

BYOD @ ST MARYS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE AT ST MARY STAR OF THE SEA

Students are required to bring their own acquired computing device to school every day.

This program was phased in across the entire student population following increasing demand from students and families for more flexibility around the technology device necessary to meet the needs of digital learning experiences.

2. WHAT IS BYOD?

Bring Your Own Device, is a trend in educational environments and beyond into the corporate world that empowers users to achieve their desired requirements utilising digital tools most suited to their individual needs.

BYOD recognises that technology options are becoming more diverse and choices about technology are very much personal.

BYOD at St Mary's College is designed to offer some flexibility in the technology choices that suit users not just in the school learning environment but also in the home environment with differing technological needs and capabilities.

BYOD acknowledges technology in education means more than meeting specific curriculum requirements.

3. HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

Access to a computing device is now almost essential in most home environments however the operating platform that these devices use (be it Microsoft Windows, Apple iOS & OSX) and the peripheral devices (printers, modems and entertainment equipment) can limit the choice of devices that are compatible with each family's infrastructure. The diversity of digital content available via web-based services also influences this choice as having access to the widest possible range of content means investing in applications that are not restricted to individual operating platforms.

Families are able to select the most suitable device for their daughters with individual consideration of educational and home based use. The device must meet the minimum requirements as outlined in BYOD Device Specification documentation. The College can then dedicate resources towards the compatibility of any device on our internal networks, ensure seamless connectivity to web-based content and peripheral hardware and high-speed data transfer to and from the interconnected community. There are areas in the technology sphere that require increasing investment and constant renewal.

This style of technology program conforms with similar programs at other independent and public schools and is seen as the most sustainable strategy for meeting the digital learning needs of millennials.

4. WHAT TYPE OF DEVICE CAN WE BRING?

The College has built the infrastructure to facilitate the use of virtually any computing device however it is important that certain functionality is considered in the decision. The two obvious styles of device that are commonplace in an educational environment are the laptop and tablet.

However there are some minimum technical specifications set out in the Device Specification sheet. Personal choices such as keyboard and mouse navigation, screen size and weight as well as suitability for certain subject choices may also play a role in the decision.

5. I'M CONCERNED ABOUT THE COSTS

The purchase of a device is a major decision and a considerable expense in a family's budget. A good quality device may last four years and viewed over this term the expense is considerably less.

The College is mindful that the financial circumstances for each family are quite different and options for making this substantial investment need to meet each family's needs. You may wish to consider options other than purchasing outright such as entering into an installment plan with a third party financier. In certain circumstances, families can contact the College to discuss alternate arrangements for financial assistance.

We are committed to our obligations as an educational institution to deliver the same learning outcomes to all our students no matter their families' financial means.

We have developed an Equity Policy to operate alongside our BYOD Policy. The Equity Policy outlines a number of strategies the College may take, in consultation with you, to augment access to information and communication technologies.

6. I'M CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT IF THINGS DON'T WORK

The College's ICT helpdesk staff are available to students before school from 8:30am to 8:45am, during Recess and Lunch and after school from 3:15pm to 3:30pm. The BYOD devices will be provided face-to-face support, advice and guidance on how to resolve any issues unique to the various devices.

7. I'M CONCERNED ABOUT DEVICE SECURITY

As the College does not own the BYO device, repair of the device and warranty for the device is the responsibility of the owner. Experience from the previous Commonwealth-funded Digital Education Revolution scheme and the schools own Laptop Learning program indicates that students who took good care of their device and considered themselves the device's owner rarely had device security issues.

If you are concerned the device is going to be broken, lost or stolen, you may wish to consider the following:

- Optional coverage for device specific warranty for issues associated with malfunction, and/or
- Accidental Damage Protection specifically for damage and breakages attributed to users.

It may also be possible to list the device on one's home contents insurance to cover the risk of theft. This would need to be discussed with your insurer.

You may also consider using a device locator service such as the "Find my iPad" service built in to Apple iOS devices.

Internet access through the device at school will be filtered through the numerous security applications which will minimise, but not eliminate the risk of exposure to software related security threats. Similar anti-virus and spyware monitoring applications are strongly recommended over home networks.

8. DETAILS AND FEEDBACK

If you have questions or feedback on the College's 'Bring Your Own Device' Program you can contact the ICT team at byod@stmarys.nsw.edu.au

9. RELATED INFORMATION

- BYOD Program Policy
- BYOD Equity Policy
- BYOD Acceptable Use Agreement Policy
- BYOD Device Specification