

Mobile Devices for Learning

Policy number	PS035
Applies to	Prep School Pupils
Endorsed by	Headmaster
Responsibility	Headmaster
Date reviewed	September 2023
Next review	September 2024

Mobile Devices for Learning

The Digital Pencil Case

Current device types that may be used at the school include laptops, notebooks and tablet devices that use either Windows, iOS or Android operating systems. Bedford School gives Wi Fi access to pupils on their personal digital devices. Pupils are required to bring these devices into school every day and to be able to access a range of web based learning services. These mobile devices can also be used by pupils to support their learning in class, where appropriate and sanctioned by teachers.

Pupils must not connect to any other wireless or network service that is outside of the school network when using their personal device on school premises, or when taking part in school events and school activities. Use of a personal device in school or for school activities is for learning purposes only, and it is a privilege, not a right to use personal devices at school. Pupils are fully responsible for the safety, security and care of their personal device when using it in school, during school visits and participation in outside activities.

In Years 3 and 6, pupils use a school issued device that is leased from the school. Pupils can take these devices home to extend their learning beyond school. This is on a rolling programme that by 2025 all pupils across the school will be working on one:one devices. Currently, pupils in Y4, 5, 7 and 8 bring their own device to school.

Pupils are responsible for their personal devices whilst on the school site. Bedford School takes no responsibility for any damage caused to pupils' personal devices, and they are not covered by any insurance held by the school. Only the one:one devices are managed and repaired by the school.

Bedford School has an Acceptable Use Policy, which is a list of rules that all pupils and staff agree to when given access to the school digital systems. This covers the use of personal devices.

Digital Services

Bedford School utilises a range of number cloud-based services that are made available to pupils. As well as the hosted services such as Firefly, these include the Microsoft Office 365 suite of applications, which are available for pupils to download and install on up to five of their personal devices at no cost. Free Office 365 applications and free internet access onsite are available for Windows, Mac, IOS and Android devices. Google Drive is also used by class teachers to share materials through Google Classrooms.

We recommend that any device a pupil wishes to bring to school meets the requirements of the Digital Pencil Case criteria. This is a simple set of basic requirements that would allow the device to be used in the majority of subjects:

- Wi-Fi connectivity
- Web browser Access to school email accounts
- Calculator application
- Camera and picture storage
- Video and audio recording
- App for taking notes
- Protective case

When students make use of personal device access at the school, the technology used to manage this allows the IT technical staff at school to track who and what devices are accessing the internet when connected to the school network and, if necessary, to block a device from having internet

access when in school. The school leased devices are also managed when off site allowing IT staff to track and monitor content that is being accessed at home (only if the pupil is using the school device.) Staff cannot watch a pupil's screen or view personal information on a device. Internet access is filtered using the Harpur Trust internet filtering services and a Smoothwall filtering system. This means that additional protection is added rather than just accessing the internet through 4G or 5G networks.

Benefits

When used in school under the direction of a teacher, or at home when revising or completing prep, digital technologies can improve the quality and effectiveness of your child's learning. The availability of personal devices facilitates and increases opportunities for learning through exploration and enquiry within and outside school.

Personal devices also increase the extent to which pupils can access learning activities to meet their specific needs, learning styles and preferences. They enable individual pupils to access digital texts and other learning resources in many different locations.

Pupils using their own devices have a more comfortable and personalised experience. They can complete tasks more quickly and be more in control of their learning as they have their own software with which they are familiar, and their own bookmarks. They can focus more on the content of learning activities rather than the technology used to support these.

The use of mobile devices, and particularly the use of pupils' own devices for learning provides more opportunities for pupils to create their own learning materials in addition to using the devices to access educational content created by others. The built-in data collection functions of mobile devices, including the ability to take pictures and record video, sounds, text and location information, facilitates this. A variety of sensors and apps can optionally be used with students' devices to collect other types of data. Pupils can combine, edit, share and add to data collected and created, contributing to increased communication, collaboration, peer-to-peer learning and project team working.

Combining pupils' own devices with Firefly, Office 365 and Google Drive makes assigning, collecting, reviewing and feeding back on pupil work more efficient and not dependent upon location.

Using pupils' own mobile devices also provides more opportunities for formative assessment, and combining them with online response systems such as quizzes or tests enables fast digital feedback on pupils' progress and identify topics that require additional explanation by the teacher.

When pupils use their devices for learning, this helps to develop their digital competencies beyond the use they make of their mobile devices socially, which may be quite limited and involve only a small number of the functions and opportunities available.

Knowing pupils have their own devices with them at all times means teachers can decide at short notice to try something new in addition to planned activities. Any use of mobile devices within class is at the discretion of the teacher.

Pupils having their personal digital device/s with them at school, supporting their learning inside school and out, assists them in the development of 21st century skills such as communication, collaboration and creativity as well as information, media literacy and technology skills.

Over time, buying, and/or developing locally, eBooks, digital learning materials and apps can be cheaper than buying and replacing conventional textbooks as well as enabling the addition of multiple media and an interactive learning experience. Ebooks and digital learning resources can be more easily and quickly updated than printed material, helping to ensure that these are always up-

to-date. They can also be designed to allow explanatory or enriching annotation by teachers, pupils and groups of pupils. There will be an increased emphasis over the next few years on the provision of digital learning resources

Implementation of a personal digital pencil case approach is consistent with Bedford School's belief in personal responsibility and innovation in general and the use of digital technologies in particular.

A whole school approach to training and staff development required for expanding the use of digital technologies should lead to improvements in the digital literacy and pedagogical skills of teachers.

This approach also offers a unique opportunity to bring the pupils' world and digital media usage into a school's protected environment and thus encourages reflection on the impact of digital media on learning.

Communication between pupils, teachers and parents can be further improved as a result of combining the use of pupils' own mobile devices with the use of the school's management systems to share timetables, lesson descriptions, study resources, prep, grades and information. The formalisation of the strategy also prompts detailed and active dialogue with parents on the subject of the ethical use of digital technologies.

Risks

As mobile technology has become a dominant force in the UK education sector, there are many logistical, financial and educational advantages to this. However, there are potential pitfalls to consider as well. Use of personal devices on school grounds is at the discretion of teachers and staff. All pupils must use their devices as directed by their teacher and staff. Pupils must take personal responsibility for their digital devices. The use of personal devices is not to be a distraction in the classroom or private study areas used by teachers or pupils. The purpose of the use of personal devices at school is strictly educational and mobile devices can only be used for personal reasons if the pupil has been given permission by a teacher or another member of staff. Pupils may be permitted to use personal devices outside of the classroom, for example school visits, field trips, or outside activities.

All users agree not to exploit technology resources, interfere with another pupil's use of the resources, or use technology resources with the intent of causing harm to others. All pupils are required to check their personal devices daily to make certain the device is fully charged, free from unsuitable material and any malicious content such as viruses and malware that may compromise the security of the school's network. These checks must be completed before bringing the device to school.

To conform to Health and Safety compliance, any defective or damaged devices should not be brought into the school. Any attempt to circumvent the schools network security and/or filtering policies is forbidden. This includes downloading programs to bypass security or accessing and setting up proxies. Any form of distribution of videos or pictures of other pupils and staff is strictly forbidden. Playing games in class on devices is not permitted unless the game is used for educational purposes. Any breach of the rules should be treated as a serious offence and should be met with one or more consequences that are clearly defined in the policy.

Specification

Although as stated above, there are minimum functional specifications recommended for the pupil to use their device for digital learning, because Bedford School uses mostly cloud-based apps in the classroom, it is not essential to have a high specification device to run the latest applications. However, to guarantee the best digital learning experience, you may wish to consider the following recommendations:

The pupil's personal device should be capable of 2.4GHz or 5 GHz dual-band Wi-Fi connectivity. This means that the device should have 802.11 a/n or ac as the Wi-Fi standard. Also, be aware that if your child's device is equipped with wireless standard 802.11 b/g/n, then it is unlikely to be 5 GHz compatible.

Parents may consider insurance coverage to cover the cost of replacement or repair of the pupil's personal device in the event of loss or damage that occurs on school premises, or during school visits and activities. In addition, it should be noted that the school is not responsible for the following:

- Any personal mobile devices that are broken on school premises or during school visits and outside activities.
- Any personal devices that are stolen or lost on school premises or during school visits and outside activities.
- Any personal data that are lost on personal devices while they are being used on school premises.

One:one devices are managed by the school.

Notwithstanding the risks listed above, Bedford School, recognises that the use of mobile technologies is an important part of pupil's lives, and when used with discretion and judgement, can do much to improve the quality of their learning. The next few years will see the further encouragement and development of the use of personal devices in Bedford School to improve the quality of pupils' educational, social and extra-curricular lives.

Reference: Future Classroom Lab by European SchoolsNet