



Kingsmead School



A PARTNER ACADEMY IN JOHN TAYLOR MAT

Head of School: Mrs M Mincher, Bsc, NPQH

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Letter ref: SDS21/L2

21st June 2021

1:1 Student Device Scheme: Opening Soon!

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are pleased to announce that the online ordering portal for laptops is now open from today, **Monday 21st June**, and will remain open until **Sunday 11th July**. You can access the portal via the information in the attached flyer, produced by FreedomTech. This includes the web address and the username and password you need to log on. Please note that if you have any problems logging in, please contact FreedomTech and not Kingsmead, as we do not host the site.

The laptops available through the scheme are as follows:

Acer TravelMate TMB311-31-C5KC Notebook:

- Intel Celeron N4120 CPU
- 4GB RAM
- 64GB eMMC storage
- 11.6" screen size

Acer TravelMate P2 TMP215-53:

- Intel i3-111G5 CPU
- 8GB RAM
- 256GB SSD
- 15.6" screen size

Both laptops will come with a case and all the benefits listed under the leasing scheme section of this letter.

Here is the timeline of events:

- While the portal is open, you can log in, choose which device you want and a payment plan.
- On the 25th July, the first Direct Debit payment will be taken. Please ensure your bank details are correct as if the first payment fails for any reason, your order will be cancelled automatically.
- Once payment is taken, the laptops will be delivered to the school during the Summer Holidays.
- We will communicate a date that you can come to sign for and pick up the laptop from school, as well as an onboarding session for students (after school) to help connect their laptop to the school Wi-Fi and a brief tour of the Office 365 suite.

As mentioned previously, you don't have to use this scheme – students can bring a recommended device of their own choosing, to use in school. All the options (and our advice for each one) is below. Please do remember also that every student in school regardless of whether they partake in the laptop scheme or not, is entitled to Microsoft Office **for free** thanks to the Office account the school provides them – they simply log in to office.com with their school email address and password, then click the Install Office button.

If you have any questions about the laptop scheme or Blended Learning in general, please check the school website at the below web address:

<https://www.kingsmeadschool.net/home/student-device-proposal-and-blended-learning/>

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If you have further questions not answered here, feel free to email the school Blended Learning Query email address at blquery@kingsmeadschool.net.

What options do I have for my child to have a device they can use with the blended learning platform?

1 - Leasing Scheme

First and foremost, Kingsmead is offering a lease-to-own scheme in partnership with Stone Computers and Freedom Technology (or FreedomTech). Under this scheme, parents will be able to log on to a portal and make a choice between two models of laptop (a “base” model and an “enhanced” model) and then choose to pay for the laptop in one of two ways:

- An outright purchase, or
- A payment plan, over a choice of 12, 24, or 36 months (students in Y10/Y12 will only have access to 12 or 24, and just 12 months for Y11/Y13).

Whichever laptop is chosen, it will come with the following extras:

- 3yr advanced replacement Extended Warranty cover;
- 3yr advanced accidental damage & theft cover;
- 24-hour replacement in case of a claim; and
- A suitable laptop case.

This offers considerable value over a high-street purchase, which would typically only come with a 1-year warranty and no temporary replacement (whilst you wait for the laptop to be repaired or replaced), let alone that accidental damage would not be covered – an important aspect when considering that the laptop will travel between home and school. Also, as the scheme is organized through Kingsmead School, there is no credit check for families taking up this offer.

We will convey the options and prices of the laptops soon, and once the scheme has gone live you will be able to access the online ordering portal for our leasing scheme via a link on the school website at:

<https://www.kingsmeadschool.net/home/student-device-proposal-and-blended-learning/>

The details to log into the portal will also be on this page. The portal is straightforward – you can choose from one of the two models discussed in previous letters and choose a suitable payment plan.

It is worth mentioning that Kingsmead has no interests in either of the companies assisting with this scheme – we do not stand to benefit financially or otherwise from this scheme, **we are just the hosts for it and your agreement will be with FreedomTech.**

If you feel you are not able to commit to a purchase through the scheme just yet, then we will be looking at possibly opening the portal a second time, once the new academic year has started -providing there is sufficient demand.

2 - Purchasing yourself

If you choose not to opt for the leasing scheme, then you are welcome to purchase a device yourself from one of the many high-street or online retailers. We believe a Windows laptop is the ideal device to use, and it is important to ensure the device you choose meets the needs of your child in Kingsmead, so with that in mind we would recommend the following specifications as a minimum when shopping. We've included an example specification for both a “base” and an “enhanced” laptop, similar to the offerings in the lease purchase scheme:

Base:
 CPU: Intel Celeron N4100 or better (or AMD A6-9225 or better)
 RAM: 4GB
 Storage: 64 GB (SSD or eMMC – SSD preferred, but **NOT** HDD)
 OS: Windows 10

Enhanced:
 CPU: Intel eighth generation i5 or better (eg i5-8250)
 RAM: 8GB
 Storage: 240GB (SSD, **NOT** HDD)
 OS: Windows 10

Either of these specifications will work for the purposes of Blended Learning – the enhanced spec will simply be a little quicker.

You may find some devices have “Windows 10 S” – this is a version of Windows that will **only** allow you to install software from the Windows Store. You can buy these, but if you want to install the copy of Microsoft Office on them that comes with your student’s school user account, you will need to switch it out to the normal Windows experience. Instructions for this can be found here:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/help/4456067/windows-10-switch-out-of-s-mode>

Below we have listed a couple of examples of laptops that would be suitable at both the base and enhanced specification – prices are correct at the time of this letter being produced:

Base spec:

Acer TravelMate B3 11.6" 4GB Celeron Laptop

<https://www.cclonline.com/product/acer-travelmate-b3-laptop-11-6-inch-1366-x-768-intel-celeron-n4120-4gb-intel-uhd-600-bluetooth-microsoft-windows-10-pro-nx-vn5ek-002/> - **£235.19**

Enhanced spec:

Lenovo IdeaPad 5 15.6" 8GB Core i5 Laptop

<https://www.cclonline.com/product/lenovo-ideapad-3-laptop-15-6-inch-1920-x-1080-intel-core-i5-1035g1-8gb-256gb-ssd-intel-uhd-bluetooth-microsoft-windows-10-home-81we010huk-354328/> - **£519.99**

Bear in mind that these are only examples, and we fully recommend you shop around to find a price and specification that suits you and your budget. A few examples of places you can look online are listed below. These are just suggestions, and Kingsmead has no financial or other interest in these companies:

Laptopsdirect.co.uk
 Amazon.co.uk
 Ebuyer.co.uk
 Cclonline.com
 Argos.co.uk
 Currys.co.uk

Although we do recommend a Windows-based device, we will not prevent any child using a different device such as a tablet or MacBook. However, we do have the following recommendations:

Tablets

A tablet (whether an iPad or an Android-based device) should also include a Bluetooth keyboard so the student can type normally as they would at a PC and should be a relatively recent model – for an Apple iOS-based device, it should be at least iOS version 12, and for Android version 6 (AKA ‘Marshmallow’).

MacBook

A MacBook is a capable device, but like most Apple products is also more expensive than an equivalent Windows-based device. Do bear in mind that replacement in the event of damage or theft will cost more, and the cost of insuring it on your home insurance may therefore be higher.

Also, please be aware that some applications (such as Microsoft Publisher) are not available on tablets or Mac-based devices.

Finally, do be aware that for any privately-purchased device, IT Support in school can only effect a “best-effort” service – we are happy to try to resolve problems, but if there is a hardware issue (e.g. a broken keyboard or screen, faulty power cable etc), then the responsibility of resolving this with the company that made the device will be with yourself. Any laptops bought via the leasing scheme can be reported to FreedomTech for repairs, with the school supplying a temporary laptop in the meantime.

Student Discounts

Students who are aged 16 or over – regardless of whether they are in Year 11 or Sixth Form – are eligible for student discount schemes. The two main examples of these are:

- [UNiDAYS](https://www.myunidays.com/) - <https://www.myunidays.com/>
- [StudentBeans](https://www.studentbeans.com/uk) - <https://www.studentbeans.com/uk>

Both of these schemes are free to join, and once joined you can search for discounts on either brands or shops. As the offers change frequently, we cannot recommend one or the other, but as they are free to join, it is worth checking both sites.

Lockers

The school has introduced student lockers and invites parents to hire one for the duration of the academic year. These have been provided to the school by an outside company who then hire the lockers out. This will save students carrying their laptops around the building all day. This will also mean that students will have somewhere to store their PE kit and other items in school. Because of the narrow school corridors, these student lockers are weatherproof and sited securely against the external walls around school.

More details on the cost and availability of these lockers will be available soon.

Again, we’ve no doubt that you may have questions about the leasing scheme or Blended Learning in general – do please check out Kingsmead School’s website where we have a dedicated page to frequently asked questions from last year when we ran this scheme:

<https://www.kingsmeadschool.net/home/blended-learning/student-laptop-frequently-asked-questions/>

If you have any further queries regarding blended learning, the laptop scheme or student lockers, please send them by email to blquery@kingsmeadschool.net.

Yours faithfully,



Mr A Brookes
ICT Co-ordinator



Mr B Morris
Data Manager