

BYOD 2025

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits of a student having their own device?

Bringing a device to school offers numerous benefits that enhance the learning experience. In today's increasingly digital world, it is crucial for students to be digitally literate, capable of accessing online learning, and prepared for the future. Having their own device enables students to seamlessly transition between school and home learning, making education more accessible and efficient. It also fosters the development of key skills in digital technologies, digital fluency, and computational thinking. Additionally, students gain greater access to a wealth of information for research, as well as web tools and the Microsoft Suite for Education, which support and enrich their learning.

How do I choose the right device?

Each type of device comes with its own advantages and limitations. For detailed recommendations and considerations regarding different device types, please refer to the advice table on our website.

It's important to ensure that devices remain focused on educational use and are not overloaded with unnecessary add-ons, games, or recreational applications. The choice of device should also reflect your child's IT knowledge, experience, and current year level. For senior subjects such as Art, DVC, DT, Media Studies, or Music, a higher-specification device may be necessary. For students in the Junior School, a device with lower specifications is typically sufficient. Balancing your budget with your child's specific needs and preferences is key, as every student's requirements are unique. If you need further guidance, we are happy to assist.

Can we bring a device that was used in primary school?

Yes! However it is important to note that devices less than 3 years old will be more suitable and reliable. The device also needs to meet the minimum requirements stated.

Can we use a tablet or iPad?

iPads are already integrated into Year 7 and 8 homeroom classrooms, making them a suitable option for use across the Junior School. While their usage is minimal in Years 9-13, iPads provide excellent creative opportunities, allowing students to produce and edit

multimedia projects, including visual images, videos, and photography. However, an additional investment in external keyboards would be necessary. Although iPads only offer lite versions of Microsoft suite apps, these versions are sufficient for the needs of younger students. Android tablets, on the other hand, are not recommended for this BYOD policy.

Can we use a Chromebook?

Yes, Chromebooks are an excellent value-for-money option, being both cost-effective and user-friendly. They are compatible with Microsoft applications through online access. Students can easily navigate to and log in with their school-issued Microsoft credentials to access essential tools like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, and OneDrive. This ensures seamless integration with the school's Microsoft-based systems.

How do I set up my Chromebook?

At Southland Boys' High School, the Microsoft 365 operating system is used, so students do not have Google Workspace credentials or a school Google account. Families will need to set up their Chromebook using their own Google account before the device is brought to school. It is recommended that this process be done alongside the student to ensure they are familiar with the account details, should they need to access them in the future.

What is the optimal battery life?

Aiming for a battery life of 8 hours is optimal. Considering today's battery technology, the devices battery charge should be sufficient for lessons which require its use throughout the 5 hour day. A device should be fully charged at home overnight. While extra power outlets and charging opportunities will be available, use of these will be at the teacher's discretion and should not be relied upon as a primary solution.

Where will the devices be stored during the day?

Students in Year 7 & 8 will be asked to store their devices in lockable storage during interval and lunchtimes or when the students are leaving the classroom. Devices are expected to be taken to and from school each day. Senior students will be responsible for the care of their devices throughout the day including interval and lunchtime. The school has lockers available for hire for seniors where devices can be stored during interval and lunch. We recommend installing "find my device" software in the event that a device is lost or stolen.

How long should I expect my BYOD device to last?

Each device has a different expected lifespan. The lifespan of a laptop typically depends on the quality of the device, its specifications, and how it is used and maintained. On average:

- Entry-level or budget laptops: These often need replacement after 3-4 years, especially if used heavily or for tasks beyond their capabilities.
- Mid-range laptops: These usually last around 4-5 years, offering better performance and durability.
- High-end or premium laptops: These can last 5-7 years or longer with proper care, particularly if they have higher specifications that remain relevant over time.

When selecting a device, households should consider their budget alongside the lifespan of the device throughout your son's years at Southland Boys' High School. Investing in a higher-quality device upfront may provide better value by lasting through to graduation, while more budget-friendly options could require replacement during his time at school.

How will my son be safe on the internet?

Southland Boys' High School provides a wireless network through the N4L (Network for Learning) Wi-Fi system, a secure and high-speed internet network specifically designed for New Zealand schools. It supports educational environments by ensuring reliable internet access with robust filtering and cybersecurity measures. Students are required to connect their laptops to the school Wi-Fi rather than using their own mobile data, and the use of VPNs is prohibited, as it violates the school's ICT agreement.

In Term 1, Junior School students (Years 7 & 8) will participate in a comprehensive cyber safety unit, which will raise awareness about the importance of managing their digital footprint and adopting safe online practices. This program will address a broad range of issues, including the social, psychological, behavioural, physical, and financial risks of being online. The goal of this unit is to fully equip students to avoid online exploitation and to encourage responsible digital citizenship, both on and offline.

Will my son be expected to share their device?

No – a student's device is exclusively for their learning. If they choose to share their device it is ultimately still their responsibility.

Are there suggested accessories?

Providing a padded bag or protective case is highly recommended. A set of headphones are also recommended. Some students may like using an external mouse, but this is not a requirement.

Who is responsible for damage, loss, or theft of devices brought to school?

Families must stress the responsibilities their children have when bringing their own device to school. Any devices students bring to school are their sole responsibility. Southland Boys' High School takes no responsibility to search for lost or stolen devices nor is there any assumption of financial responsibility by Southland Boys' High School for damaged, lost or stolen personal devices. We highly recommend having any device covered by the family's contents insurance policy.

What about families who can't afford to purchase a device?

Loan devices are available for day-long, or lesson-by-lesson, loan from Student Services. Students can pick these up before school between 8.15am and 8.40am and return them at the end of the school day, or at the end of the lesson. In Year 7 & 8 homerooms there are shared classroom computers and iPads available for students who do not have their own device to use.