



Parmiter's School

Student Chromebook Scheme

Parent/Carer Frequently Asked Questions 2023/24



Google for Education

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General questions:

1. What is the rationale for introducing individual student Chromebooks to Parmiter's? And why now?

As a school, we've long since believed that we need to embrace the technological advances we see in homes and workplaces to best prepare our students for life beyond Parmiter's. The events of COVID allowed us to experience just how beneficial individual access to technology can be. Not only has it opened up a world of new opportunities from a teaching and learning perspective, but it's also allowed students to develop their independence: a crucial life skill. It follows then that access to technology shouldn't just be something that happens in a few rooms in school, but something that's available for everybody to use, everywhere and at any time.

2. Does my child have to have a Chromebook?

Ultimately, we would like all students to have access to a Chromebook throughout the school day and at home. We understand that not everybody will want/be able to purchase a Chromebook and have a range of different support options depending on your circumstances.

3. Why has the school opted for Chromebooks?

We have opted for Chromebooks for the following reasons:

- They boot up in less than eight seconds which means that no time is wasted waiting for the device to start up
- They have a battery life that's typically longer than the duration of the school day
- They are easy to use, especially when it comes to the student-teacher workflow (ie, the setting, distribution, handing in and marking of work)
- They update automatically which means there is no need to purchase and install new software
- They have excellent collaboration tools that work seamlessly with Google Apps for Education
- We can provide technical support in school through the Google Champions Help Desk in September in the LRC
- Our Wi-Fi infrastructure and filtering systems work best with Chromebooks

4. Did you look at Windows, iPads, Macbooks, Linux or Android as alternatives?

Yes, and very seriously. iPads are great tools for consuming media but they are not as good for creating content and allowing our students to work collaboratively. While the range of applications available on iPads and Android is vast, many of the resources that teachers currently use in IT suites would not be available. We also looked at traditional Windows, Mac and Linux laptops. Although these devices are indeed more powerful, they are also more complex, more expensive and have poorer battery lifetimes. The simplicity of the Chromebook overcomes these barriers so that the focus will be on learning.

You may have read that the Chromebook is useless without an internet connection. This is a misconception. Even offline, Google Drive items can still be edited and many apps and extensions can still work (even if just in a limited capacity) until connected back to the internet.

5. Why can't my child bring a device we already have at home?

Our research (through visits to other schools and into a range of devices) has shown that bring-your-own-device schemes can create issues in the classroom. The most concerning of these issues was lost learning time. The type and age of the device can impact both battery life and boot-up time. Devices are no good if they run out of battery before the end of the school day and long boot-up times can lead to a break-down in concentration and can therefore decrease learning time. Additionally, teachers found themselves troubleshooting technical issues between devices rather than being able to support students with their understanding of the lesson. If we want technology to support learning rather than distract from it, then we need to ensure that all students get a consistent experience. Using Chromebooks across the school will allow us to achieve this.



6. What's the specification of the Chromebook model you've chosen?

Lenovo 300e Gen 3 Chromebook

Memory: 4GB RAM

Display: 11.6" HD (1366 x 768) 10-point multitouch display

Garaged stylus

Storage: 32GB eMMC 5.1

Operating System: Chrome OS

Battery: Up to 10 hrs with 47 Wh battery

Ports: 2 x USB 3.2, 1 x USB-C 3.2, 1 x HDMI, 1 x microSD card reader, 1 x audio combo

Connectivity: 802.11 AC 2 x 2 WiFi, Bluetooth® 5.0

Dimensions: 289.6 mm x 202.4 x 19.9 mm

Weight: 1.33kg

7. Why is there not a choice of Chromebook models?

All Chromebooks share the same key functionality, so having a range of devices offers little advantage. We've chosen a model which has a good balance of performance and durability. A single model simplifies the deployment of the scheme and reduces the cost to you.

8. How does my child get access to their files using a Chromebook?

When your child logs in to a Chromebook using a Parmiter's School email address, they will get immediate access to their email and all documents stored in Google Drive. They'll also have access to Google Classroom (which our teachers use to set both classwork and homework), the internet and our school's list of extensions that support learning and revision. If they log in to another Chromebook, all of their settings are transferred across and they can keep working as normal.

9. How will the school ensure my child gets the most from the Chromebooks?

Parmiter's teaching staff are committed to developing opportunities to engage with new technologies so that devices truly support learning. Over the past three years, they have taken part in professional development and training to help embed opportunities for learning with Chromebooks, Google Classroom and the Google Apps for Education suite.

10. How will Chromebooks be used in the classroom?

Chromebooks will be used as a tool to support and enhance learning and creativity. We seek to equip all of our students with the necessary skills and ways of thinking that will enable them to succeed in a constantly changing society that values high levels of skill in the use of new technologies.

11. Will Chromebooks be used in every lesson of every day?

Chromebooks are educational tools and are not intended to be a replacement for traditional teaching methods. They will be used when they can enhance the learning experience. As such, their use will vary between subjects and even between topics within subjects.

We are currently developing a set of internal principles around the appropriate use of Chromebooks in the classroom. These will be shared with all staff in the coming months and departments will be updating their schemes of work to incorporate these opportunities.



12. Will my child still use pen and paper?

Yes, definitely. Students will be expected to bring pens and other equipment to school as they do currently and will engage regularly in written tasks. Writing is a necessary life skill, not least when it comes to taking examinations.

13. Will Chromebooks be used for homework?

Yes. Over the past year, teachers have begun to use Google Classroom to set homework.

14. Can the Chromebook be used at home?

Absolutely. Using the Chromebook both in school and at home is expected and supports our goal of learning taking place at any time, anywhere.

15. How does my child connect the Chromebook to the internet at home?

Your child will need WiFi to be able to connect their Chromebook to the Internet. If you have WiFi, your network security key can be added to the Chromebook before log-on. If you don't have WiFi at home and provided your child has already logged into their device in school, the Chromebook will still work for many things (apps, eBooks, etc.) but neither email nor web browsing will be accessible until the Chromebook is back within the school network. If you do not have WiFi at home, please email admin@parmiters.herts.sch.uk or call 01923 671424 to let us know.

16. Will my child suffer from too much screen time?

We are aware of the negative impacts of long periods of screen time and will factor this into our lessons. We would be grateful if you could support us with this at home by talking to your child about whether their Chromebook (or another device) is the best tool for the job. In doing so, we can both help to develop your child's independent learning skills and support them in finding their preferred learning and revision techniques.

17. What technical support and training will be provided?

Many students have already used a Chromebook in lessons over the last two years as part of trials in subjects such as History, Art and Music. Regardless of experience, all students will be taught how to use the Google Apps suite in preparation for receiving their devices at the start of the next academic year.

For technical queries, students can head to the Google Champions Help Desk in the LRC. This will be available to them every day during break and lunchtime. Trained students, overseen by a member of staff, will be available to provide any additional technical support or training. No support will be available at weekends or over school holidays and Bank Holidays.

18. Are there any Chromebook guides available?

Yes, there is a lot of (free) guidance out there. This [user guide](#) is a good place to start. We will make sure all of our students receive the training they need to get them up and running with their new Chromebooks when they are issued.

19. Many workplaces use Windows/Office. Shouldn't students be trained in these?

Microsoft Office products such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint function very similarly to their Google equivalents (Docs, Sheets and Slides). Skills learnt on one platform are quickly transferable to others and they are still taught within our IT curriculum.

20. Who repairs or replaces the Chromebook if it gets damaged?



Our partner, Freedom Technology, will manage all aspects of repairs. As such, any damage must first be logged with our IT team via chomebooks@parmiters.herts.sch.uk. Once logged, damaged devices can then be handed to the school's IT team (located in the Learning Resource Centre). They will arrange for it to be sent for repair. Chargers are not covered by the repair and replacement service provided so will not be replaced if damaged, stylus is only covered for damage, not loss, we advise students also keep these at home to prevent loss

21. Will my child be issued a loan device while theirs is being repaired?

Yes. We operate a swap-in service. As soon as the damage has been reported and handed to the school's IT team (see more information in the response to question 20 above), your child will be issued with a replacement Chromebook. This Chromebook will be swapped when we get their original device back.

22. How will you ensure my child is using their device safely in school?

All Chromebooks will be connected to the school's wireless network and therefore be monitored and only have a filtered internet connection. We will install mobile device management software which will allow us to monitor usage and add or remove apps or remotely wipe devices if required. Herts for Learning's RM filtering system, which is designed specifically for schools, both logs access and blocks unsuitable content.

23. How can I help my child use the device safely outside of school?

To add to the discussions that take place at school, we ask that you please talk to your child about e-safety and discuss the importance of staying safe online. The following resources on our [school website](#) may be of use to you.

24. Can my child install their own apps?

Currently, students cannot add their own apps using their school account as they need to be 'allowed' via our central system. They will, however, have access to all apps approved by the school.

25. How will you stop my child from playing games and misusing social media both at school and home?

All Chromebooks will be registered to the school domain. This means that no matter where the students log in to their device, our school internet filtering will operate to prevent access to any inappropriate sites.

26. How will inappropriate use of the Chromebook be dealt with?

With your support, all students will be required to sign to say they have read a set of simple rules. These rules will outline what appropriate and inappropriate use of the Chromebook looks like. Examples include rules relating to the management of the Chromebook (eg, I will bring a fully charged Chromebook to school every day) and to classroom behaviour (eg, I will stop using the Chromebook when my teacher asks me to). Failure to comply with these rules will lead to the usual sanctions. In addition, any students that misuse their Chromebook may have increased restrictions applied to their device.



27. How will the Chromebook be backed up?

Google Cloud backs up and saves work automatically. However, locally stored files such as pictures or videos taken with the device will need to be manually copied to the student's google drive, especially if the device is ever sent off for repair.

28. How safe is it for my child to store their work on Google?

All data is the property of Parmiter's School; it is not owned by Google. Google is fully GDPR compliant. It offers a detailed data processing amendment that describes its commitment to protecting our data. They do not store or log information; they encrypt it in transmission and at rest. They do not share our data.

29. Will my child be able to charge their Chromebook in school?

Students are expected to charge their devices before coming to school for the day and leave their chargers at home. There are several reasons for this.

Chromebooks have a battery life of over eight hours. While this varies depending on what the Chromebook is being used for (eg, web browsing is very different to using YouTube), it's extremely unlikely that it will need to be charged during the school day. Please note that 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 Chromebooks to school every day. As with any other piece of equipment required for school, there will be consequences if they fail to do this.

30. Will the Chromebook be too heavy to carry?

The model we've selected weighs approximately 1.35kg, which is about the same weight as a textbook. This is not a significant weight alone but we appreciate that it will add to the total weight of your child's school bags. Medical guidance suggests that when bags are worn appropriately (ie, spreading weight equally over both shoulders), there will be no health risk to your child. Students with lockers should use them for non-essential items. If further concerns exist, please get in touch with Matron who is happy to offer support and guidance.

31. Will my child be in any danger if they are carrying a Chromebook to and from school?

In speaking to other schools whose students already use individual devices, we heard no reports of Chromebooks being stolen on their journey to/from school. They suggested that they are no more at risk than if they are carrying a smartphone.

It is, however, possible to reduce the risk and consequences of theft. We ask that you advise your child to keep their Chromebook in their bag on the way to and from school and register their device with the [Immobilise](#) database. This is the largest free possession ownership log which helps to get recovered property to its rightful owners.

32. What happens if the Chromebook is lost or stolen?

If the device is **lost**, the school will endeavour to help your child find their device, ultimately the parent/carer is responsible for continuing to pay for the lost device and also sourcing a replacement, our repair and replace service **does not cover lost devices**.

In the very unlikely event that the device is **stolen** from your child, parents/carers need to report the theft to the police and a crime reference number needs to be obtained. As soon as we receive the reference number we can cover the theft.



33. Will my child be required to bring their Chromebook on school trips?

Largely speaking, we advise against students taking their devices on trips. However, where they are required by trip organisers, we will ensure that the rationale for doing so is explained in full.

34. What investments will Parmiter's School be making?

Preparations for the introduction of this scheme began over four years ago when we spent time researching how technology can support learning. Thanks to a significant contribution from the Parents' Association, the school has already invested in expanding wireless coverage which has improved connectivity enough to support a large number of Chromebooks on the network. More recently, we've invested in improving the school's internet connection and now have an impressive 1Gbps available to us. This will ensure that everybody will have reliable internet access, even during peak times.

35. What is the school going to do with the current IT suites?

We will rationalise the number of IT rooms in school over the next two years but will maintain our investment in those suites that run specialist software for subjects such as Art, D&T, Music and Computer Science. Students will continue to be able to access high-quality resources that support their learning in these subjects.

36. If I sign up, when will my child receive their Chromebook?

Chromebooks will be distributed to students when they start school in early September.

Financial questions:

37. How does the payment plan work?

Families will be asked to sign up for a Direct Debit payment scheme which will take monthly payments for the duration of the scheme. Families can choose the length of the payment scheme between 1 and 3 years.

38. What do I get for my money?

The package includes:

- A high-specification Chromebook
- Protective sleeve
- Access to G-Suite for Education licence for the duration your child is at the school including apps and subscriptions
- Three years (no excess) repair and replacement service for theft and accidental damage
- 'White-glove' service concerning the initial setup and delivery of the device
- School-run monitoring and filtering system

39. What is the white-glove service?

This refers to the service provided by Freedom Technology. They will not only set up each Chromebook so that it's charged and ready to open and start using straight away, but also deliver it straight to school.

40. Who owns the Chromebook?

For all practical purposes, the devices belong to the students. Students look after them at school and



home. Legally, however, Parmiter's School owns each Chromebook until the final payment has been made, at which point it becomes the property of the student or family. At this point the warranty and repair and replace service cover ends – but there may be a further option to lease a new device, with warranty and repair and replace service, for families who particularly value this cover.

41. What happens at the end of the payment plan?

At the end of your payment plan, families will own the Chromebook also **three years** after the first initial payment the device is no longer covered by our repair and replacement service. At this point, we advise that you invest in your own insurance for the device.

When your child leaves school (ie, at the end of Year 11 or 13), we will remotely wipe all school-owned apps and our device management system. The Chromebook will be fully operational and yours to use as you wish.

42. What happens if my child leaves Parmiter's before the end of the payment plan?

If your child leaves Parmiter's before the end of the payment plan, you should contact finance@parmiters.herts.sch.uk to discuss your options regarding paying off the payment plan to gain ownership of the device.

If you return the device within 14 days of receipt we can provide a partial refund, after this point however we may not be able to refund the purchase cost.

43. Why does the overall cost seem so high when you add the instalments together?

The package you're purchasing via the school includes a lot more than just a Chromebook. To recap, it includes the following:

- A high-specification Chromebook
- Protective sleeve
- Access to G-Suite for Education license for the duration your child is at the school including apps and subscriptions
- Extended warranty for three years
- ***Three years (no excess) repair and replacement service for theft and accidental damage***
- White-glove service concerning the delivery of the device
- School-run monitoring and filtering system

Based on our extensive research, we believe that this package offers excellent value for money.

44. Why can't the school provide these devices for free?

We don't have the budget to provide Chromebooks for all students. The benefit of students owning their devices is that they can use them to support their learning both in and outside of school - and beyond!

45. I cannot afford to purchase a Chromebook. Will my child be disadvantaged?

No, we will look into ways to enable your child to have access to a device while at school. Families of students who are in receipt of any form of Pupil Premium or who have three or more children in school will be sent an additional letter outlining the financial support available to them. If this does not apply to you but you know you're likely to struggle, please explain your situation in an email to finance@parmiters.herts.sch.uk and we'll do what we can to help.

46. What happens if I have more than one child in school and can't afford multiple payments?

The school has already pledged to support families with three or more children at the school. Further information will be sent to those



families in due course. If you have fewer than three children in school and are concerned about being able to afford the payments, please explain your situation in an email to finance@parmiters.herts.sch.uk and we'll do what we can to help.

47. What if my child already has a Chromebook or I want to buy one outside of the scheme?

If you already have a Chromebook that you would like your child to use in school, then the device will need to be added to the school domain at £30. If you would like to purchase your Chromebook, please purchase a model with the following minimum hardware specifications:

- 802.11ac Wireless
- Minimum 4GB RAM
- Minimum 16GB Storage

Please be reminded that we are unable to provide technical support for Chromebooks not purchased through the school scheme. We also cannot accept responsibility for damage, loss or theft of the device. You will be expected to purchase your insurance for the device.

48. What does the £30 licence include?

The £30 licence enables us to add all school subscriptions onto the device, as well as our filtering system and security systems. These allow for a more seamless connection to our wifi infrastructure and prevent the use of the device by other domains outside Parmiter's. A new licence will need to be purchased if a non-scheme Chromebook is replaced for any reason.

49. How can I donate extra to the scheme?

A number of you have generously asked how you might donate extra to support other families. If you would like to donate extra to the scheme please email finance@parmiters.herts.sch.uk

For any further questions not covered by this FAQ document, please get in touch using the information below:

- For enquiries about financial support, please email finance@parmiters.herts.sch.uk
- For enquiries about the purchasing portal, please go to www.freedomtech.co.uk/help
- For technical enquiries, please email chromebooks@parmiters.herts.sch.uk
- And for all other enquiries, please email admin@parmiters.herts.sch.uk

