



SAINT PAUL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
RICHMOND

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"You must shine among them like stars lighting up the sky" Saint Paul - Philippians 2:15

PLEASE CONSIDER

A CHROMEBOOK FOR YOUR CHILD FOR 2026

Dear Parents and Caregivers of Year 5-8 Students

Saint Paul's strongly recommends that students in Y5-8 have a chromebook. In previous years we have seen many educational benefits to students having their own chromebook that they bring to school with them daily. Our BOT has introduced a policy stating that we are a chromebook only school from 2026.

The reasons for this chromebook only policy are:

- **Security** - We are a **google school** which means we can restrict students' websites, search capabilities, extensions, downloads etc on google chrome. Ensuring they are safe while using their school google accounts both at school and home. Students who have laptops have different browsers Microsoft Edge or Safari, we aren't able to restrict anything that happens on these browsers and therefore can't ensure students safety.
- **Set Up** - Our network for learning (internet) has secure access only. Which means only devices set up with a specific certificate can connect to our school network. When students log into their school account using a chromebook they automatically receive the certificate needed to access the internet because we are a google school and send it through to them. Laptop's are a lot more complicated to set up and require 1-2 hours of a tech person's time.

Please see below for more information about chromebooks.

How long will a chromebook last?

Chromebooks are designed seemingly to have a life of about 5 - 6 years (for students who take care of their device), so for those parents buying a chromebook in year 5 or 6, their child's computer will last them through to College.

What platforms do the students use on their chromebook?

These range from using the most basic google docs to sophisticated digital platforms such as Google sites, Prototec, Banqer and Read Theory to name but a few. For example, classes in 2025 used Google Classroom to ensure students could easily access their online learning, present their understanding in a variety of ways (google slides, google docs or google sheets) and develop their digital literacy skills. Again, these are just a few examples of how our students are using the tools of the digital age to enhance and support their learning.

How does the school ensure the digital safety of my child whilst on their chromebook during school time?

We have a policy that children are not allowed on devices if there is not an adult present in the classroom. The students are not allowed on devices during break or lunch times. We use Hapara in our Y5 - 8 classes. This system allows teachers to ensure that students have minimal distractions and a safe online environment.

In addition, we have a Ministry of Education provided "Firewall" which provides a secure filtering of appropriate sites. We also have a range of Cyber Safety teaching and learning units that your child will be involved in to help them develop a responsible and respectful online presence.

What if my child doesn't have their own chromebook?

Please rest assured that your child will not be left out or disadvantaged in any way, as we have a number of school owned devices which we allocate to students and classes for this very reason. These devices however cannot be taken home by the students.

My child had a laptop (Microsoft or Apple) that they used last year, can they use this in 2026?

We understand that a few of our students had laptops that they used in 2025. Those students will be able to use these devices again in 2026 as we don't want increased costs to whanau and they are already connected to our Network for Learning. These devices **must have** a google chrome browser and only use this browser when they are at school. The laptop must also have up to date anti-virus software.

We hope that this letter will provide enough information for you to understand why we are making a strong recommendation that all Years 5 to 8 students have their own chromebook and that the questions and answers help you to make an informed decision about buying a chromebook for your child.

We are more than happy to answer any further questions and those we cannot answer, we can pass onto our technical support person.

Kind regards,

Olivia Currie
(Saint Pauls IT Teacher)