

MVC iPads for Learning - FAQs



In this document we have tried to pre-empt questions regarding iPads For Learning. Please note answers may change as we move forwards. If you can't find the answer to your question, please email not find your required answer, please email MEL-iPadEnquiries@melbournvc.org.

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Why introduce 1:1?

We are committed to giving every pupil the best education possible and believe that technology can play a crucial role in the classroom, transforming the learning opportunities available to our pupils. We have a responsibility to our pupils to equip them with the skills necessary to succeed in that 21st century workplace. For us, this means they need:

- to be digitally literate;
- to be able to think;
- to work independently;
- to be able to problem-solve;
- to be creative;
- to be able to collaborate.

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Why 1:1 as opposed to a class set of iPads?

We believe there is more to be gained from each pupil having their own device, as opposed to having a small number of sets to use in lessons. Firstly, there will be increased opportunities to use the iPads, including for smaller tasks which will fit more naturally into lessons. As a result, pupils will gain a wider variety of skills and experiences at a faster rate.

Having their own iPad will also mean that pupils take real ownership of the device and will be able to access their own work any time and anywhere. This will also allow more opportunities for parents/carers to play a greater part in supporting and understanding the work that pupils are doing in class, providing an enhanced link between school and home learning.

Overall, we anticipate that this will lead to an increase in pupil motivation and effort levels, leading to enhanced academic progress.

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Why iPads?

An extensive comparison of various devices was undertaken by visiting schools using a range of 1:1 devices, and the iPad proved to be the most competitive in a number of key areas:

- 10-hour battery life
- Lightweight and portable tablet well-suited to the demanding, fast-paced environment of a school
- A stable and reliable OS
- Extensive range of cheap/free Apps, developed specifically for educational use on the iPad
- Intuitive to use
- Range of inbuilt sensors and camera
- Competitively priced given the features
- Apple-certified Apps that can be installed, giving confidence in the Apps to which pupils have access. The Apps will not contain viruses and can be restricted by age group.

Functions provided by the iPad that can support effective teaching and learning, including:

- A web browser - extension tasks, wider reading, film clips, research skills can all be developed in short bursts and where appropriate.
- A camera - the production of rich media resources by pupils will lead to more innovative and varied presentation styles in lessons. It will allow learning to be consolidated and developed in a different way. Pupils can be filmed carrying out activities so that they can receive coaching from teachers and others. Techniques can be filmed by the teacher to support the skill development of their pupils.
- Apps - there are many subject specific Apps that can enhance the quality of provision. Obvious examples include GarageBand in music lessons and the many art creation Apps. However, there is an ever-increasing supply of subject specific Apps for all areas.
- Productivity software - pupils will have access to Microsoft Office 365 on their iPads including OneDrive and OneNote.

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Why are the cases not coming with a keyboard?

There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, our experience is that the on-screen keyboard is more than good enough, particularly if the iPad is held in a portrait orientation (in which case it takes up a smaller proportion of the iPad screen). Pupils are used to typing on their phones which have much smaller keyboards. Keyboards are also an additional expense and as a Trust we have struggled to find a robust keyboard that can withstand the rigours of daily school use. This led to additional costs for parents and we are seeking to avoid these.

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What are the principles of the 1:1 iPad scheme?

We believe that our solution is able to deliver the following objectives:

- Fairness – we want all pupils to benefit from the iPads, regardless of financial circumstances. We hope that all parents/carers who are able to donate will do so
- Sustainability – we want a scheme that will be sustainable for the school in the light of tough budgets ahead
- Affordability – we want the monthly contribution to be as low as possible. Investing in the project will mean that your son/daughter can use the same mobile technology at school and at home with access to the same resources.

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Can we buy our own iPad independently rather than join the scheme as the costs are higher?

No; however, this is not just about the price of an iPad. The 1:1 scheme we are providing will involve a device that is fully insured and with a warranty. It will have all the up-to-date software that your son/daughter will need, and we will provide technical support during school hours. These devices can be used at school during the day, as well as at home in the evenings and at weekends. In contrast, personally owned computers cannot be connected to the network at school, would not be managed by our Mobile Device Management (MDM) or classroom management system and would not be supported by our technical team. Finally, to purchase the educational software we use would incur further costs. You would also be responsible for insuring your device against damage, loss or theft.

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Who owns the devices?

The devices are the property of the school for the period of the lease period (typically 24 or 36 months). If your son/daughter leaves the College during this lease period, you will be required to return the iPad, with accessories to the College. If the leaving date is within the last 12 months of the lease period however, there may be the possibility to purchase the device outright.

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What happens if the device gets damaged or stolen?

The warranty and insurance is unique to this scheme and offers a number of key features, including accidental damage cover. We will manage all claims within the College. Please note that the insurance does not cover accidental loss; for example, if your son/daughter leaves their iPad on a park bench, this would not be covered under the terms of the insurance policy. It is expected that your son/daughter will look after their device, ensuring that it is transported in a suitable school bag and not used whilst travelling to and from school. It is expected that the device will never be removed from its case. Claims for accidental damage will only be accepted by the insurance company if the device is stored in the case provided. Claims for theft will require a police crime number.

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What happens if I can't make the regular contributions?

No pupil will be excluded from the scheme because of their financial circumstances, so please come and talk to us so we can ensure your son/daughter is included. The College will seek to offer financial assistance to families who are experiencing financial difficulties. If you think your son/daughter may be eligible, please contact us. The College has also tried to ensure the scheme is as cheap as possible and will continue to look at other possible solutions to ensure the benefits of the scheme are open to all.

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How much do we need to contribute?

We ask that you make a contribution as described in the presentation. In return your son/daughter will receive a new iPad 8th generation plus case and screen protector, wall charger, full insurance against damage and theft, all software and applications needed and technical support during school hours.

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Why should I donate if others don't?

We will only be able to run this scheme if parents/carers want it and are prepared to contribute. While a small number of families in difficult circumstances can be accommodated, unless there is widespread support for the scheme then the school will not be able to provide 1:1 iPads.

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What about parents/carers who don't want to be part of the scheme?

In order for this scheme to be viable we need the significant majority of parents/carers to participate. While we would encourage all families to take part, it is your right to choose not to do so. Please be fully aware, however, that by opting out your son/daughter will not be provided with their own device to take home. We will try to ensure that your son/daughter has access to a device in the classroom to support their learning, but this may involve them sharing school-owned devices with other pupils who are not part of the scheme. If a significant number of parents/carers do not support the scheme, then we will not be able to go ahead with it at this time.

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How can you make sure that pupils are safe?

We already have an Acceptable Use Policy to ensure all pupils adopt a safe and sensible approach to using ICT at the college. These devices will fall under that policy and in the pilot project pupils used the devices appropriately. A series of assemblies and guidance sessions will be organised to ensure all pupils are aware of this policy and how to use their device within the terms of that policy.

In addition to this, a MDM system will be used by school to provide full control over the device. The MDM provide a school-curated selection of Apps and will prevent pupils from installing any apps from the Apple Store the school do not deem necessary,

Pupils' internet use will be filtered using the same filter we use in the school, but it is the responsibility of parents/carers for filtering/monitoring what their son/daughter does at home. We will provide support and guidance with this aspect.

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How will you ensure that pupils are not in danger when using social networking sites?

It is possible to block access to certain sites within school on iPads in the same way that it has been with PCs. We also have a duty of care to continue to educate pupils so that they understand the risks associated with social media and use it safely and positively.

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What if pupils use the iPad to photograph each other without permission?

This issue is covered in the Acceptable Use Policy and will be taken very seriously, in the same way that it is now if a pupil uses their phone in this way. Taking photographs/video are possible now, as the majority of our pupils carry mobile phones. iPads would fit into our existing policies for dealing with such incidents.

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Won't my son/daughter just be a target when traveling to and from school?

There is no evidence that pupil iPad schemes have led to a rise in thefts / muggings etc. The reality now is that iPads and iPhones running the latest iOS are less of a target as Apple have implemented technology that prevents them being used by anyone else while there is an account attached to the device. Each device can also be tracked and disabled by the College if stolen. A large number of our pupils currently carry expensive smart phones to school and are not under threat because of this.

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Will my son/daughter spend all day looking at a screen?

As passionate as we are about the opportunities that iPads offer, we are also keen to ensure that other important traditional skills such as writing, sketching and group discussions continue. The role of iPads is to enhance and extend learning opportunities rather than replace those currently being used. We will educate the pupils to think about the quality of their screen time. We hope that our projects encourage a larger proportion of purposeful, quality screen time. Young people need to learn positive digital behaviours and habits, and schools are well placed to encourage this and give the right pointers and encouragement. The iPad is intended to be another part of the Teaching and Learning toolkit and not to replace the currently diverse methods of teaching that our pupils enjoy. Staff training will continue to focus on the effective use of the iPad. It will not be used in every lesson, all lesson.

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How will using the iPad impact on the quality of pupils' handwriting?

Pupils will still be expected to handwrite work in most subjects. There will be no need to word process all their work, and much will still be completed in exercise books. However, there are many advantages to word processing some work on the iPad using an app such as Word or Pages. Pupils can spell-check their work, look up definitions, add electronic notes and email work to their teacher for faster feedback. However, there is an argument, in terms of sustainability, that work stored electronically would reduce paper wastage.

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Will my son/daughter be able to access their school work from home?

Yes. Pupils will have access to their school Office 365 account. This access is cross-platform, enabling pupils to access saved work using both PCs and iPads.

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How will the iPad affect homework?

The iPad will be an invaluable tool to support home learning, giving simple access to a variety of apps and internet resources. All homework assignments are set electronically and can be accessed with ease using the iPad through Go4Schools.

A device that can be used both at school and at home can improve continuity of learning, with all the resources needed available in one place. Parents/Carers can play a greater part in supporting and understanding the work that pupils are doing in class. We anticipate that homework tasks can have much greater depth and use a much wider range of media than conventional paper-based homework.

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Exams still take place on paper, so how will the iPads help with this?

Practice exams and essays will still be handwritten. If these would benefit from electronic marking they can be photographed and emailed to teachers, consequently providing an electronic backup of the work.

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How will you measure the impact of iPads on learning?

We are rigorous in our approaches to assessment at all key stages, across all subject areas. Regular assessment that is consistent year on year will provide some data on the impact of iPads; however, we are aware of the challenges in linking this data solely to iPad use. More meaningful information will be gathered during school self-evaluation procedures, which include regular lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice surveys.

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Can my son/daughter use their iPad at home?

Yes, we are keen to promote learning beyond the school gates so taking the iPad home is a key part of this scheme. Pupils will use their iPad to access and complete homework assignments. It will be the pupils' responsibility to ensure the iPad is fully charged for the next school day. There will not be facilities to charge the iPad in school.

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Can my son/daughter use their iPad during breaks or lunchtime?

We are keen to get the balance right in terms of pupils accessing technology and developing their interpersonal and social skills. In light of this, pupils' access to their iPad will be limited to the Library or classrooms during break / lunchtimes. Our MDM system mentioned earlier can help us enforce our policy when necessary.

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Will my son/daughter be able to install their own apps?

Initially only apps approved by the College can be used on the iPad; however, this is something we may reconsider in the future.

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What amount of time will the iPad be used in a lesson?

This will vary from lesson to lesson. In some lessons the iPads may be used extensively, but in other lessons use of the iPad may not be relevant or appropriate. Likewise, some lessons may use the iPad for a brief starter, or at the end for a plenary. Teachers will use the iPad to enhance rather than replace good teaching; iPads will be used to diversify the range of effective learning and teaching strategies available to the teacher.

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Will iPads become a distraction in class?

Effective classroom management is just as important as ever when iPads are being used. When iPads are not in use, they will be left face down on the table and in view of the teacher.

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How will the teacher stop pupils playing games?

Staff will be using Apple Classroom when working with iPads. Apple Classroom is a powerful iPad app that allows teachers to guide learning, share work, monitor and manage pupil devices. As a result the teacher will still be in charge of the classroom and set engaging, challenging activities with expected outcomes that drive the focus of the class just as they do now. Anecdotal reports from the trial have indicated that pupils enjoy using the iPads and are motivated by the independence and creativity that they afford.

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What happens if a pupil forgets to charge their iPad?

It is expected that pupils ensure their iPads are fully charged at the beginning of each school day. There will be some limited capacity to charge the device at lunchtime.

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What happens if a pupil forgets their iPad?

If a pupil forgets their iPad, if possible, they will be issued with an iPad which they can use until the end of the school day, when they need to return it to the IT team. They need to ensure that any work they need to keep has been saved to their OneDrive account. Once the iPad has been returned, it will be wiped to ensure it is ready for the next pupil to use it.

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Will the battery life decrease over the three-year period?

Across the Trust we are using iPads that are well over 4 years old with no battery issues.

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What do I need to provide at home?

All you are required to provide is a suitable school bag for the iPad to be stored in. Many apps and features of the iPad work without Wi-Fi. Having Wi-Fi at home, however, will give access to additional features including the internet.

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Will my son/daughter have to bring his/her iPad home every night?

Yes. They will need to take it home to make sure it is charged ready for the next day. It is also very likely he will have homework to complete that will require access to the iPad.

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What support will there be for parents/carers and pupils in learning how to use their iPad?

We recognise that, in order to fully support your son/daughter's learning, it is also important that as a parent/carer you also feel confident using the iPad. Over the coming year we intend to host a number of iPad training sessions for parents/carers that will focus on specific issues including how to set up safety features and e-safety.

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Can I install parental controls on the iPad?

Yes, in the Settings app, under the 'General' options, several restrictions can be enabled, such as access to FaceTime. We will provide further instructions and guidance before the scheme commences.

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