

BYOD (BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE)

– A PARENT PERSPECTIVE

NEWSLETTER 3 by Annemarie Diepenbroek

PENNANT HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Updated policy based on parent feedback

Many thanks to the parents who provided feedback on the draft policy to me, to the school and via the feedback sessions. It took longer than expected to collate the feedback, but as a result the new policy is further improved and the appendix in this newsletter provides a summary of the dialogue that has been taking place.

Practical corner

How do I install the free software on my child's device*?

*Disclaimer: this is a practical guide that doesn't aim to be a complete overview.

Our children are already licensed for a range of software from Microsoft and Google. They can download their software and applications using their school email address (xxx@education.nsw.gov.au) and corresponding password as identification from the following portals:

Microsoft

Microsoft offers each student 1TB of online storage, free downloads of Windows and Office software and 10% discount on the Microsoft store (which includes hardware, software, Xbox etc.).

1. To download and install Microsoft Office

From the device browse to the following website: <https://products.office.com/en-au/student/office-in-education?tab=students> (or google 'Microsoft office education' or similar) and get started by entering your child's full school email address, then:

- Select "I'm a student"
- You are directed to the NSW education portal login page. From there sign in again this time using the user name (which is equal to the first half of the email address "xxxx") and your child's password
- You are then directed to the download page for the latest versions of Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Onenote etc.

- Once these applications can be accessed from the device, follow the line to Microsoft Onedrive and again use the child's email address to unlock the free storage if required
- 2. To download software directly via the department portal:
 - From the device browse to bit.ly/byodsoftware
 - Select the software you wish to download
 - Sign in using your child's username and password or register
- 3. To access the discount
When shopping online browse to the Microsoft Education store. Select "K-12", "NSW" and then search for Pennant Hills Public school in the search box. In store mention that you are purchasing for BYOD for Pennant Hills Public School.

Google

Our children are licensed for the Google Apps for Education Suite which includes Google Classroom, Unlimited storage in Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides etc. To access these apps go to Google.com and:

- Log in using your child's email address and password (xxx@education.nsw.gov.au)
- You are directed to the NSW education portal login page. From there sign in again this time using the user name (which is equal to the first half of the email address "xxxx") and your child's password
- Once logged in under your child's name the licensed application will automatically appear when selected from the top right corner.
- Google apps can also be downloaded from the appstore

How do I set up Internet Filtering at home?

At school all access is filtered (and logged) and to extend that same filtering to the home one solution is the free K9 Web protection which is powered by Bluecoat which is the enterprise application that the school uses. K9 Web protection is downloaded onto the device itself and blocks a range of websites, can stop internet access at night automatically and provides easy reports to monitor and control web activity.

Next updates on BYOD will appear in the newsletter. Thanks everyone!

Kindest regards,

Annemarie

Appendix 1

Community Discussion Summary

Subject	Feedback/question	Feedback
Virus protection	How do we ensure our devices are secure: we need easy –to- understand and low cost guidance how to do this for parents, do we need to check devices?	Most devices now come with virus protection. Windows 10 and Apple offer suitable virus protection built-in. It is essential that all parents manage virus protection actively, per the policy, and raise their hand if they have questions around security.
Virus protection	Do we need to review BYOD management software so we can isolate weak devices before they affect others?	The department advises that BYOD is not new to the DoE network. They have been operating in this sphere for several years with thousands of devices across over 2000 schools, and whilst they can never eliminate all of the risks with protection, a number of practical steps have been in place for several years.
Extend of the program	While this program for 2016 includes Years 5 and 6, does it extend to the entire year 4/5 composite class?	Year 4 in the 4/5 are not part of BYOD. The school will be providing access to the variety of devices they have to ensure the Year 4 students can participate in the lessons planned by the teacher.
Handling of the devices on school grounds	How are the receptacles (small lightweight crates fitting a few devices each) lifted up and down stairs? If these are lifted by the children, isn't that a risk?	Staff believe that at this point in time this type of crate is the most suitable but this position can be revised once the staff can observe the device types coming in and their handling on site. The students are trustworthy and teachers are aware that students take their responsibility seriously when caring of others' belongings. There are a few crates per class to ensure that the weight and the actual containment of the devices is within acceptable limits. The crates have wheels so on flat surfaces they can be wheeled to and inside the classroom, which minimizes the lifting.
Handling of the devices on school grounds	What happens to the transport of these devices during school hours when it rains?	The school will take precautions by covering the crates to ensure that devices will not get wet and that the devices will not be handled when there is a risk of slipping.
Communication between parents and teachers about BYOD	Can we email the teachers directly, this would be very beneficial for the roll-out	Currently the preferred method of contacting a teacher via email is to send it to the school account and then the office will forward it to the appropriate teacher.
Communication between parents and teachers about BYOD	Will the school communicate safety incidents, virus incidents or any other incidents with the parents?	Communication protocols about incidents are already in place and this will fully extend to the BYOD program. As parents we would like to see a detailed overview of the program start-up issues if any, and their resolution. Communication is highlighted as a critical aspect of this program.
Tracking the device on site	Should we review a tracking solution so we can trace the devices within the school grounds? What would be the cost?	Windows 10 and Apple have a tracking mechanism that identifies the network that the device is connected to, but not the exact location within that network. (The exact location can only be identified if there is a GPS and the device is outside, or mobile phone connection, and these

		devices are not allowed as part of BYOD). Parents can see that the device is online and in use at school when this feature is turned on.
Tracking the device on site	How do we avoid devices being stolen by visitors, students, or getting lost?	The devices are always supervised by the teacher or locked away during breaks. Previous roll out at other schools show students are proud owners of their devices and take great care of their devices. This care will be reinforced by the teachers. Students at Pennant Hills Primary school are very well educated and should continue to be educated in the value of looking after your own and other's belongings.
Movement of the device on site	Are the devices taken to the math groups?	Yes these are taken to their math groups.
The risk of using the device too much	My daughter can sit uncomfortably when using a device, can the school make sure students adopt good posture strategies and that they regularly move?	Good ergonomic habits and limiting the time behind a device are good habits to learn, like good eating habits. The teachers will implement these habits into their programs. (This focus has already started)
The risk of using the device too much	Can children do too much on their computer at home for homework, how can we stop them if overdoing it and we are concerned?	Clear communication between parents and a teacher around homework is essential to avoid that students overdo it. If parents feel that their child is using their device too much then they should speak with their teacher or email the teacher via the school address to find out how they can work together to address the concern.
The risk of using the device too much	Parents cannot see what is happening inside the classroom, how do we know if the teacher does the right thing?	The school committed to organizing BYOD parents-in-the-classroom session using your child's device while you follow one of your child's classes. This will give more insights in how the students use the device.
The risk of using the device too much	Can the school share some information about the usage after a period of BYOD usage?	The devices will be used throughout the day but typically only for short periods while the students research, collaborate or create output. While we cannot 'measure' the time in minutes that the device is actively used, the school will provide this feedback as part of the control strategy to evaluate the roll-out.
The risk of using the device too much	Will BYOD negatively affect other curriculum requirements? How can we ensure that handwriting skills do not deteriorate? Some students are already reluctant writers.	It is an essential aspect of this program that basics skills such as numeracy and handwriting are not negatively impacted. The school has a range of strategies in place, independent of BYOD, to raise these skills and measure their improvements. If parents have concerns then they should speak with the teacher or email the teacher via the school address.
Equity	What if one child has a more expensive device and another a cheaper device, is this unfair?	Previous roll-outs at other schools have not shown that this is a concern for the children and parents are encouraged to not over-invest in devices as long as the devices meet the minimum specs.
The BYOD process as a whole	Transparency by the school in the past has been an issue, lack of parental involvement in the past is still felt by us today	The school will be running sessions for parents to participate as students in lessons to get a sense of the experiences of their children, open classroom afternoons above the normal Education Week showcases, as well as regular spots in the newsletter for helpful hints.
Specifications	Will the specifications change next year?	The specifications will not change next year, they are designed to offer a long life time of the device.
Year 6	Shouldn't we wait till these students start	Not being fluent with a device when starting in year 7

Students	High school?	may be a disadvantage as there is already a lot to take in in the first months of year 7. Educators report that device fluency is a benefit when starting high school . Primary school BYOD devices can be taken to high school: the policy is designed to accommodate that transition.
Bulk Buying Devices	It is still not clear while the school does not adopt a program where parents lease a centrally managed device through a leasing arrangement	There are significant advantages in such a roll-out, but the current program at Pennant Hills Public school offers also significant benefits through a higher level of flexibility and potentially associated cost –effectiveness, by enabling parents to re-use devices that they already have in their home and meet the minimum specifications and use devices that they themselves are familiar or comfortable with. While the ownership on device maintenance and support rests with the parents instead of with the school for BYOD devices, the school continues to centrally support devices for students outside the BYOD program. Lease programs are only cost effective when a large group of parents are part of this, which would potentially remove the optional nature of the current policy.
Monitoring and evaluation	How can we ensure the roll-out is meeting the outcomes it is intended to meet?	Parent feedback has been wide ranging from being very comfortable with the plans to not being in agreement. Everyone though agrees that improved communication, monitoring the rollout and reporting results, good and bad, to parents is essential. As a first step the school is organizing in -classroom sessions to highlight how and when BYOD devices are being used and the school encourages parents to view their student's work online. The newsletter and teacher communications will be used to further communicate the practical aspects of BYOD and the outcomes of the roll-out.