providing will involve a device that comes with a comprehensive insurance policy which is only available through the school, with a warranty, a case for the device, include all the software that your child will need, technical support whilst at school and your child will have access to learning resources on the school's Learning Platform.

These devices can be used at school during the day as well as at home in the evenings and weekends. In contrast, personally owned computers cannot be connected to the network at school or supported by our technical team, and to purchase the educational software we use would cost you several hundred pounds more.



Why am I making a donation to the Learning Foundation?

The Learning Foundation is a registered education charity that is collecting monthly parental donations on our behalf to save us administration costs. They will collect your donation every month and apply for tax relief where applicable, and then grant the money back to us to pay the bills.

Do I have to sign the Gift Aid declaration?

It is vital that you do this if you are a UK taxpayer; otherwise the cost of administering the collection of donations has to come out of the donations themselves. *Gift Aid applies to cash and cheque contributions as well as direct debits so please do sign it if you are a taxpayer.*

How much do we need to donate?

We ask that you make a donation of £9.50 a month over a two-year period or a one-off payment of £200. The good news is that because we are offering this programme to all the pupils in the year group, the Learning Foundation can claim Gift Aid worth 25% of all donations made by parents who are UK taxpayers and have signed the Gift Aid declaration. This has been used to off-set the cost of processing the monthly payments and made the scheme cheaper.

Will we be able to access the Internet on the device? / What if we do not have the internet at home?

If you have Broadband at home the tablet device will be able to connect to that. A wireless router that plugs into your Internet line is a really good idea as the tablet device we provide will be wirelessly enabled.

If you don't have Broadband at home then we suggest you talk to us about 3G/4G solutions we may be able to provide. The tablet device can also still be used but will naturally lose some of its effectiveness. The majority of apps are now created to allow 'offline' access to them and still create or add to files/content. The content is simply saved on the actual device. When the student returns to school and the device connects to the wireless internet the work will be backed up via the cloud.

Will our children be safe if they have to carry the tablet device home?

We all need to be aware of the risks the children could face on their way home but the number of recorded incidents nationally is surprisingly low. We have not had a single incident recorded from the current year group in-school who have had their tablet devices for over a year now. All tablet devices are security tagged and protected as well as insured. If a child is approached for their computer they should hand it over without resistance and then inform you so you can let the police and the school know.

With over 4000 devices employed in schools we have researched, those schools have not reported a single incident of mugging. Many of our students carry very expensive smart phones already and have similarly not experienced any such incident.

Full guidance, education and safety, health and well-being will be delivered to all students prior to beginning the programme. The message of 'safety first' will be conveyed throughout so all students are aware of the importance of this.

Why should I donate if others don't?

We will only run this programme if parents want it, and are prepared to contribute. While a small number of families in difficult circumstances can be accommodated, unless there is widespread support for the programme then the school will not be able to provide it to your children. If you are



interested in the school doing this then please encourage other parents to support the programme too.

Will we need to buy any other equipment?

Ideally every pupil should have access to the Internet at home as an essential requirement. A printer would be a desirable requirement although one of the benefits of this approach to learning is the ability to send and receive work and feedback on work electronically so this is not essential. Any work that must be printed could be done at school also.

What happens when I sign the Gift Aid declaration?

The school sends the declaration to the Learning Foundation. They keep the form on file as proof that they are able to claim the additional 25% in Gift Aid from the Inland Revenue.

Who do I tell if I change my bank account?

Please let the Learning Foundation know as soon as possible if you change your bank account by writing to them with your new bank details. In your letter, please include your name, your child's name and the name of your child's school.
