

Avonside Girls' High School

Digital Devices for Learning



From the start of 2018 all students in Years 9 – 11 are expected to bring their own device for learning. This will enable each of them to access a wide range of opportunities for learning which are beyond the classroom walls, and the geographical limits of our campus. The use of the own device for learning will enable students to collaborate in solving real-world problems, and to develop the critical thinking skills which are essential in the 21st century. Our plan is for the entire student body to learn with their own device before we move to the co-located campus early in 2019.

Avonside has a **Windows platform**, and is authorised to offer Microsoft Student Advantage. This means any student can freely download Microsoft Office Suite software (worth \$900+) on to their personal device(s) while enrolled at Avonside. Many of the learning activities are promoted through this platform. For this reason a **Windows machine** (or a more expensive MacBook) are the preferred devices – an Ipad, a Chromebook, or any Android device cannot take full advantage of this environment.

These are the important things to consider when purchasing a tablet/netbook/laptop for learning:

Recommendations for Learning at Avonside		Essential?
1. Operating System	A Windows 8 (or 10) machine, or a MacBook . N.B. An Ipad , a chromebook or an Android tablet are not suitable.	yes
2. Screen	At least 10 inches A smart phone or an 8" tablet is not adequate for learning activities at high school	yes
3. Battery	At least 6-8 hours needed to last through the school day	yes
4. Keyboard	YES (could be an attached 'cover')	yes
5. Memory	At least 4GB	
6. Hard drive capacity	At least 64GB on-board storage. This is an absolute minimum, and will suffice in the junior school, but may not be enough in the senior years. Solid state memory (DDR, SSD, eMMC) are faster, lighter and more reliable than an optical hard drive (HDD)	yes
7. Weight	This aspect needs to be considered. Lighter is better. A netbook, or a tablet with an attached keyboard, is very portable, while a (full-sized) 15" laptop can weigh up to 2.5kg.	
8. Camera	Can be useful, but is more easily managed on a phone.	
9. Cover protection	This might be the keyboard attached to a tablet, or a "sleeve" protection. The device needs to "travel safely" in a school bag/backpack every day.	yes
10. Mouse	A new device is likely to have a touchpad	no

While any wireless device may access the internet at Avonside, not all devices are suitable for our learning environment and communicating with our network. Many students have more than one device (eg a smartphone, and a laptop) and choose which one is better to use for each task – different devices have differing features, and differing levels of usefulness.

Features	Smartphone	Tablet	Netbook	Laptop
Large screen size	✗	✓	✓	✓
Fits in a pocket	✓	✗	✗	✗
Battery lasts all day	✓	<i>Essential – check specifications</i>		
Short start up time	✓	✓	<i>Some models</i>	

Usefulness	Smartphone	Tablet	Netbook	Laptop
Basic reference, e.g. dictionary, calculator, simple searching	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internet research	✓	✓	✓	✓
Taking photos recording audio/video	✓	✓	<i>Possibly, but not the best tool</i>	
Manipulating photos, editing audio/video	✗	✓	✓	✓
Communicating with the teacher or other students (e.g. email, text message)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Creating and working with typical documents	✗	<i>limitations</i>	✓	✓

\$\$\$\$\$ will affect any choice made about technology. More dollars generally means more features, greater capacity, faster processing – not all of these are necessary in junior high school.

Avonside does not have a preferred supplier, but we have endeavoured to ensure that local retailers understand our needs. It is a competitive market and our advice is to shop around: Harvey Norman, PB Technology, Noel Leeming, Office Max, Cyclone Computers are just some of the possibilities.

Right now in the local retail outlets, these are some appropriate devices **under \$500** which meet our minimum specifications: at least 4GB RAM, at least 64GB storage (SSD or eMMC is better than HDD).

• Acer TravelMate TMB115-M-C99B Business laptop 11.6" Intel Celeron N2840 4GB 500GB HDD	\$446
• Lenovo N22 Semi-Rugged design Education Notebook 11.6" Intel Celeron N3060 4GB 128GB M.2 SSD	\$433
• HP Stream Pro 11 G3 Notebook 11.6" - Intel Celeron N3060 1.6GHz - 4GB DDR3 - 64GB eMMC	\$458
• Toshiba Remanufactured Satellite U920T Ultrabook 12.5" Touch Intel i3 4GB 128GB mSATA SSD	\$477
• Lenovo N23 Yoga 11.6" N3160, 4GB RAM, 64GB eMMC	\$451

... and with a pen, for writing on screen (very helpful for writing mathematics, and annotating files):

• Lenovo Yoga N24 2in1 Flip Education Laptop 11.6" Touchscreen Intel Celeron N3450 4GB DDR4 128GB eMMC - with Pen

Beware of “bundled” offers – most school backpacks have a suitably padded compartment to protect a travelling device. Very few students use a mouse, but prefer to use the trackpad on the device. Do not be persuaded to purchase Microsoft Office – it is free for students at Avonside, and can be downloaded at school

If you have any questions about the right device, please call the school office. Alternatively email pprestidge@avonside.school.nz with your queries.