

Laptop Protocol

Welling School recognises that for some students with **specific learning difficulties or medical conditions**, a laptop may be the most appropriate method of organising and presenting their work. Some students will require access to a laptop following a temporary injury which prevents them from writing.

Use of a laptop

Students may be allowed to use a laptop in school as their routine, normal way of working provided:

- The student has a specific learning difficulty or medical condition diagnosed and where use of a laptop or IT has been identified as a strategy of support.
- The student has a history of handwriting difficulties/legibility/speed
- A need has been established and its use is recommended by an Educational Psychologist approved by the school.
- The student is able to show that typing is efficient, accurate and of sufficient speed to be able to cope in class. As a guide, we would expect 30 to 60 words per minute, depending on age.
- The student has received guidance in the organisation, the printing and filing of copies of work when using a laptop.
- The SENCO confirms in writing that these conditions have been met and this is recorded on CMIS.
- The student has been using the laptop as a routine way of working in any subject where they wish to use a word processor (WP) in an examination and has specific practise and rehearsal in the use of a WP under examination conditions.
- A signed copy of this laptop Protocol must be returned to the SENCO to support any applications for use in examinations.

Limitations to laptop use

A subject teacher has the right to veto the use of a laptop in particular situations. These include:

- Where its use might be dangerous or problematic, e.g. in an experiment in chemistry.
- Where exercises should not be done with computer assistance, e.g. maps and diagrams.
- Where calculations are required without the assistance of computer functions e.g. in mathematics.
- If a student, in any lesson, is using a laptop in such a way to cause a distraction or disturbance to the learning of themselves or others.

Some school and home work may still be required to be hand written to support the development of handwriting skills.

Detailed procedures

- All written work, which would normally be done in exercise books during lessons is to be printed out daily at school and filed appropriately so that students possess a hard copy of all their work. This should be pasted into exercise books.
- Students should use a plain font (e.g. Arial, Calibri), font size 12 or 14 and allow room for teachers to add comments and feedback.
- Spell check may be used on all pieces of work except in examinations.
- If there are problems with the laptop during lessons, the student should immediately stop using it and switch to pen and paper.
- Special arrangements may need to be made for tests requiring extensive prose if a member of staff wishes to receive the work immediately e.g. save to a memory stick.

- Many internal examinations use structured papers which require students to answer on the question paper e.g. Maths or Science. However, where papers require extended answers, students will be allocated to a room where they will use a school computer or WP.
- In public examinations, students must use a school computer or WP.
- Students should not expect the school to maintain their personal machines or undertake repairs to them.

Back-Up

Students should back-up their work on to a separate hard drive or USB sticks, ideally weekly but at the least, every half term. The cost of losing a term's/year's work, particularly in KS4 through a computer crash can be considerable. Memory sticks can become corrupted so it is always advisable to save work onto the network when working in school.

Printing Work

Provided it is saved onto the network, work can be printed off from many machines in the school. Printers are available in the iBrary, IT rooms and other subject locations around the school. With staff permission, students may print their work in these areas.

Assistance with Laptops

The SENCO will be able to:

- Help students establish a daily routine and encourage them to operate in an organised and independent way.
- Advise on help for keyboard competency skills.
- Provide a school laptop (subject to availability) for a short period of time to allow a student to trial its use prior to purchasing their own. In all cases, parents are required to sign a Laptop Loan Agreement form.

Security of equipment

Adequate insurance cover should be arranged by the parents/carers to cover loss or damage to personal laptops and other equipment

The school does not accept liability for loss or damage to any personal laptops which remain the responsibility of the owner at all times.

Purchasing Advice

We are unable to make specific recommendations when it comes to makes or models but there are some key points to bear in mind:

- The basic requirement is that any laptop is capable of running the latest version of Microsoft Office.
- Try to keep size and weight in mind. The keyboard needs to be of sufficient size so that it does not restrict the development of touch-typing skills.
- Consider battery life. Ideally, go for a longer life battery type as a student may not always be able to charge a laptop during the day.
- Get a good protective bag. If a student is using a laptop every day, a good sturdy bag will be needed to protect it from accidental damage.
- Check the warranty. Most only have a one-year return to base warranty which may be difficult if a student's work is on a laptop that has to be returned to the maker.
- Get an external hard drive (memory stick). These can be used to back-up the students work.

Use of WPs in public examinations

The JCQ's recommendation for the use of WP's in examinations must be viewed within the context of the School's position on WP use.

- Where a student is authorised to use a WP as per School policy and therefore may use it in examinations, the examinations officer will contact the candidate to arrange in which specific examinations they wish to use a WP.
- Only the relevant software will be available: spell check, grammar check and the thesaurus will not be enabled. There are instructions informing candidates how to set up documents with all the relevant personal information (appendix 1). The WP/PC will periodically autosave but we suggest saving at regular intervals in addition to this.
- At the end of the examination, the candidate will be required to remain in the room while work is printed off and to authenticate the relevant hard copy.
- Opportunities to rehearse the use of a WP will be made available leading up to public examination e.g. during end of year exams and mock GCSE's.

I have read and understand the Welling School Laptop Protocol.

Student name:

Student Signature:

Parent/Carer Name:

Parent/Carer Signature:

Date:

Please return this slip to Mrs A Crane, SENCO

Using a WP in exams

1. Open a new document in word and insert a header.

Click the tab **Insert** then click on Header (Blank). Enter the following information:

Name, candidate number, centre number, subject name and paper number and date.

See the example below:

Andrew Smith: 9457
Edexcel Maths 1MAOH

Centre number: 14151
15/06/2013

2. Remove the spelling and grammar tool. This will ensure you receive marks for your spelling and grammar.

Click on File then options and select 'proofing'. **Un-tick** all the boxes relating to checking spelling and grammar. These are under the heading "**When correcting spelling and grammar in word**"

3. The exam boards recommend using a minimum font size of 12 and to use double spacing to assist the examiner when marking.
4. Remember to save your work regularly to the memory stick you have been provided with for the exam. You must not save your work to the computer or your own user area.

REMEMBER

Never access anything other than the word document you are working on for your exam. Accessing the internet or anything which may give you an advantage will always result in disqualification.