BRITISH SCHOOL
MUSCAT

Bring Your Own Designated Device (BYODD) Policy

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(Versions are 0.1, 0.2 etc until such point as the document is approved. Then it becomes version 1.0.)

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1. Introduction

At BSM, we ensure there is a balance of screen time and the continued development of important written skills. All of the tools that we use promote the knowledge, skills and understanding of our learners. As part of using technology in the classroom, we educate the children about healthy and unhealthy habits as well as give them the skills they need to use the educational software effectively.

Our Bring Your Own Designated Device (BYODD) programme begins in Year 4 and continues through the Senior School. It gives students access to interactive learning platforms and collaborative tools that can significantly enhance our education approach.

2. Chromebooks

We are standardising our device strategy around Google Chromebooks to ensure a unified and consistent learning platform for both our teachers and students.

Chromebooks are fast, secure and affordable laptops, they look like regular laptops, but run ChromeOS rather than Windows. They are manufactured by many different companies (e.g. Acer, Asus, Dell, HP, Lenovo). Most new Chromebooks are supported for up to 10 years, meaning this device will serve your child well throughout their school years. You can learn more about Chromebooks at: edu.google.com/chromebooks/overview

3. BYODD Requirements

EYFS and Years 1, 2 & 3	There is no requirement to bring a device into school. Children are introduced to using technology within the classroom.
Year 4	All Students should have a Chromebook when the programme is initiated.
Years 5 - 11	All students are expected to use a Chromebook. New students must use a Managed Chromebook, while existing students with a Windows or Mac laptop may continue using their current device until August 2028. However, if an existing student's laptop breaks or needs replacement before that time, the new device must be a Chromebook. From August 2028, non-Chromebook devices will no longer be supported, and only school-managed Chromebooks will be allowed to connect to the network.
Sixth Form	Sixth Form students may use any suitable laptop of their choice; it does not need to be a Chromebook, although they may continue to use their Chromebook if suitable for their programme of study.

You have the flexibility to choose the manufacturer and supplier for your Chromebook, however it must be a Chromebook running ChromeOS. Laptops or tablets running Windows or MacOS, or iPads will not be compatible with our device strategy after August 2028.

4. Chromebook Requirements

For optimal performance and compatibility, please ensure the Chromebook meets the following minimum specifications:

- Must be a Chromebook (a laptop running ChromeOS)
- Must not be older than 5 years
- Must have a physical keyboard
- Must have 8GB of RAM or higher
- Should be 11-12 inch screen (larger is acceptable for older children)
- Should be a touch screen display
- Should include a stylus/pen for drawing or written work

5. Sourcing Chromebooks

Sourcing Chromebooks in Oman can present a challenge. If you are unable to obtain a device (or if you prefer) you can pre-order a Chromebook through BSM at cost price.

Many parents have successfully purchased devices via Amazon UK and Amazon US and arranged delivery to Oman. If you would like advice on whether a particular Chromebook is suitable, the IT Services team would be happy to assist. Please feel free to share a link to the product listing via helpdesk@britishschoolmuscat.com

Option 1: Purchase independently

- Device: A Chromebook purchased from any retailer of your choice
- Specification: Must meet BSM's specifications above.
- Warranty: Warranty, repairs and hardware support is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Option 2: Purchase through BSM

- Device: Acer Spin 512 (our BSM-standard model)
- Specification: 8GB RAM, touchscreen and stylus included
- Warranty: Includes a walk-in 2-year parts warranty with Acer and 1 free screen replacement for each year during the warranty period.
- Cost: Please see order form for details.

You can pre-order a Chromebook from BSM: Link to pre-order a BSM Chromebook

6. Safety and Security

To ensure both the effectiveness of our educational programs and safety of our students, your child's Chromebook will be enrolled into our central management system. This enables us to efficiently deploy necessary applications and services. Critically, this management software will remain active even when the Chromebook is at home, ensuring a consistent, secure, and controlled learning environment at all times.

The management system makes the device safer and more effective for learning by:

- Keeping them safe: Secure access with 24/7 filtering and monitoring, both at school and at home
- Protecting their work: Automatic cloud backup ensures school files are always saved.
- Helping them focus: Access is limited to BSM accounts, so the Chromebook stays a tool for learning with fewer distractions.

Once enrolled the Chromebook will only be able to work with BSM accounts and when your child has finished their journey with BSM the management system will be removed.

When your child brings a new Chromebook into school, they should come to the IT Services Office to register it and install our Management system.

6.1. Blocksi

We have invested in the latest security and internet filtering tools to provide a secure and safe browsing experience for your child. Once the Chromebook is managed by BSM the usage and filtering will be managed by a service called Blocksi. Whilst your child is using the Chromebook outside of school, Blocksi will also be active and securing their internet and you are able to use a Parent App to control access to websites. More information can be found at: blocksi.net/parent-hub

7. BSM Chromebook Guidelines

To ensure the effective use of the Chromebooks we ask that the following Guidelines are followed:

- **Bring devices to school daily, fully charged.** Chargers are not permitted at school.
- **Take devices home at the end of each school day** for charging, and bring them back the next school day.
- **Devices must have a protective case.**
- **Devices must be carried in a secure bag.** No other items should be in the device bag.

- **Devices are brought at your own risk.** BSM is not responsible for loss or damage. We'll remind students to handle devices carefully and we appreciate your reinforcement of this at home.

- **Our robust firewall protects students when using BSM's WiFi.** We continuously update our system with a leading UK company to ensure your child is safe from inappropriate content online.

8. Emergency borrowing of BSM Chromebooks

We have always strived to provide students with the necessary resources to enhance their learning experience. The availability of school-owned laptops for emergency use has been a valuable support system for those students who forget or accidentally break their own devices during the day. However, providing these laptops indefinitely, without any charge, incurs significant costs for the school in terms of maintenance and replacement.

8.1. Free Laptop Borrowing: 5 free days

Each student will be eligible for up to five days of free laptop borrowing per academic year. This will help with emergency situations and short-term device issues. The laptops should be signed out from the IT department and returned at the end of the day. (There are a limited number of laptops available and we cannot guarantee their availability; priority will be given to exam students.)

8.2. Paid Laptop Borrowing: 5 OMR per day

After exhausting the five free days, a charge of OMR 5 will be applicable for each additional day of laptop borrowing. We will contact parents for approval prior to lending the laptop and you will receive an invoice from our Accounts Department. The implementation of a charge will help us maintain the laptops in optimal condition and ensure their availability when needed most.

9. Appendix 1 - FAQ's

What is a Google Chromebook?

A Chromebook is a laptop that runs on Google's ChromeOS, a lightweight, cloud-based operating system designed for speed, simplicity, and security. Chromebooks are produced by a range of manufacturers, including Acer, HP, Lenovo, ASUS and Dell. You can find out more about Chromebooks at: edu.google.com/chromebooks/overview

What is a Managed Chromebook?

When your child brings their Chromebook to school, it will be enrolled in the school's centralised management system. This allows us to ensure a safe and consistent learning experience for all students.
The management system makes the device safer and more effective for learning by:

- Keeping them safe: Secure access with 24/7 filtering and monitoring, both at school and at home
- Protecting their work: Automatic cloud backup ensures school files are always saved.
- Helping them focus: Access is limited to BSM accounts, so the Chromebook stays a tool for learning with fewer distractions.

The management software remains in place while your child is at BSM. The software will be removed once their time at school comes to an end.

Any tips on where to get a Chromebook?

We recognise that Chromebooks are difficult to find in Oman, so we offer the ability to purchase a Chromebook from BSM. However they are also sold in physical and online stores in other countries. We would ask that you check it meets the specification provided. We have had other parents successfully purchase from Amazon UK and Amazon US with shipping to Oman. The IT Services department welcomes enquiries on whether a Chromebook is suitable if you would like to send them the link to the store listing to helpdesk@britishschoolmuscat.com

Can it be a second hand Chromebook?

We would not recommend a second hand Chromebook as with any technology there could be unseen issues with it.

Will this laptop, tablet or iPad work instead?

You have the flexibility to choose the manufacturer and supplier for your Chromebook, however it must be a Chromebook running ChromeOS. Laptops or tablets running Windows or MacOS, or iPads will not be compatible with our device strategy after August 2028.

We already have a Chromebook, can we use that?

You will probably be able to use the Chromebook you already have. We recommend that your child brings it to the BSM IT Services office so we can check it. Installing the school's management software will require erasing all existing data on the device. We will ask a parent for permission before doing this. Once the software is installed, the Chromebook can only be used with a BSM account.

Why is this website or App blocked on the Chromebooks?

To ensure that the Chromebook is supportive of learning and a safe environment for children, we install monitoring and filtering software.

What about after school, the weekends or the Holidays?

We feel it is important that the Chromebook is always seen as a safe and secure environment for the children to access learning materials and so will remain on the filtering system at all-times.

Why can't I log into my child's Chromebook using my gmail account?

Unfortunately we have to prevent children from using other accounts on the Chromebooks otherwise they could circumvent our Digital Safeguarding settings and technologies. This means the Chromebook would only be usable with a British School Muscat account.

What happens when my child leaves BSM?

Whether you bought the Chromebook from BSM or elsewhere, we will remove the management system from the Chromebook when your child leaves BSM. This will return the device to normal, so it can be used with a personal Google account or connected to another school's system if required.

Why are you charging for Chromebooks?

We charge separately for Chromebooks to give families flexibility and choice to purchase from outside the school or use a Chromebook you already own. The price we offer covers the cost of the device, delivery to us, licence and warranty; no margin is added.