

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you to all who have responded to our initial consultation about the plans we have to introduce a Devices for All Scheme in Years 7, 8 and 9 for next Academic Year. We had 197 responses which we have carefully read and used these to develop our ideas further to address some of the issues raised.

The second consultation phase asks you to respond to one of three option areas, but first, here are the outcomes and analysis of the first consultation.

Outcomes of Consultation 1

- There were 197 responses to the first stage of the consultation (some of these were duplicate responses from forms that had been submitted more than once).
 - 38 against the scheme
 - 46 with questions, suggestions or neutral comments
 - 33 in support of the scheme
- Of these 38 parents left comments that argued strongly against the scheme. These representations fall into the following categories:

Cost	Have a laptop	Security and Issue of carrying	Screentime and health	Equality	Other difficult to define
7	17	5	3	1	5

Key Issue 1: We have bought our child a laptop during lockdown

- Addressing the issue of students being able to use their own devices purchased during lockdown or already owned would directly address the most common objection which was to buying a further device when parents had already purchased a device.
- We have looked into this and we have found a solution which means that we can install our management software on a laptop device in school. When a student opens their laptop, the network will identify it and push out a message asking if it is prepared to accept our management tools. Students will need to accept this. If not, the laptop will not function on the network or be able to access our wifi and so would not be allowed in school.
- The main risk that parents would have to accept if they chose this option is that the device would not have a warranty or insurance unless parents had organised this themselves. This would need to be clearly understood by parents taking this option.

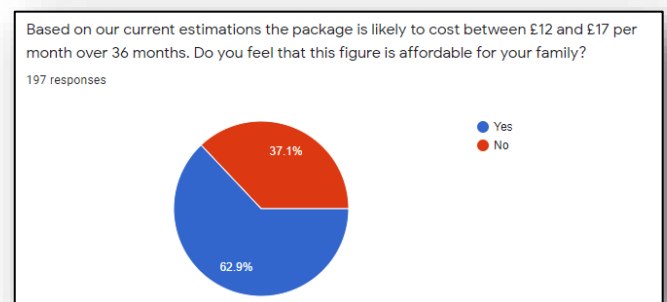
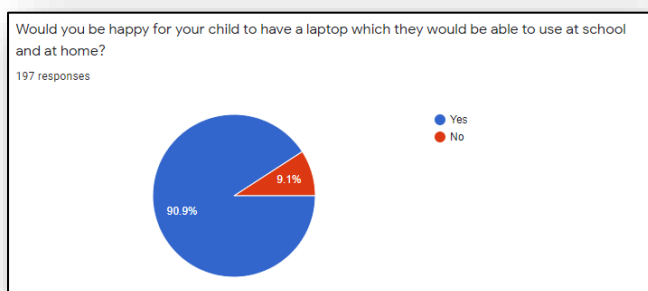
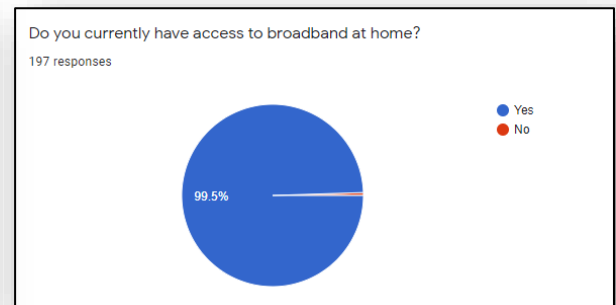
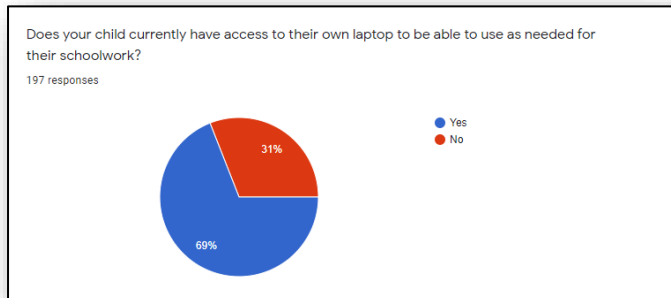
Key issue 2: Cost

- The issue of cost for those families who are struggling financially will be addressed through support for the scheme by the school. Those already on receipt of FSM or who are Pupil Premium students will be provided with a laptop. However, there are parents who do not fit either of these categories who can actually be worse off financially. For example, families in receipt of Universal Credit can be financially worse off than those on Free School Meals. These would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- The scheme is an opt-in scheme, so no parent has to take part in this. The school will have a bank of additional laptops which they will be provided when blended learning requires access to a device.

Key Issue 3: Security and Health

- The issue of students having to carry a laptop to and from school raises concern about physical damage and security risk if people know that students are carrying a laptop.
- However, the scheme would mean that students would be carrying fewer books in their bags as text books are available online and it is probable that we will move from exercise books to A4 paper and ring binders with organisers. This will mitigate against the increased weight in bags.
- The second issue around security has not been an issue in previous environments when the public knew that students had laptops. Notably, we would look to ensure that the laptops provided as part of the scheme would have encrypted hard drives and so would be rendered useless if stolen. Advice can be provided to parents providing their own laptops on how to encrypt their device so that it will not work if stolen.

Responses to Yes/No Questions:



Responses to FAQs:

- ***Do we own the laptops at the end of the 36 months?***

Yes – the laptops are yours at the end of the 36 months.

- ***What will the specification of the laptops be?***

The minimum spec of the laptop will be:

- AMD 3015e chipset OR Intel Celeron N4120 chipset
- 4Gb RAM
- 64Gb eMMC or SSD hard drive (128Gb preferred)
- 11.6" screen
- Minimum Wifi5 (ac) (Wifi6/ax preferred)
- Windows 10 64bit
- Minimum 8 hours battery life
- Preference for reinforced hinges, spill-proof keyboard and military-spec drop resistance.

- ***I can buy a laptop with this spec for less cost. What is the extra for?***

There is no profit for Balshaw's involved in this scheme. The additional cost is for all the extras that come as part of this package. The laptop scheme comes with full insurance and warranty. This means that your child will be provided with a replacement laptop if theirs is being repaired. It is insured for all accidental damage, theft etc. Licences for software in school will be included in the price as is a protective case. Moreover, you do not pay the full cost up front, the cost is spread over 36 months.

- ***Can I provide our own laptop or buy one myself (Bring Your Own Device Scheme – BYOD)?***

Yes, you can do this. There are a couple of things to be aware of if you choose this option:

- The device you purchase will need to be of the minimum specification as outlined in the bullet point above and agree to have Balshaw's Management Software installed on the laptop for it to be used in school.
- Your child's device will not be insured. You must arrange for your own insurance, warranty etc. If your child's laptop is damaged they will be without a computer until theirs is repaired or you have acquired a new laptop.
- The school cannot provide IT support for BYOD laptops. There are so many different laptop devices it would not be possible and if there were driver issues connecting to print services etc. there is no guarantee our IT staff could resolve the issue.

- ***Does this mean that my child won't write any longer?***

No – in a blended learning environment children will still write. Writing is no less important and we still have to prepare them for an examinations system that is assessed through written exams (at least for now!)

- ***Will my child be a target for thieves?***

All laptop hard drives will be encrypted so they will be useless to anyone trying to steal them. It has not been the experience of other schools that students are targeted by thieves.

- ***Won't they have too much to carry in their bags?***

It is likely that students will carry less. There will be less need for text books as these can be shared online if students have devices. Some departments in school have already moved to using a ring binder and A4 paper for students to organise their work at KS4. In preparation for the way that students learn post-16 and at KS4 we are likely to move to this, so students would only need their

laptop and a plastic wallet in their bag. They would organise their work in folders at home.

- ***Chromebooks are cheaper, why are you using laptops?***

Chromebooks are no longer cheaper than laptops. In fact, current Lenovo Chromebook is more expensive than the equivalent laptop and does not have as good a wifi chip. We cannot manage Chromebook devices with our network management tools to keep students safe in school. They also do not have the power to run software equivalents of Photoshop for digital art work, computing environments such as Python Shell. Also, we feel that it is important that students work in a Windows environment to prepare them for the world of work which will not use Android as an OS.

Consultation Part 2

Having adapted and modified in response to the feedback from consultation 1, we are now at the point where we need to find out which of the three possible approaches you might adopt for your child in the second part of the consultation.

Please would you complete the short form [here](#) if you have a child in Year 7 or Year 8 only?

<https://forms.gle/hdKmmR1fFpe7ES9X7>

There are 3 options you are asked about:

- Bring Your Own Device
- What level you would be involved in as part of the scheme
- If you would not want your child to have a laptop of their own

Kind regards,

Mr Haycocks

HEADTEACHER
BALSHAW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path. (Psalm 119, vs 105)