

CHROMEBOOKS FOR LEARNING SCHEME AT LOXFORD – Frequently Asked Questions

How much is a Chromebook going to cost?

We will provide a robust HP Chromebook 11A G8 or HP Chromebook 14A G5 (2020 models) with a 3 year warranty. This will be an outright purchase of £150/£200. Students will need to buy their own case. This will help them look after the machine and personalise it.

Why is this Chromebook not available in a shop or online?

You can read about the chromebooks online or the product data sheet links on our website.

How was the cost reached?

Extensive evaluation took place by a team including IT staff and senior leaders to determine the best suited package. We talked with other schools, attended Google training days and had a variety of Chromebooks for evaluation. To use a Chromebook in school you need a licence which currently costs £19. The school will be paying for this as we see that this will help with your education. You will get access to the Google Apps for Education Scheme.

Could we buy a cheaper Chromebook ourselves?

There are cheaper Chromebooks on the retail market but please be aware that these devices have different specifications and in particular the size of the 'RAM memory'. This has a big effect on the speed of the Chromebook. We will be bulk purchasing Chromebooks that we believe will stand up well to use in the school. We will be passing on all savings we make directly to you, so that we can bring a package price to you that genuinely represents value for money.

How is the Chromebook being paid for?

Sixth Form students on free school meals can claim the bursary. This is currently £15 a week (2020/21) and lasts for 39 weeks. These students can opt to take a Chromebook instead of the Bursary at the start of the year. They will receive the bursary by cheque as soon as they have met the criteria for more than 14 weeks. This means they will have paid off the cost of either Chromebook.

Students who do not claim the bursary can purchase the Chromebook for £150 or £200. The school will pay for the licence to use it on the Google Apps for Education Scheme (GAfE).

How will I make the payment?

By bringing a cheque into school payable to 'Loxford School ' or by completing the Bursary application form and opting for the Chromebook rather than the half termly cheques until you have reached the £150/£200.

Can I pay for the Student Chromebook Package month by month?

Currently this is not possible.

Who owns the Chromebook?

Students will own their Chromebook and will look after it. They will be responsible for it and we strongly suggest they have insurance for it. It is a robust machine but there is always the risk of damage or theft. If a Chromebook stops working and it is a fault then it should be covered by the warrantee. Students will get a telephone number to call and we will help in school.

What if I don't think I can afford it?

We want everyone to be able to afford it which is why we have decided to pay for the GAfE licence and offer it to students on the Bursary. We understand that not all students will be on free school meals. Chromebooks are available to use in the Sixth form Study room and the school library is open from 8 to 5.30 for Sixth Form students to work.

When will the Chromebooks be issued to students?

Attendance at Loxford is excellent therefore we will give the Chromebooks to students on the Bursary when the first students get their cheques after the first half term. In previous years all students have paid off the cost by the middle of the year.

What if my child already has a Chromebook?

With the agreement of the parents, students who own a Chromebook already will be able to bring it to school and have it connected to the network as long as it has a battery life of at least 6 hours and parents are aware that we will not be able to offer support for devices purchased outside our scheme. We will buy the licence so it can be used in school. This is subject to change as this will be a cost to the school.

My child already has a laptop, can they use that instead?

If the laptop that your child already has meets the following requirements then it can be used instead of opting into our Chromebook scheme. The battery need to last 6 hours on a single charge. We cannot offer charging facilities in school. The student is not expecting to connect to the school Wi-Fi. This is not possible. Students can only use off line programmes or their own internet provider where it is available. It is strongly recommended that laptops are covered by personal household insurance.

It is vital that we make sure that the computers in the classrooms and teachers do not take up important teaching and learning time because technical difficulties need to be resolved. Teachers are not technicians and it is the simplicity of the Chromebook, the long battery life and the rapid boot up time that ultimately led to this choice of device. The computers then become 'invisible' in the classroom and the teaching and learning remains the focus throughout.

My child already has an iPad/Android Tablet, can they use that instead?

Students can use these in study areas however they are not fully compatible with the Google Apps and Chrome add-ons that we will be using for teaching and learning. They will not be able to join to the school Wi-Fi.

What are the models of Chromebook being offered?

Students can see the data sheets on our website.

Can we have different models to choose from?

In order to achieve the economies of scale with a manufacturer which make this scheme most affordable, we can't offer a more diverse choice as the numbers taking up each option would be too low.

Is the battery good enough? How will charging work?

Chromebooks have a battery life of 8+ hours. This varies depending on what the Chromebook is being used for (e.g. web browsing is very different to using YouTube). As long as students charge the Chromebook overnight, it will last all day. An energy research body has calculated the cost of charging a Chromebook for a year to be 87p if charged every other night. Students are responsible for bringing their charged Chromebook to school.

Can my child put their own content onto the Chromebook (music, video, apps)?

Yes, your child should treat the Chromebook as their own. A big part of the success of this scheme will rely on students valuing the Chromebook as part of their wider life and therefore taking care of it, charging it and bringing it to school every day. Storage space is provided via the Google domain that Loxford provides and will be unlimited and so students can store movies and music and still have ample space left for school-provided apps and content.

How do I connect the Chromebook to the internet in my house?

Chromebooks use wireless to connect to a network, so you will need Wi-Fi at home to use the Chromebook on the internet. If you have Wi-Fi, your network security key can be added to the Chromebook before login. If you don't have Wi-Fi at home, the Chromebook will still work for many things (most apps, reading eBooks, etc.) but things like email and web browsing won't be accessible until the Chromebook is back within the school network or another Wi-Fi signal.

What happens if the Chromebook is lost, stolen or damaged?

Students are responsible for the Chromebook from the moment it is taken from us. It is covered by the warranty but this does not cover if it is dropped, lost, or damaged accidentally etc. We strongly suggest you check that your home contents insurance covers the unit. The supplier has said that, subject to availability, we will be able to provide a 'loan' Chromebook during any period when your Chromebook is being repaired.

What technical support will there be for students?

The school ICT Support Service will be able to help resolve many technical issues but one of the major advantages of the Chromebook is that it rarely goes wrong.

How are teachers being helped to maximise the potential of Chromebooks?

We are developing a specialist teacher team of Chromebook users who are being given additional support in developing their practice so that they can help other teachers they work alongside. We will be continuing to focus on the use of Chromebooks in the regular staff training that the school runs.

How will the Chromebook be backed up?

The Chromebook is always backed up, our students have unlimited storage space in the Google Cloud. This is already set up and associated with their school email address.

Are there any Chromebook guides available?

Yes, there's a lot of (free) guidance out there. This link is a good place to start:

www.chromestory.com/chromebook-user-guide

We will make sure all of our students receive the teaching input to get them up and running with their new Chromebooks when they are issued and we will provide an online course they can access to develop their expertise. It is important to us that everyone; teachers, students and parents/ carers, feel capable and confident with the Chromebooks.

What is the school doing to reduce e-safety problems with the Chromebooks?

We already operate an internet and email filtering, which we will extend to Chromebooks.

What about safety on the way to and from school?

It is sensible to reduce the risk of theft through some common sense measures; students should keep their Chromebook in their bag on the way to and from school, both for road safety and crime prevention reasons. This is advisable if travelling by bus or on foot. Chromebooks are fitted with anti-theft software and can be disabled to prevent reselling if lost or stolen.

Will the Chromebook be monitored?

The school has a very effective web filtering system and all devices attached to our network go through this web filter. The school will not be actively monitoring students' Chromebooks; we feel it is important that students feel that the device is 'theirs' and they are not being watched. We will be able to look at web filter logs, should an issue become apparent. Chromebooks are fitted with anti-theft software and can be disabled to prevent reselling if lost or stolen.

Will my child need their own Google account, if so, how will the school be able to put apps on the Chromebook?

Your child's Loxford account is in fact a Gmail account and this account will be used when they are in the school. The school will use management software to enable it to distribute apps to any Chromebook registered with it and effectively will 'gift' the app to the device.

If you have any further questions then please ask one of the ICT support staff.