KING HENRY VIII SCHOOL
YSGOL BRENIN HARRI'R VIII

Headteacher/Prifathrawes: Mrs E. Lewis BA (Hons) MA Ed

Old Hereford Road, Abergavenny,
Monmouthshire NP7 6EP

Tel/Ffôn: 01873 735373
E-mail/E-bost: info@khs.schoolsedu.org.uk

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Dear parents and guardians,

RE: A digital device for every student launch

I am delighted to inform you that finally, there seems to be an improvement in the IT procurement situation and we are now in a position to have a launch date for this exciting project.

I understand it is a very long time since my original letter therefore Appendix 1 on pages 2, 3 and 4 have updated information on:
- ✓ Context and rationale
- ✓ Preferred digital device
- ✓ Digital device purchasing
- ✓ Frequently asked questions

Launch date and parental engagement event

We have undertaken the work required with our IT provider and Academia on our mobile device management system. Our intention is to open the portal on **Monday 15 March until and including Tuesday 6 April for year 7 to 10 students.** Parents and guardians are able to access the portal using the following link ConnectED Mobile Learning Portal [NEW] (academia.co.uk). Current delivery dates is estimated end of May/early June.

Our intention is to have another portal ordering period in the second half of the summer term for Year 6 into 7 students and Year 11 into 12 students. All other years would also be able to make a purchase in this window for September 2021.

We understand you may have many questions about this project therefore we are holding a parent and guardian TEAMS meeting on Thursday 18 March at 6pm. The meeting will be hosted jointly by the school and Academia and to join Click here to join the meeting. There will be a short presentation followed by a question and answer session.

How much will it cost?

The recommended school devices (standard bundle) are to be an iPad 8th generation 32GB, Logitech Combo Touch Keyboard Case and Logitech Crayon. Our expectation is that these can be bought at a competitive rate via the school portal. Current costs are:

i.	iPad 8th generation	£243
ii.	Logitech Combo Touch – Keyboard and folio case	£99
iii.	Logitech Crayon	£40

In addition, there will a warranty charge of £15, a mobile device management licence (varies per year group) and a pre-provision cost of £20. There is also the option of buying a comprehensive insurance package. There is the option to buy outright or enter a finance agreement over one, two or three years. Costs are not inclusive of VAT.

In November, we did receive a number of queries about the purchase of iPad 8th generation 128Gb and an Apple pencil. These will be offered through the portal but are not part of our standard bundle.

We trust the information outlined in this letter provides sufficient information however, we hope you will also meet with us on Thursday 18 March so we can explain further about this exciting project.

Yours sincerely,

Elspeth Lewis   **Mark Stockham**

Executive Headteacher,   Head of School,

Appendix 1

Context and rationale

As you are aware prior to the COVID-19 crisis, we had already moved some way to developing our approaches to the teaching and learning of digital skills. The past twelve months have seen a huge leap in the way we are now using technology to promote innovative learning through skilled and creative teaching. We wish to inspire all our students to be digitally confident so they not only succeed in school but also develop the full range of digital skills they will require to lead a successful life in the modern world.

The Welsh Government has strongly promoted the use of technology as part of its National Mission to reform education in Wales. The Curriculum for Wales identifies digital competence as one of the key cross-curricular skills and the Digital Competency Framework sets out clear expectations for students. These expectations have been supported by the development of the national online learning platform 'Hwb'.

The ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic has highlighted the importance of having a strong and sustainable digital strategy. It has also highlighted the fact that the most significant barrier to student engagement in their learning is whether they have access to their own digital device.

We have students encouraged our older students to bring in their own devices (BYOD). This has been a steep learning curve for the school. Attempting to get all different models onto our BYOD system has been extremely challenging and time consuming. Furthermore, not all students know how to fully use their devices. It was also very difficult for the teacher or our IT technician to support students in all cases, as they are unfamiliar with some of the devices.

The school has received additional funding through the Welsh Government Educational Technology (EdTech) programme that has allowed us, over the past 24 months, to make an investment in our digital infrastructure and in the quality of digital devices in school. Unfortunately, this funding, although welcome, has not been sufficient for us to secure a digital device for every child.

Preferred digital device

The rationale above identifies the reasons why, as part of our digital strategy, we intend to move to a preferred digital device model. This will allow the school to meet the challenges of the new Curriculum for Wales, deliver innovative teaching and learning, support all students to use their device in a safe way and develop the digitally confident learners we all desire. Our aspiration is that every child should have access to a good-quality digital device at home and at school.

Following discussion with the teaching staff at King Henry VIII School, it was agreed that the digital device that would best support innovative teaching and learning across all subject disciplines was the iPad, with a protective case, integrated keyboard and a digital pen. This proposal was then presented to and agreed by the school's governing body. There were a number of reasons for the selection of these devices, including the fact that they:

- ✓ are designed to support the delivery of education across all subjects;
- ✓ can access Hwb, Microsoft 365 applications, Google Classroom and other compatible systems, together with a wide range of educational applications;
- ✓ have a good battery life, a physical keyboard, a stylus pen and front and rear cameras;
- ✓ can be used for multi-tasking, for example, video conferencing while editing documents.

We are clear, however, that students who already have a digital device can continue to use these unless parents and guardians decide they wish to take advantage of the purchase model outlined below.

Digital device purchasing

As already stated, the school and governing body wish every child to have access to a digital device that is more than a smart phone, so they can fully develop as digitally confident learners. This is a long-term aim and we have to be realistic that current funding models for schools make this very challenging.

We are also mindful of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. When the school has had students isolating at home, or there are periods of lockdowns or similar, those with devices are well placed to continue their studies through our Blended Learning offer.

Therefore, moving forward, the school and governing body have had to consider a pragmatic and sustainable model of funding for student devices. This includes:

✓ the use of Ed Tech funding, future Pupil Development Grant monies and the King Henry VIII School Foundation Governors' Head teacher fund;
✓ additional fundraising by the PTCA and governors;
✓ parents /guardians purchasing a device for their child.

A key aspect of our planning is that those students from disadvantaged backgrounds are able to access the preferred device through the school. However, it should be noted that priority would be given to students in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, in view of the fact that they are studying examination courses.

The school and governing body were mindful of the current financial climate and, therefore, have linked up with a preferred provider - 'Academia' – who, as a leading Apple Authorised Education Specialist, are able to leverage and pass on education discounts to us on the procurement of the suggested technology through a bespoke school purchasing portal at very competitive prices. Parents and guardians who wish to purchase a device for their child will be able to take advantage of this.

Linking with such a provider delivers some key e-safety elements, and school management of these devices supports the delivery of high quality teaching and learning. In particular:

✓ All iPads purchased through the school portal will be automatically enrolled on the school's mobile device management system. This allows teachers to share essential applications, online teaching resources, and digital textbooks to your child's device, as required for lessons.
✓ All software will be regularly updated by the school to ensure that your child's device is always ready for lessons.
✓ The school will also ensure that your child's device is secure and the data on it encrypted. Therefore, if your child loses the iPad, we can remotely wipe any personal data from it.
✓ Your child's device will also be protected from viruses and malware, using the school's management system.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)
a. **Will mobile computers change the student experience in the classroom?**
   Since March 2020 the school has moved to a combined traditional and technological offer – Blended Learning. Our intention is to develop and refine with this model as we come out of the current crisis. Students are now familiar with Hwb, Google Classroom and can see the benefits of working in a traditional way and in using technology to support their learning.
b. **I have already purchased an iPad or alternative digital device outside of the school scheme; does this meet the school's requirements?**
   Yes, this will still meet our requirements however; this will not be a managed device. Your child's device will access the school IT system through the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) network. The school will not be able to provide the same degree of support as a device purchased through the school purchasing portal.
c. **The iPad is relatively expensive, so why can the school not facilitate the purchase of a cheaper device?**
   There are cheaper alternatives however as an educational tool the iPad has a very wide range of applications to support teaching and learning across the curriculum and all subjects.
d. **What support can the school offer families who will struggle to afford this device?**
   In November, the school and governing body worked hard and raised substantial funds. In addition, we have used our pupil deprivation grant and additional grant monies received this year to buy additional 'standard bundles' for our students. Once the portal closes in April, we shall then plan how to distribute our school devices ensuring not student is disadvantaged.
e. **Why can my child not use a mobile phone?**
   A mobile phone is a tool devised primarily for convenient social communication. Whilst it may have some of the functionality outlined above, it is not suitable for routine use in classrooms.

f. What can we do to protect against damages, theft or loss?

A robust case will be included in each of the packages offered on the school portal. Also available are optional insurance and warranty extensions. As with all valuables, students must take responsible care of their digital device.

g. How will my child know how best to use their device?

As part of our digital provision all students have been provided with training on making effective use of Hwb, Google Classroom and additional subject applications. This will continue to be woven into all lessons.

h. Will my child lose the skill to write?

The school firmly believes that good handwriting is an essential life skill. In addition, students will be required to handwrite their exams, so it is important that they practise this skill. Handwriting will continue to be the primary method of working. When working on the mobile computer, students will use the 'lie flat' technology and the stylus pen, which works just like a normal pen.