



ROYAL HIGH BATH

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Educational technology at Royal High Bath

At Royal High School Bath, we are continually looking to improve teaching and learning. One aspect of this is to examine the role of technology to maximise the advantages of collaborative and differentiated learning in all subjects. Consequently, to integrate technology more directly into the girls' learning, we have a 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) policy. The school requires girls to bring to school a Windows laptop of their own to support their learning. This will increase the versatility and effectiveness of teaching and learning in school and allow seamless connection with learning at home.

Our fundamental aim is for girls at the Royal High to become more independent and effective learners. We believe that this initiative will help students to get more from their learning and prepare them for life beyond school that is increasingly reliant on technology. It will help them to make critical decisions about when and how to use technology, but also when it is most appropriate to switch all technology off and simply think or listen without distraction.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF BYOD?

Tasks that would have been previously impossible or highly inefficient may benefit from the use of technology. Examples include:

- Instant feedback on learning from online assessments or real-time video recording that enable students to make performance adjustments
- Whole classes collaborating on one document
- Quick processing of data so that more time can be spent on the higher-level thinking skills required for analysis
- Access to large repositories of information for research purposes.
- Work is saved to the cloud so can be accessed on any internet enabled device, anywhere in the world. Work that is set in class whilst a student is away is instantly available, often with course material available in advance to prepare for a lesson
- Accessibility options give all students the ability to adapt the work to suit their needs, e.g. changing the background colour, font size, or read-aloud.

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S BYOD POLICY?

Our vision for technology in education is that *every learner and every educator, can use the most effective digital tools, wherever and whenever those tools are the best way of learning or teaching.*

For us to achieve this we need to ensure that every pupil can be connected to the schools' electronic resources throughout the school day, within school and beyond. For this to work effectively this means that each pupil has access to a device in every lesson.

The key requirements for these devices is that they have:

- The ability to connect to the school's Wi-Fi network and the internet
- A physical keyboard or the ability to connect to one.
- The ability to record photos, video and audio
- The ability to connect to OneDrive and other the Microsoft Office 365 suite tools such as OneNote, Word, Excel etc.
- A battery life that will last a few hours of use, and all day on standby.
- A suitable size screen, larger than 10 inches, but ideally between 12 and 14 inches. Larger than 14 inches tends to be too cumbersome.
- We **highly recommend that devices have a touch screen** interface to allow annotation of pictures and diagrams as well to make it easier to input mathematical text.

From September 2026 - **all devices must be a Windows device**. It will be mandatory for all laptops to have a piece of software installed that will help with classroom management e.g. the teacher will be able to see what apps a student has open and will be able to lock all the screens to ensure students are paying attention. This software will only work whilst the student is connected to the school network during the school day, so privacy is maintained when students are at home.

More information for parents can be found here: <https://royalhighbath.fireflycloud.net/bring-your-own-device>. Students have access to a BYOD portal for getting up and running with their device here <https://byod.rhsb.gdst.net/>

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY DEVICE IS STOLEN/DAMAGED?

Students will be responsible for their device and so we would highly recommend that devices are insured. We recommend that the insurance has zero excess and covers all accidental damage. It may be that your home insurance is sufficient but there are companies who will offer separate digital device insurance.

In the event of damage or loss, we also have several spare laptops that students will be able to borrow during the school day, so learning is not disadvantaged whilst a device is being repair or replaced.

WILL STUDENTS BE STARING AT A SCREEN ALL DAY?

No, teachers will use the best teaching or learning techniques available for any given task. At times, that will involve handwriting, role play, conversations, debates, etc. with no use of technology. Devices will remain closed or off in lessons unless the teacher gives permission to use them. We find that students may use devices in about 40% of lessons, and then only for part of those lessons.

WHAT ABOUT eSAFETY?

The school Wi-Fi is protected by a system that limits students' ability to access inappropriate websites or apps. Most broadband providers offer similar services as part of their package to protect students at home. Parental controls can also be set up on devices. Details of this are available on Firefly and we are committed to working with you and your daughter to ensure her safety online.

WHY DOESN'T THE SCHOOL BUY THE DEVICES?

This is one possible model and one that some schools have chosen but actually has higher cost implications for parents. If the school provided the devices, fees would have to increase to pay for the devices. We would also have to pay for more technical staff to maintain the devices. For many students this would be unnecessary because they already have a perfectly acceptable device of their own.

WHAT ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY BEYOND SCHOOL?

- Before we started the scheme, we looked at many other schools that have BYOD policies including GDST schools. This showed no increased risk to pupils, even in more densely populated areas such as London. This has also been the case here in Bath since we introduced BYOD in 2017.
- We considered that our Sixth Form were already bringing devices in to school each day. Since we introduced laptops to the Sixth Form fifteen years ago, no student has been targeted for carrying a laptop.
- We considered the general prevalence of technology carried by people across Bath.
- We have looked at the existing use of mobile phones by our students (many of which are worth as much as a laptop).

After considering all these factors we took the assessment that to add a device to all student's backpacks was not going to increase the likelihood of students being targeted. The assumption is that most people will be carrying some sort of electronic device and so it becomes more about behaviour and safety awareness. This is not in any way to underestimate these issues. Indeed, issues of personal safety are routinely addressed with students encouraging them to be discreet in public.

Code of Conduct

- **Students must only use mobile devices in lessons with the permission of the teacher.** When using devices in lessons, students will remain focussed on the task set and not use the device for anything except the work that has been set.

Devices may not be used at break or lunch, except in dedicated work areas such as the Library or Southside.

- **Students should use their mobile device with respect to others.** This means:
 - o asking permission from an individual before recording them (photo, video or audio).
 - o asking permission from an individual before sharing information about them including photos or video.
 - o not using the device to write defamatory things about other people or the school.
 - o mobile device are expressly banned from changing rooms or toilets.This code is in addition to the GDST Acceptable Use agreement which governs student online safety and behaviour.

We have listened carefully to the views of students and parents in relation to this issue and we hope that our code of conduct is one that allows our students to use mobile devices in a way that is helpful to them while maintaining plenty of opportunities for them to interact face to face. We explain the code of conduct to our students in assemblies, and this continues through tutor times. We always wish to work together with parents on an issue of this importance, so please do get in touch if you have any questions about the code of conduct.