

BYOD FAQs

What is BYOD?

BYOD stands for 'bring your own device' and is the [policy](#) that Oswestry School has adopted to encourage greater use of computers and portable digital devices across the school by pupils. BYOD makes use of the wireless network that was installed across the School way back in 2012.

BYOD has been a feature of Oswestry's curriculum since September 2013 and most pupils make use of the wireless network for connecting their digital devices to the internet. All senior school pupils are **expected** to have a digital device in School. (Year 6 are welcome to engage with this option also). These devices are regularly used in lessons and work is often set and submitted online, although we are clear that not all tasks lend themselves to a digital approach. Traditional methods of working will still remain in the many instances where they are still the best way of progressing pupils' learning.

What sort of device does my child need?

Content creation will form a large part of the function of your child's digital device and, as such, we strongly **recommend devices with integrated keyboards** rather than tablets as the ones to choose. Mr Smith, our Network Manager, currently recommends the following minimum specifications:

- Windows 10 [or later]/ Mac OS X / Chrome OS
- Intel Core i3 (6th generation minimum) or equivalent processor
- 4GB RAM minimum but 8GB RAM recommended (Chromebooks may not meet this spec but this is not so important with Chrome OS)
- 11" screen minimum (but 13+" will be preferred for longer content creation work)

The software the device comes bundled with is mostly immaterial as nearly all school work will be carried out 'in the cloud' on the school's Google domain. [Chromebooks](#) might be considered as cheaper alternatives to some Windows or Apple machine. However, pupils studying computing, design, art or photography to GCSE and above are advised to purchase machines with a Windows operating system. This is because such machines have the ability to run certain types of specialist software which are necessary for these courses. The IT department can offer advice and offer an 'Oswestry School Approved' list of devices, which are offered via a third party supplier at a reasonable cost. **[An online shop 'portal' will be available very soon - in the meantime, please contact [Mr Paul Smith](#), IT manager, for advice].** There is no obligation to choose from this list or this supplier, but these are strongly recommended. The supplier also offers a reasonably priced 'care pack'.

Does the school offer insurance for these devices?

As mentioned above the 'care pack' covers most eventualities. The simplest (and probably cheapest) solution for most families is to ensure that their child's portable device is insured under their own home contents policy. If you go for this option though, please check the small print of your policy very carefully to ensure that you are covered. Any device brought into School will also, of course, need to be clearly named so that it can be retrieved and returned if it gets misplaced around campus.

If you would prefer to use a separate, specialist form of [pupil personal possessions insurance](#) the School has a



policy run through Endsleigh which you may be interested in. If so, please contact Mrs Rebecca Watkinson, the Finance Manager, at rlw@oswestryschool.org.uk

What about mobile phones in school?

Mobile phones are already part of pupils' lives and we are keen to encourage their use, albeit with various provisos. Smartphones can be connected to the school Wi-Fi in the same way that portable digital devices can. Pupils in the 3rd form and above are welcome to bring their phones into school (if they have one) and to use it for keeping track of their appointments, checking their e-mails, and recording tasks etc. Pupils are not allowed, however, to walk around the campus whilst on their phones, or to have their phones set to receive notifications in lessons (unless using such functionality for a specific lesson-based task). Use of phones is governed by rule #13 of the [School Rules](#); the golden rule for pupils is to use their common sense.

Pupils below the 3rd form may bring their phones into school, but phones are handed in during the day unless it is known that they will be needed for a specific school activity. For these younger year groups the benefits phones afford are outweighed by the risks and so their use is discouraged.

Whatever the age of a pupil, members of staff reserve the right to confiscate mobile phones that are being used inappropriately. Confiscated items can be retrieved from the relevant form tutor or Head of School at the allotted time or after 24 hours (whichever is sooner).

Are children charged for accessing the internet in school?

No. Access to the internet whilst on the school site is included in the fees. There will be no further charges so long as use is reasonable. Pupils found to be excessive in their use will find their connection is intentionally slowed, or in some cases disconnected, by the Network Manager.

Will my child be safe online?

Internet or cybersafety features heavily in computing and PSHE programmes of study and in whole-school events. In addition, we use a school-specific web filtering service that prevents access to unsuitable sites. Social networking sites are banned during school hours. In short, we have devised a robust mix of strategies to ensure that your child's use of the internet in school is entirely safe and properly managed.

The school cannot, of course, police mobile 3G and 4G networks. It is perfectly possible for pupils to circumvent all the school's filtering systems and use these networks if they so wish (though by doing so in school they are subject to all the normal school rules and disciplinary procedures). If you are worried about this loophole, the only foolproof solution is to purchase your child a device that is WiFi, but not 3G/4G, enabled, or has a contract with a limited mobile data allowance.

What support will be available if my child's machine breaks down?

Pupils will be told how to link their devices up to the network and how to deal with common problems themselves. For more major problems parents will need to make their own arrangements with an off-site repair service, ideally via the already purchased 'care pack' provision. Unfortunately, because of the number of devices on-site, the School's in-house IT technical support will not be able to provide help in this way to individuals.

Miss Alison Sefton
Deputy Head (Academic)



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Reference: [BYOD policy](#)