BETTER SCHOOLS FOR OUR KIDS –
TECHNOLOGY ENABLED LEARNING

Chromebooks for Canberra public secondary students
Parent Information Booklet

ACT
Government

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM ABOUT?

Bridging the digital equity gap – Secondary students

Every child deserves an equal chance for a great education and access to technology for learning will not be an educational barrier in the ACT.

The ACT Government is ensuring that every secondary student in a Canberra public school has access to a Chromebook device. In term 1, 2018 Chromebooks were rolled out to students in years 7 to 11 who opted to participate in the program.

In 2019 the program was extended to all newly enrolled public school students in year 7, and any other secondary student newly enrolled in a ACT public secondary school. 2020 will see the program continue as it did in 2019.

This initiative will ensure that every secondary student in Canberra public schools has the same access to a device to enhance their learning through technology. Irrespective of family circumstances, every student will have an equal opportunity to access technology so that they can learn wherever they are and use technology whenever they need it.

More than just a handout

Chromebooks are used in our schools as a tool to help engage secondary students, enhance their learning experiences, provide them with opportunity to collaborate and discover, and in doing so produce responsible, literate and knowledgeable digital citizens.

Investment in this technology will assist students to be equipped with vital 21st century skills, alongside foundational learning and a balanced learning environment that includes physical activity and outdoor learning.

Building on good foundations

ACT Education schools have some of the fastest and most reliable network connection speeds in the country. Building on the success of the Learn Anywhere program provides a equity and consistency of access to devices and digital learning tools across ACT Schools Over 800 public education staff have attended G Suite for Education professional learning events, including a range of short courses and four two-day annual Google Summits. Communities of like-minded teachers have been established to share innovative practices, ideas and resources made possible by a common platform.

Safety and security of information with Google

Privacy and safety of personal information is important to the ACT Education Directorate (the Directorate) and so a full independent Privacy Impact Assessment was commissioned in 2014. This was conducted by a former Commonwealth Privacy Commissioner and has been made publicly available on the ACT Education Directorate's Publications A-Z webpage, listed at the letter 'G'.

CHROMEBOOK DEVICES

What is a Chromebook?

A Chromebook is a laptop that runs on Google's web-based operating system Chrome OS.

Chromebooks are integrated with Google applications (apps) such as Gmail, Google Calendar and Google Drive.

What is G Suite for Education?

G suite for Education (formerly known as Google Apps for Education or GAFE) contains the Google applications mentioned above as well as others, such as Google Classroom and Hangouts. The suite of applications supports collaboration between students and teachers and will be added to as more applications are introduced that enhance teaching and learning. We have over 55,000 G suite users in our ACT public schools already.

The ACT Government has also added additional tools to the G-Suite to enhance functionality, such as Read&Write for Google Chrome, which automatically reads text to students and can capture speech and turn it into text.

There are also apps that will convert handwriting to characters. Although available to all students, these features are particularly beneficial in supporting students with additional needs.

Why Chromebooks?

Aside from being well received by schools, Chromebooks:

▶ are super-fast– starting up in less than 7 seconds

▶ have a high level of processing power

▶ have a long battery life

▶ are easy to use

▶ are durable

▶ are lightweight

▶ automatically update

▶ compliment the G Suite for Education program across ACT public schools.

Chromebooks are also capable and versatile in developing coding and computational thinking skills. There are a number of free web app-based integrated development environments (IDEs) that can be used to write and edit code.

How are documents saved?

Everything is saved on the web automatically into student's Google Drive, which means students can access their information from anywhere and if they don't have access to their Chromebook, they can access the information through any web browser on any another device.

Using Chromebooks Offline

Chromebooks are designed to primarily be used with an Internet connection; however, there are hundreds of offline applications that can work without a connection. The following are just some tasks that can be managed offline:

▶ emails can be composed and read with Gmail Offline

▶ documents can be created and edited with Google Drive Offline

▶ check calendar appointments

▶ note take with Google Keep

▶ save webpages for reading offline

When the Chromebook has an internet connection the offline Google G Suite applications will automatically sync and save.

CHROMEBOOK CARE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to use their ACT Government supplied Chromebooks as a learning tool and in an acceptable manner in accordance with the terms of the Acceptable Use of ICT Agreement, the Chromebook acceptance form and other applicable ACT Government policies, guidelines, procedure and requirements.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Usage

Chromebooks are to be used for the purposes of learning through the Digital Backpack. It is configured to only allow use by ACT Public School students.

Additions and deletions to applications

Students have access to a wide range of educational web-apps from the Chromebooks, or through the Chrome Web Store on any device with the Google Chrome browser. Some web applications are managed by the Directorate through the student's online portal called the 'Digital Backpack'. Students are not permitted to delete or install applications on the Digital Backpack or attempt to circumvent the standard operating environment (SOE).

Offensive material

Taking, accessing or storing offensive images, video or audio on Chromebooks is prohibited.

Personalising the Chromebook

Decals (stickers) may be used to personalise Chromebooks. When using decals please ensure that they do not cover any areas that have sockets, vents, barcodes or serial numbers.

Food and liquid

Food and liquid should not be kept in close proximity to the Chromebook, as spills could result in damage to the Chromebook. Water damage is a common cause for device failure.

Batteries

Students must bring Chromebooks to school every day fully charged to sustain the duration of learning throughout the day. Chromebooks will not be charged at school and battery chargers should not be brought to school unless specified by a teacher for a specific purpose e.g. a multiple day excursion.

Backup

Storing documents on Google Drive will ensure that they are backed up and accessible from anywhere with a Wi-Fi connection; however, Chromebooks can also connect to external storage devices such as USB drives.

Chromebooks in transit

When moving from one class to another and to and from school and home, Chromebooks should be carried in the student's bag fully closed. Although Chromebooks are robust, to avoid damage, place the bag down rather than dropping it. When in use, Chromebooks should not be carried around while the screen is open nor by the screen edge.

Storage

When the Chromebook is not in use at home, it should be stored in a safe place, out of reach of younger children and away from areas of excessive heat or large magnetic fields.

At school, when the Chromebook is not required for lessons, it should be stored securely to prevent theft e.g. in a locker or bag.

General maintenance

Students are responsible for taking care of their Chromebook and keeping them clean. Regularly and gently wiping the Chromebook, including the screen and keys with a clean cloth will ensure that hygiene is maintained. Cleaning agents should not be used.

Lost, stolen or damaged Chromebooks

If a Chromebook is lost, stolen or damaged the student must immediately report it to their school. The student may be interviewed regarding the incident so the school can determine action. The school may require written evidence of loss, damage or theft, such as a police report or a statutory declaration.

ACT public schools do not have to repair or replace any Chromebook that is stolen, lost or damaged.

Stolen or lost Chromebooks will be remotely disabled so that no one can use them.

Theft out of school

If theft occurs outside of school, parents/guardians should inform the Police immediately. The Police Event Number should be provided to the School when the student reports the incident to the school.

Most common examples of damage

Parents/guardians should reinforce to students the importance of caring for the Chromebook placed in their custody. To assist parents/guardians to reduce the risk of damage to Chromebooks, below are examples of instances leading to damage to Chromebooks:

▶ damage to the plastic casing and screen by the device falling from a student's hands and landing on the floor

▶ broken screens caused by students accidentally standing on the computer

▶ broken screens and damage to plastic casing caused by the Chromebook accidentally falling off a table

▶ broken screens from the Chromebook being placed on the floor where they have been kicked or stood on.

Repair turnaround

Canberra public schools will not always repair any damaged Chromebook.

Repair is dependent on the extent of the problem, the age of the Chromebook or how the Chromebook was damaged. If a school elects to repair a Chromebook, students may be loaned a school Chromebook whilst waiting for repair.

USING THE INTERNET SAFELY AT HOME

It is important to protect our children from the impact of inappropriate material on the internet. The protection provided during regular school hours by the Directorate comes in a number of ways to reduce the risk of accidental access to inappropriate content. The Directorate has activated email and web filters to ensure the safety of students whilst working within the school network.

Outside of regular school hours, parents are responsible for their child's use of the Chromebook.

Active supervision of your child at home will help maintain a safe environment for your child to participate in internet activities.

Talk

Take an interest in what your child is doing on the internet. Asking questions, not only helps you in knowing what your child is doing online, but it is a great way to have a conversation about what your child is learning.

Keeping children safe means making them aware of the risks. Have a chat to them about how to avoid potential risks. They also need to know they can make the right choices and can talk to a trusted adult if something online makes them feel uncomfortable. Have a conversation about the dangers of online use and navigate new experiences together

Monitor use

Monitoring use is applicable to all online tools. The following are just some steps you can take:

▶ set up internet content filters at home. Your internet service provider (ISP) should provide parental controls

▶ install an ad blocker to prevent inappropriate content being advertised while your child is on a webpage

▶ supervise usage

▶ avoid permitting use in rooms where students can close themselves off from the rest of the family, such as their bedroom.

Keep personal information personal

Without thinking of the ramifications, such as identity theft, students sometimes post private information about themselves online. This can include their name, contact details, photographs and the personal details of friends or family.

They may also be tempted to respond to messages that attempt to trick them into giving out information such as bank details. These scams or phishing messages are sometimes hard to distinguish from legitimate messages.

To help protect privacy, parents can encourage their children to:

▶ treat any unexpected message with caution:
- consider who is emailing and what are they asking
- check the details from a legitimatesource

▶ consult with them before giving information about personal details online

> **TIP:** The Office of the eSafety Commisioner has a Parent Resource: https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents
>
> https://twitter.com/eSafetyOffice

Social network sensibly

Social networking websites allow users to create profiles, communicate and form networks with others. They are often seen as a great tool for connecting with friends and family and are quite the norm for many students. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram are all examples of social network websites.

An interesting exercise to do with your child that illustrates how much personal information is on the internet about you or your child is to run a search using a search engine (e.g. Google) on your name or your child. This can be an eye opening exercise.

You can support sensible social networking by:

▶ setting house rules about when your child can engage with a social network or share personal information

▶ consider blocking location access to all social media apps

▶ recommending your child set their profiles to private in the security settings so that only people they want to see it

- ▶ encouraging your child to think about content they post before making it available online. Some websites don't allow information to be taken down

- ▶ encouraging your child to be careful when making new friends online – they might not be who they say they are

- ▶ making it clear to your child that they should never arrange to meet an online friend that they have never met before, unless a trusted adult is with them

- ▶ showing your child how to report inappropriate content to the web administrator of the website.

Gaming

Some games allow for networking through the game with other users. Think about implementing house rules about levels of engagement.

You can monitor and encourage safe play by:

- ▶ discussing games your child wants to play. It is an opportunity to have a positive talk about the game.

- ▶ considering using parental controls on your gaming console, where you can:

  - • provide a password when your child wants to play a game

  - • limit the people your child can interact with online, or

  - • specify what type of content your child can access

- ▶ setting your child's profile to private and discourage the use of their full name or photo - like all online platforms, keep personal information private

- ▶ reviewing the age ratings of the games so you can understand the content and make an informed decision as to whether the game is appropriate for your child or not

- ▶ Encouraging gaming in a common space so you can see what's being played but can also have discussions about it.

CYBERSAFETY

Electronic devices have enabled us to communicate via a number of channels, however, they also can be an avenue for bullying and harassment. This is known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying done through electronic means through social media and or/telecommunications platforms.

Behaviours include teasing, spreading online rumours, sending threatening or defamatory material via messages or posts.

ACT public schools are committed to providing safe, respectful and supportive environments for their school community. For policy details refer to the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy at https://www.education.act.gov.au/support-for-our-students/safe_supportive_schools.

Students are taught safe and responsible online behaviour at schools and we encourage parents to support school efforts in promoting responsible online behaviour. Conversations at home and role modelling desired behaviour all help in teaching responsible and productive computer use.

Parents can provide support in helping their child be safe by:

- ▶ encouraging discussions about bullying

- ▶ reiterating that even liking or sharing hurtful content is not appropriate

- ▶ recommending that their child does not reply to any messages from a bully - not reacting may disarm the bully

- ▶ teaching their child how to block bullies so that bullies can't make contact through electronic means

- ▶ advising their child not to share their user name and password with anyone and not to leave their computer logged on - this is to stop anyone from using their account to post damaging material using their details

- ▶ encouraging their child to report any threatening messages immediately to you - cyberbullying may be illegal and can be reported to the police

- ▶ contacting the web administrator (or web master) to ask for content to be removed, if bullying information has been posted on the website.

Educate yourself

Educate yourself about potential harm online and how to help your child make the right choices about online behaviour.

> **TIP:** The Office of the eSafety Commissioner and ThinKUKnow websites have a number of resources to help parents support cybersafety at home including how to report cyberbullying and strategies to keep kids safe online. https://twitter.com/thinkuknow_aus

WRITING AND CHROMEBOOKS

Students are expected to approach their writing tasks using their Chromebook with the same attention to spelling, grammar, text type and format as they do when handwriting.

Text used should be legible and fit for purpose.

It is important to encourage your child to proof read their work no matter what form of writing they do to:

► detect typing mistakes

► eliminate spelling and grammatical errors

► ensure consistent language and formatting

► make sure they have included what they have wanted to say or needed to say

► check that the writing is structured appropriately

While spelling and grammar checking functions on a device are important learning tools because they provide immediate student feedback on their writing, students still require a level of understanding in grammar and spelling to determine whether the feedback is relevant to the intent of their written work.

For example, a spell checker will not pick up manger as a misspelling because it is correct as a word in isolation, even though the writer was meant to type manager.

POSTURE AND MOVEMENT

Throughout the school day, students will use their Chromebooks for short term use (less than an hour) at a time.

It is important for your child to develop and exercise healthy postural habits to avoid stressing the body or developing musculoskeletal injuries during Chromebook use or use of any other ICT device.

Central to ensuring good posture is maintained, is to focus on positioning the back, neck and shoulders, arms and forearms, wrists and hands. As a parent/ guardian, you can help your child by:

► encouraging your child to sit at a desk with their elbows at right angles to the desk with their wrists flat. This helps maintain blood flow in the hands and arms and decreases muscle strain and fatigue

► providing sufficient lighting and arrange the work area so that reflections and sun glare do not cause a visual disturbance

► encouraging a light touch on the keyboard when typing and let the fingers rest lightly on the keys

► helping them set up their work space so that they to sit with the screen at arm's length to the screen and shoulders relaxed

► neutral posture that is not hunched or rounded, with the neck aligned with the spine - not bent or thrust forward

► a relaxed and supported back

► straight wrists and hands - not bent or turned out.

Supporting good posture at home

Find the right ergonomic posture and work space set up is especially important if long term use (more than hour) occurs. You can help your child by:

► adjusting the space they work in to suit their physical need. If possible:

  • use adjustable chairs and teach them to sit tall, position their backs flat against the seat, their feet flat on the ground and their knees facing forward (cushions can be added to provide extra support). This encourages good posture, enables proper sitting height, and avoids pressure on the back of the thigh which promotes good circulation

  • tilt the screen so their eyes are at the top of the screen. This encourages the use of the eyes rather than the neck to adjust the line of vision

► encourage them to take regular breaks and get a drink

► set break reminders:

  • after 20 minutes of screen time get your child to look in the distance, or

  • download a free app or Google extensions such as Compassionate Computing, Evo, Stretch Reminder, Take A Break and PostureMinder to set break reminders

- where possible, encourage them to:
  - regularly rotate between Chromebook and school activities that do not require technology
  - switch between typing tasks and browsing tasks
- get them changing postures or stretching on a regular basis for at least 20 seconds so as to avoid interfering with circulation.

Stretching

Taking a break, stretching limbs and loosening the body:

- stops your child from feeling sluggish and tired
- restores concentration
- improves joint mobility and muscle flexibility
- improves circulation
- stops your child from reverting to an unhealthy posture
- prevents muscle fatigue and eye strain

Stretches should be done with controlled, slow movement and should not be done to the point of discomfort. If your child has a pre-existing condition please contact your health care professional for advice before starting any stretches.

Transporting the Chromebook

Although Chromebooks by design are portable and lightweight there are some things you can suggest to your child to ensure that stress on the body is mitigated when moving the device around.

The following are points of consideration:

- Lightening the load – removing items from their bag when they are not needed.
- Switching hands or shoulders frequently when carrying a bag with a handle or shoulderstrap
- If carrying the Chromebook in a backpack, use both shoulder straps

CHROMEBOOK CHARGERS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Being electrical equipment, Chromebooks and their chargers should be checked regularly for wear and tear.

Testing and tagging

The ACT Education Directorate has an annual testing and tagging regime in place.

Chromebooks issued to your child may be recalled by their school at certain times to undertake this process.

Electrical items at home

Like all electrical equipment, Chromebooks and chargers should be:

- used according to the manufacturer's instructions
- used with care and maintained to prevent damage
- turned off when not in use.

Care and maintenance

Position leads and equipment where they are not likely to be damaged or cause a trip hazard.

Extra measures

- use power boards with overload protection
- make visual inspections of the lead, plug and Chromebook before use for any cuts, damage, cracks, burnt areas etc. If these are identified, do not use them and report the issue to your school
- remove faulty electrical items from use immediately – report the issue to your school.

ICT FOR LEARNING

Acceptable Use of ICT Agreement

The Directorate provides ICT facilities and resources to its public schools for educational purposes.

To ensure fair, safe and secure access, all students and their parents (if under 18) are required to sign and abide by an Acceptable Use of ICT Agreement that is consistent with the Directorate's Communities Online: Acceptable Use of ICT Resources and Use of Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) in Schools policies and associated guidelines. These policy documents can be located on the Directorate's Policy webpage at: https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/ policies

According to the Australian Curriculum: Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Capability: "To participate in a knowledge-based economy and to be empowered within a technologically sophisticated society now and into the future, students need the knowledge, skills and confidence to make ICT work for them at school, at home, at work and in their communities."

The Directorate recognises the need for students to engage with ICT resources and that the safe and responsible use of these technologies – including online behaviour – is best taught in partnership with parents/carers. This partnership is reflected in this Acceptable use of ICT agreement.

The terms of the Acceptable Use of ICT form apply to the conditions of use for the Chromebooks allocated to students.

Chromebook Acceptance and Use

In order for your child to participate in the *Better schools for our kids – technology enabled learning initiative* and receive a Chromebook, you and your child must complete a Chromebook Acceptance Form indicating you want to opt into the initiative.

FURTHER INFORMATION

1. ACT Public Schools Learn Anywhere
   https://www.education.act.gov.au/teaching_and_learning/learn-anywhere-ict-for-students

2. Digital Schools - Our Stories
   http://digitalschoolsact.blogspot.com.au/

3. Canberra Public Schools have gone Google
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFW-A-2-sM4

4. Privacy Impact Assessment located at ACT Education Directorate's Publications A-Z webpage, listed at the letter 'G'.
   https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/publications_a-z

5. Stay Smart Online
   https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/

6. My Guide
   https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1886/f/Stay-Smart-Online-My-Guide.PDF

7. ACT Education Directorate Safe and Supportive Schools Policy located under the 'Schools Tab' at the heading Wellbeing/Safety.
   https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies

8. The Office of the eSafety Commissioner
   https://esafety.gov.au/

9. ThinkUKnow
   https://www.thinkuknow.org.au/

10. Compassionate Computing
    https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/compassionate-computing-r/oihgkadphcjghedmalnfjlfkjkefdkbi?utm_source=chrome-app-launcher-info-dialog

11. Evo
    http://www.protectyourvision.org/

12. Stretch Reminder
    https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/stretch-reminder/hgfehgeccidmnomgijefcdmmkhobjbpp?utm_source=chrome-app-launcher-info-dialog

13. Take A Break
    https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/take-a-break/kfcgkgmiedhpoalhpmalhjjcnhpkapgl?utm_source=chrome-app-launcher-info-dialog

14. PostureMinder
    https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/postureminder/dkmkfopiihabelocpelofchappjjnpkm?utm_source=chrome-app-launcher-info-dialog

15. ACT Education Directorate Policies
    https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies