



Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

Principal: Mr E Hodges



Thursday 12th November 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Firstly, I would like to pass on my apologies that this letter has been so long in coming. We had intended to send it out some time before half term, but it has taken longer than anticipated to set up the contribution method that we are requesting.

On the Thursday prior to half term all Year 11 who had returned their Loan Agreement forms were issued with a new Chromebook. This will now be used at school and at home for the duration of this year. It remains the property of the Trust but is loaned to your son for the duration of Year 11. It should be returned along with his books at the Sixth Form Induction week starting Tuesday 6th July. We are very much looking forward to making the most of this new resource with them and we anticipate that it will make a significant contribution to what we are able to offer your son. At a time of potential lockdown / disruption it will also support us in offering remote education if needed.

As previously communicated we are asking all parents to make a financial contribution towards the Chromebook scheme. We cannot require it and pupils of parents who are unwilling or unable to contribute will still keep their Chromebooks for the duration of the year. In our parental survey more than 90% of parents indicated a willingness to contribute. This indicator has led to us making a significant investment in school infrastructure and also enabled us to support the Chromebooks themselves. This in turn has helped us to begin to digitalise our curriculum.

Whilst we cannot compel contributions from parents, a little like school trips, if we do not have enough contributions then we may be unable to continue this scheme in the future. I appreciate that this may not have a direct impact on Year 11 but would ask you to support us in this new venture anyway.

We are requesting a contribution of £18 per quarter. For Year 11 this will be made up of an initial contribution followed by two further payments, one in February and one in May. We are asking for payment quarterly rather than monthly because this reduces the transaction costs that the school has to pay so more of your contribution actually comes to the school. Payment is via Wisepay. Please log onto your account and click on the 'School Laptop Programme' - Laptop image. This will take you to the page where you are able to make your initial contribution and also set up your future contributions.

I appreciate that whilst the vast majority of parents who responded to our Term 6 survey were very supportive of this scheme, a small number had negative views or questions. I will address some of the more common ones here. We are loaning rather than buying because it will enable us to replace the machines midway through Year 9 for pupils lower down the school. Students are not able to bring in their own devices such as laptops due to issues such as insurance, IT support and damage. We will have a stock of spare Chromebooks which will enable us to swap out any faulty devices to ensure there is no down time for students.

Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

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Finally, I would ask for parents' assistance in ensuring Year 11 establish good habits with regard to their Chromebooks from the start. They need to be brought to school fully charged every day. Whilst they will not be used in every lesson, they need to be available to be used if called upon. Students will continue to work in exercise books and written work will retain a very high level of significance, it is after all how exams will be taken. However, the Chromebooks will be used to augment the current offer. This should be reflected in pupils' homework and revision where the Chromebook is a tool to be used, but is not a replacement to all traditional methods of learning.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any concerns over the content of this letter or the approach we are taking.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

E Hodges
Headteacher