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Dear Parents and Carers,

Below are some more 'Frequently Asked Questions' about our PODS Project.

Q1. Why has the school chosen to use Chromebooks?

Chromebooks are reliable and easy to manage, turn on instantly and do not get viruses. A personal device will support student engagement and personalised learning. Embedded in our School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a focus on student learning that is differentiated and connected in a purposeful way to real world applications through Project Based Learning.

Collaboration

Chromebooks enhance student communication and collaboration opportunities. Students can create, share, and edit documents in real-time; and all work is automatically saved to the cloud.

Ease of Use

Chromebooks are designed and built to be easy to use, fast and powerful. With a fast boot time and quick access to web apps, Chromebooks easily meet the capabilities for digital learning.

Safety and Security

All work is automatically saved to the cloud meaning that data is safe even if the Chromebook is lost, stolen, or damaged; while automatic updates, verified boot and data encryption, protect against viruses and other malware.

G-Suite

All students enrolled in a NSW Public School have been provided with a school Google account. G-Suite is on the Learning Tab on the DoE student portal. These accounts also allow the students to use the various Google apps to collaborate within the classroom.

Q2. Does it have to be a Chromebook? What about other devices?

Yes. We have selected Chromebooks as they are a reliable device which allow students to carry out any task that can be completed on a laptop. Chromebooks are easy to manage, turn on instantly and do not get viruses. These are the devices of choice for many schools as they are affordable and meet all school requirements. Chromebooks have been used at Newport School for more than 4 years now and have proven to be valuable teaching and learning tools.

Q3. Will my child still use pens and paper?

Yes. The Chromebook will not replace written work. There will be many opportunities for



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students to write, draw and engage with "hands on" learning materials. The school recognises the importance of students developing a range of skills including satisfactory handwriting skills for school and work.

Q4. How will my child access the Internet at school?

Every student has access to the school's wireless network at school. Whilst at school, all students' Internet access will be filtered, ie. inappropriate content and websites are blocked. It is important that parents/guardians know that Internet usage is not filtered at home unless parents have filtering in place.

Q5. What about cyber safety?

Newport aims to educate and empower students to become safe users of information technology through our Digital Citizenship and Cyber-safety Program as well as using the "teachable moment" to reinforce our high expectations around online behaviour.

Q6. Will my child get sore eyes looking at the screen all day?

Children will not be looking at screens all day.

As with all technology it is recommended that users take regular breaks throughout the day. Whilst your child will require their Chromebook each day it will not be used for every lesson.

Eye strain may also be avoided by the student enlarging text (easily done on a Chromebook) and some students may choose to install antiglare screen protectors for their Chromebooks. It is generally recommended that rest breaks are taken for at least 5 minutes every 30 minutes of use and with well-structured lessons, this is easily achieved.

Q7. Is there an acceptable user agreement?

Yes. Newport Public School has had a Digital User Agreement in place for a number of years to support safe information and communication technology (ICT) practices in the school environment. We require all parents and students to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement before they can use technology at school. This agreement has been reviewed to include our PODS project Chromebook. Students learn about not giving out personal information, cyberbullying, safe and appropriate online language, what to do if he/she feels unsafe, protecting their online identity and not placing themselves in dangerous situations.

Q8. How will devices be used to implement the digital technologies section of the Science and Technology syllabus?



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Students will use software to interpret and visualise data. This will include coding and using digital devices to help solve complex problems. This may include researching the problem, conducting a survey, analysing data in spread sheets and creating a video or presentation with the solution. They may also use devices to test predictions, through animations and simulations. Devices will help support the knowledge and skills students develop through Project Based Learning.

Q9. Do teachers receive professional development in using Chromebooks and other forms of technology to support teaching and learning programs?

All teachers receive ongoing professional development in all areas of the curriculum. This includes school based, online and external training. Some of this is whole school as well as teachers selecting their own professional development. All teachers have the opportunity to attend introductory Chromebook workshops and training around the use of Google Apps.

Q10. Is the school's wifi capable of handling all the new devices?

Yes. Our school wifi has the capacity to support our PODS program, however, as our technology infrastructure needs are increasing our network will need upgrading and we are planning accordingly for this. Our network is maintained by the Department of Education who quickly respond and resolve any portal or wifi issues.

Q11. Will students be provided with a school Google account?

Yes. All students are automatically provided with a G Suite account that is accessed through the Learning Tab on the DoE student portal on their enrolment to a NSW public school. This is an education account and separate from any Google account set up at home. Students can, however, access this at home through the student portal.

Q12. Are there school procedures around PODS?

There is a school procedure which is available on our school website and parents will have the link sent to them via the Natter.

Q13. How will Chromebooks be used in the classroom?

Since "Learning from Home", all students use Google Classroom. As you experienced during "Learning from Home," Google Classroom provides a platform for communicating with students, assigning and collecting work and providing learning resources. Teachers can assign tasks to students, monitor their submissions and give feedback. Teachers and students use G Suite apps including Google Docs, Sheets and Slides. Students use devices for research, collecting and



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analysing data. They also use many other educational web-based apps - Canva to create posters and presentations, Reading Eggs, Mathseeds, Mangahigh, Get Epic, Study Ladder, Read Theory and Typing Club. Students also create videos and podcasts.

Q14. Can students leave their Chromebooks at school?

Yes. Arrangements can be made with the class teacher to leave Chromebooks at school.

Q15. How can Chromebooks be used at home to support learning at school?

Students can use their device to complete relevant research, class learning tasks, homework and to present projects if relevant in their chosen format. Students who do not own a device can access their G Suite from any device at home that connects to the Internet and has an up-to-date browser installed, eg. Chrome, Firefox, etc.

Q16. My child is in Year 5 or 6 and I am wondering if the Chromebook be compatible with what my child needs in High School?

Possibly.

Chromebooks are suitable for all cloud-based applications, for example G Suite which is extensively used at our local public high schools. For more information, please see their websites for device specifications.

<https://www.barrenjoeyhighschool.com.au/about-us/information-technology/byod/>

<https://pittwater-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/technology/byod-bring-your-own-device/byod-specifications.html>

Q17. My child is in Kindergarten. Can I purchase a Chromebook this year?

Yes. However, the Kindergarten students' use of Chromebooks will be limited.

Q18. How do I purchase a Chromebook?

- 1) AFTER we have announced a start date purchases can be made at the following address - <https://newport.orderportal.com.au/>
- 2) purchases can be made up until the cutoff date the 19th of November
- 3) the Chromebooks are scheduled to arrive at school as one bulk delivery on the 30th of November
- 4) Newport School IT staff will configure and test each Chromebook
- 5) Parents/carers will be advised when their child's Chromebook is ready in early/mid December.



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You'll find extended advice about the Department of Education's [Schools Digital Strategy](#) by following the link.

Kind regards,
Natalie Baldi
Principal