

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 devices?

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 the 21st century workplace where a number of them will be employed in jobs that don't yet exist. For us, this means they need to be:

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

The use of devices by pupils on a 1:1 basis has the potential to:

- provide opportunities to enhance students' overall learning experience
- give access to learning anywhere, anytime - both in classrooms and at home
- narrow the digital divide between students
- encourage students to become more independent in their learning
- personalise learning to suit individual students
- provide opportunities to create and share work

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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. Most importantly, 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 ownership of the device and will be able to access their own work anytime 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:

- Battery life
- Robustness, weight and portability well-suited to the school environment
- Stability and reliability of the 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. There is also 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 and so can access their schoolwork at home.

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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 continued challenging 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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How is the donation amount calculated?

The Trust works with Albion, an Apple Solution Expert for Education (albion.co.uk/education/apple-in-education). Their mission is to work with schools and their parents to provide devices to pupils so that they can use technology for learning, both in school and at home. Donations are calculated for each separate lease so are different for different year groups and are kept at a minimum; the college makes no profit from donations.

The cost of the scheme includes insurance, warranty, and a case. It also includes all the up-to-date software that your son/daughter will need, including Office 365 and some specialist device management and monitoring software. In addition, we will provide technical support during school hours.

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

The short answer is that it isn't possible. An integral aspect of the scheme is the Mobile Device Management (MDM) and classroom management systems which enable each school to manage and monitor the devices. This also allows schools to ensure that the devices contain the specialist software / apps that pupils need for their various subjects. Personal devices cannot be connected to the school network and we would not be able to provide technical support. Finally, to purchase the educational software and insure the device would incur additional cost.

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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 offer financial assistance to families who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium. 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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Why should I donate if others don't?

The bottom line is that none of the Trust schools can afford to run the schemes without significant donations from their parent bodies. We believe that there are significant learning benefits to all pupils to having 1:1 devices and so are asking you for your support in helping us make this a reality.

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

While we would encourage all families to take part, it is clearly your right to choose not to do so. However, in order for this scheme to continue to be financially viable we need the significant majority of parents/carers to participate.

Where parents/carers do not want to be part of the scheme, their children will still be given access to a device in the classroom to support their learning. This is part of our commitment to ensure that individuals are not disadvantaged and also to allow teachers to take full advantage of the opportunities that iPads present.

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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 we now also have a few years of experience of running the scheme. In addition to this, a MDM system is used by each Trust 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 at school will be filtered using our school filter, but it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure appropriate filtering at home. Since these are school devices we are able to monitor the use of the iPads (for example internet searches) both in school and at home and will liaise with parents where any concerns arise.

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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. Within school we will also continue to educate pupils so that they understand the risks associated with social media and how to 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 considered in a similar way as when a pupil uses their phone in this way. iPads 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, either nationally or from our own experience, 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 schools 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?

The short answer is 'No'. When planning, each teacher will consider the best way to teach their lesson objectives. In some cases, using an iPad will enhance a traditional method or open up new possibilities and teachers will therefore include them in part or all of a lesson. However, other effective methods will continue to be a significant part of the learning experience and skills such as writing, sketching and group discussions will remain important foci.

The iPad is intended to be one part of the Teaching and Learning toolkit and not to replace the currently diverse methods of teaching that our pupils enjoy. We will seek to educate the pupils to think about the quality of their 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.

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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. There is also an argument, in terms of sustainability, that work stored electronically would help 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. Teachers are increasingly using app or web-based homework tasks, taking advantage of subject specialist resources and the iPads make accessing these much easier. 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.

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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?

Pupil learning is regularly assessed 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 be able to 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 as 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.

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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 in the library.

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What happens if a pupil forgets their iPad?

If a pupil forgets their iPad they will not be able to participate interactively in the part of any lessons that make use of iPads. However, teachers will always enable the child to learn the same content by other means e.g. the use of a paper worksheet instead.

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

Our experience so far indicates that this will not be an issue. 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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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..

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