



PEREGIAN SPRINGS STATE SCHOOL

mLearning 2020 Year 5 - 6 BYO Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to buy my child a computer? Is this compulsory?

No, **the purchase of a computer is not compulsory**. The teachers at Peregian Springs State School use many innovative learning strategies using technology. A one-to-one laptop program cannot be funded by the school, unless we made it for a very small select group of students, i.e. create a 'laptop class'. We have chosen a more inclusive approach of enabling all students in Years 5 – 6 to bring in their own MacBook to school, if their parents so choose. We ask parents to partner with us, as we can't do this alone. Children without their own computer will continue share school-owned computers, as they do in all other year levels.

Why does my child need their own computer for school?

As a school we have made a commitment to transforming learning using technology. The power of technology today to enhance the learning process is the most exciting thing to have happened since the invention of the blackboard. Students will not be learning in the same way they always have – children will be collaborating and creating, literally transforming their learning into something different, and much more powerful than can be achieved without a mobile learning device.

Will my child be participating in *mLearning* if they don't have a Macbook?

Yes. *mLearning* is not about the Mac; it's a change in learning style to a mobile, collaborative and inquiry approach. Children without their own MacBook will still have access to our fleet of school-owned MacBooks in the same way that they do in Prep – Year 4. These MacBooks are shared across a number of classrooms and with specialist teachers, which means students won't have access all the time. Class teachers plan their programs so that their students have access to school MacBooks when lessons and learning activities require them. Children also can't take these devices home to continue their work there. They can still access The Learning Place, Office 365 and other online learning environments they utilise at school, at home from family owned devices.

Can my child use a PC (Windows) laptop?

No. We do not use any Windows-based computers in classrooms or for student use. As such, the school does not provide any support for Windows-based computers or their programs. Teachers use and provide instruction in the suite of software that comes with an Apple Mac – this software is user friendly and easy for anyone to negotiate. Windows computers can be used at home but they are not used for learning at Peregian Springs State School. All students access and use Apple Mac computers at this school.

Why do you specify Macs in your *mLearning* Year 5 - 6 BYO (Bring Your Own) Program?

This was a decision we consulted about in 2010. Our staff prefer MacBooks, as they are already used across the school. BYO programs consist of the full range of options from being really specific about the device, to the other end of the continuum where students bring any device they like. The research and the advice we continue to receive is that for primary school children it is best to be specific and have only one type of computer in the classroom. This limits the amount of technical and software support teachers would have to give students who are just starting out with personal devices. It's only when students get to the later years of secondary school (e.g. Years 10, 11 and 12) and have advanced skills and are able to manage their devices without teacher intervention, that a program of bringing any device to school can be implemented without disrupting learning.

We already have a MacBook at home. Can my child use this?

Yes, if it is included in the table below. Older computers (2016 and earlier) are really too old to use now, as their battery, memory, built in features and software compatibility are not at the level required. Please check the year and model of the MacBook you intend for your child to use. Some older models are unsuitable for school use. If in doubt, please contact your child's teacher or the Office to check.

Device Name/Type	Year of Manufacture	Allowed
MacBook 12"	2017 and onwards	Yes
MacBook Air 13"	2017 and onwards	Yes
MacBook Pro 13" or 15"	2017 and onwards	Yes
Older, superseded models*		
MacBook Air 11"	No longer manufactured	No
'White' MacBook	No longer manufactured	No

If my child brings their own MacBook to school what software needs to be installed on it?

All student MacBooks require Pages, Numbers, Keynote, iPhoto, iMovie, iBooks, Safari and GarageBand. These Apple Applications (apps) are free to download from the Mac App Store with new MacBooks or may come already installed on new Apple devices. Word, Excel and PowerPoint may be used instead of Pages, Numbers and Keynote. Word, Excel and PowerPoint can be downloaded for free The Learning Place by using the student's school username and password. More information on this is available here: <http://education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/whats-happening/office2016.html>

Will a MacBook be on the booklist?

No. **It is not compulsory** for students to have their own BYO device.

If my child has their own computer will I still need to provide booklist/stationery items?

The booklist for students with their own computers contains less stationery items than the regular booklist, as students will complete more of their work on their computer. Students with their own computers will most likely not have to top up their stationery items throughout the year, as they will use less pen/paper as they become more organised and proficient on their computer. Photocopy paper will still be needed. Students without their own computer will still need to supply the full stationery list and keep this replenished throughout the year.

How will my child's computer be secured at school?

Student's computers are locked in a dedicated locker, storeroom or classroom when classrooms are empty, i.e. at specialist lessons or during lunch times.

How much time will students spend in front of the computer at school each day?

It is difficult to put a figure on this – each day and class will be different. Teachers will advise if computers won't be needed on particular days due to the nature of the class program, e.g. Athletics or Swimming Carnival days. Even when students use their computer for most of the day, they are often on and off it, to collaborate with other students, walk around to ask questions of each other and their teacher, looking up to the board for information or to the teacher for further guidance. Teachers monitor the usage of computers and students' posture whilst they are using them as well. This is part of the learning in every class in our school. Students are only permitted to use their own computer at lunch with permission in order to complete class/project work.

What about internet safety? What does the school do about cybersafety?

Education Queensland maintains strict filters on all school networks across the state. All teachers closely supervise all computer usage in the classroom and guide students as to where they can go on the Internet. As part of being an eSmart accredited school, class teachers implement the school's Cybersafety Program in all year levels. Part of this program teaches students what to do if they feel unsafe on the Internet, including how to screenshot offensive material. It also pays specific attention to the sharing of personal information online. Year 5 and Year 6 students also have access to our PSSS Concern ICT reporting site, if they have concerns about cyberbullying or other unsafe online behaviours they may experience. This is explicitly taught at the start of the school year and revisited throughout.

Will students still be learning handwriting?

Yes. As part of the Australian Curriculum: English, handwriting is still taught in Year 5 and 6, but to a much lesser degree than in earlier year levels. We believe that children in primary school need to continue to develop their handwriting and fine motor skills, and this is included in learning programs.

Will my child be able to charge their computer at school?

Generally speaking, no. Students should make sure their computer has a full charge at the start of the day. By making sure that unnecessary programs are closed and that power saving settings are in place, students can usually get a full school day out of their computer. There are certain times, in an emergency, where if the battery has run out on a student's computer, their teacher may allow them to use their charger in order to retrieve a necessary file.

It's a lot of money to spend and I don't think my son/daughter is responsible enough to have a computer. *It is not compulsory for students to have their own computer at this school?*

It is completely up to parents whether or not they purchase a MacBook for their child to use in Years 5 - 6. Parents should make their own decision about whether/when a child is ready for this responsibility. Students without their own computer will still have access to the school fleet of shared MacBooks when required for their learning. Teachers continually reinforce safety measures with students, including walking around with computers and safe storage in the classroom/at school, and there are consequences for students who are unsafe with their computer. It is a joint effort between parents and students to make sure that computers are taken to and from school in a safe manner. When students accidentally leave their computer at school, their class teacher will secure it overnight and usually email the parents to notify them of this.

What happens when my child goes to high school? Will they be able to use their MacBook there?

We can't speak for all high schools. However, students enrolling at Coolum State High School (our local high school) will be fully supported in using Apple Mac computers in their learning programs.

My child has an iPad can they use their iPad instead of a MacBook in 2020?

No. If parents have made the decision to purchase a device for their child to use at school in Years 5 - 6 it is preferred that students have their own MacBook.

I have more than one child in Year 5 and 6. Can they share a computer?

No, this would be very difficult. A one-to-one program means that one child needs the laptop most of the time. Sharing one computer across classes between family members would be quite impractical. It is best for families who have decided to purchase a computer, to make it available at school for the use of one child (perhaps the eldest), and the other child/ren use a school owned computer when they are available in the classroom. In the case of twins in the same classroom, a computer may be able to be shared and we would expect families to negotiate the rules of sharing before the computer came to school and work with the class teacher around this.

When can I buy a MacBook?

If you are choosing to buy your child a MacBook for Years 5 - 6 you can buy this at any time, preferably before school starts in 2020. You can join the *mLearning* Years 5 - 6 BYO MacBook Program at any time from the start of 2020, including during the school year.

What accessories should we buy?

A strong sturdy case is a must; as well as attaching some form of identification to both the case and the MacBook. An external hard drive (used only for this computer), will enable your child to create backups of all their files.