

BYOD – Bring your own Device 2026

Expectations, Recommendations and Frequently asked questions

Waitākere College is a BYOD school and all students are requested to participate in our BYOD programme. This means that we ask all families to provide a digital device (Chromebook or similar) that will allow students to access online learning in the class and at home.

We understand that the start of the school year brings many expenses. However, it is an important part of your student's journey through the school to ensure they are able to participate equally in the teaching and learning in their class and home. For this reason, we remind families that all students will need to bring their device to school every day in 2026.

If you are eligible for assistance from WINZ, we recommend you take them this booklet along with confirmation of your child's enrolment at Waitākere College if you wish to apply for assistance. If you have any issues accessing assistance, which you believe you are eligible for, please contact the school for further support in dealing with this.

Purchasing a device

Waitākere College recommends a Google Chromebook as a suitable device for years 9 to 11.

We strongly recommend that you take the following into account when selecting a device:

- Does it have accidental damage cover? This really is essential in case something breaks – e.g. the screen. How long is the cover for? (recommend 3 years) How many claims can be made? What is the excess? What is the cost of the cover?
- How current is the model of Chromebook or Laptop?
- Does it have a 3-year warranty? (However, cover is also provided under the Consumer Guarantees Act, that a device must be durable)
- Some providers offer a loan device if you need to claim under warranty or insurance which can be helpful.
- It is essential that all devices are kept within a protective case (even if they will be transported to and from school in a school bag)

Frequently Asked Questions

Why BYOD?

- Students are now able to use a wide range of digital tools for reading, writing, designing, working with spreadsheets, doing Maths, answering questions, creating and researching on a daily basis.
- Ownership of a personal device by students has been shown to increase motivation and engagement.
- BYOD supports greater independence and improved critical thinking, and provides new opportunities for collaboration, sharing, engaging with communities and creativity.
- Teachers share assignments directly with students who submit work and receive teacher feedback online. This work can also be shared with friends and whanau around the world!
- The full integration of digital learning tools into our curriculum is essential to ensure our students are responsible, safe and skilled users of digital technology in the online world they are already part of.

What Devices are NOT suitable?

Smartphones are not adequate for this type of learning.

- iPads and tablets are also less useful than a device with a keyboard such as a Chromebook or a laptop.
- Devices will need to be equipped for typing and editing documents, collaborating online and using internet resources and tools.

What Devices ARE suitable?

Chromebooks or laptops are suitable for this type of learning.

Key requirements: the device must be:

- Robust and sturdy enough for school use with a light and portable protective case
- Have a minimum screen size of 11.6"
- Have a keyboard
- Have a battery that will last at least eight hours and be brought to school after being fully charged at home each night

- Able to connect to the school wireless network
- Under warranty - to ensure that any failure of the hardware or components can be quickly remedied.
- Insured against loss or damage (including Accidental Damage Cover - multiple claims recommended)

Chromebooks or Laptops?

Our experience has shown that an up to date Chromebook is a good choice for Years 9 to 11, meeting all the specifications above. A Chromebook may still be suitable for Years 12 to 13 if students are taking subjects which do not require specialist software or higher specifications. When buying a Chromebook, we recommend you get one with at least 4GB RAM. A Chromebook with 8GB will run faster and handle more complex operations - for example music, video, photo editing.

When making the choice of device for Years 12-13, students and parents should consult the subject teachers of their chosen subjects and ask for advice. For some specialist subjects, a laptop with higher specifications would be an advantage, but is not an absolute requirement.

What Software is required?

Students will be able to achieve much of what they need to, using online tools which are often free.

Teachers can advise students of specialist software useful for particular subjects.

It is important that the device have an up-to-date operating system, and the Google Chrome browser, which can be installed on any operating system free of charge. For specialist subjects where specific software like Photoshop, Garageband, Sony Vegas, Sketchup etc. is used, desktop computers with the software are available for students to use during class time.

What Support does the school provide?

We will provide help to connect to the school network. If there is something that is not working with your device, it is best to bring it to school in the first instance and ask a teacher for help. However, beyond that students will need to take responsibility for their own devices for problem-solving or troubleshooting.

If necessary you will need to refer to a technician or to the supplier where you bought the device.

We make lockers available and offer an engraving service at the start of the year for a reasonable cost so that students can keep their devices secure.