

# Pioneering the use of Google

in education

Wheatley Park School in Holton, Oxfordshire, is a co-educational secondary school of approximately 1,150 pupils with ages ranging from 11 to 18 years old.

The school has pioneered the use of Google solutions in their curriculum with the introduction of Gmail and Google apps and are progressing to Chromebooks in the classroom. They are now in the process of rolling out 1-to-1 Chromebooks for students throughout the school.



## Passionate about technology

This process has all been driven by Roger Nixon, the Director of ICT at Wheatley Park and Roger Slade, Education Consultant at Getech, a Google for Education Premier Partner that provides full support to schools. They have implemented roll out of 1-to-1 devices for their Year 7 and Year 11 pupils, with a clear end vision of ensuring all year groups are furnished with a Acer Chromebook by the end of 2017.

The school is led by a team of teachers that have a genuine passion and thirst for utilising technology in the classroom. After extensive research and consultation, the device the school chose to roll out to all pupils across 2017 was the Acer Chromebook R11: this was due to a number of key reasons. The Acer Chromebook R11 is robust and offers an attractive design, a 360-degree hinge and a touchscreen, offering all users great flexibility. It is also one of the first Chromebooks to come to market with Google Play for Education which gives the school access to a whole host of educational apps, which also played a key factor in the decision process.

Roger Nixon, Director of ICT at the school is an advocate for Google and the driving force behind the project and the roll-out programme.



He reported that *“the installation and integration of the Acer Chromebook R11 into the year 7 and 11 year groups has been remarkably smooth and event free. This has been attributed to successful planning and ensuring the infrastructure was in place to offer support and guidance as required. As project leader, Roger Slade ensured all stakeholders in the project were fully versed on the process and trained on the product; this included parents, children and of course staff, who all have Chromebooks with the G Suite ecosystem available to them”*.

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The roll-out process has been remarkably smooth and event free; this comes down to a lot of planning and making sure that the infrastructure to support the roll-out is in place; running parents’ evenings before the launch so that parents are fully aware what’s happening and publicising to parents what it’s all about and why we are introducing 1-to-1 chromebooks.

We have already had students using the devices in school for many years. It wasn’t new to staff either as they have their own Chromebooks with the G Suite ecosystem themselves.

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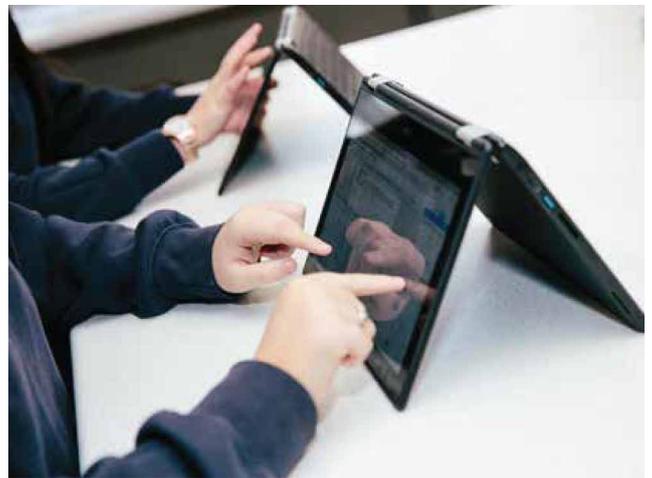
The school has a great system in place to support all families in the purchase of a personal Chromebook for their children.

Parents are very supportive of the school's roll out plan. They are encouraged that the school pre-loads the machine with all of the relevant software ensuring a great out-of-box experience. They feel reassured that any issues with the device will be repaired and returned within a few days causing minimal disruption to learning.

Roger Slade says that *“Parents like the idea that we look after the device: if it's broken we return it in a few days later and also that they can buy a Chromebook for a better price than they would find on the high street. We have offered the option to buy as well as long-term loans or daily loans. Parents have been offered a range of options that they can take advantage of, which helps with the cost”*.

The Chromebooks themselves are easy to manage, have a long battery life, are designed to be robust and handle excessive use and offer a quality design in a value package. There haven't been any issues to report as Roger Nixon points out: *“In terms of any issues; there has been virtually nothing. Chrome OS devices basically look after themselves as long as you put the right management policies in place there is not much that is going to go wrong which is why it's the device that we have chosen to roll out across the school”*.

The benefits of the pupils having their own 1-to-1 devices are apparent throughout all the curriculum, not just in the ICT suite.



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Chris Bateman, Year Form Tutor, highlights the ease of use and quick access:

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The roll-out of Acer Chromebook R11s through our Year 11 has enabled us to make sure that we have constant and quick access to technology in lessons and without disruption.

Students are used to the transition from school to home. They can continue what they have been working on at school with the homework and everyone is in the same position with the same device, same specification and the same software set up.

It's changed the way we do things like how we do our assessment and our feedback to the students: for example we can run a quick, simple quiz at the beginning of the lesson and then assess where everybody is at and who needs help where.

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Feedback from the students themselves included the benefits that you would expect like the management of work load, access to research on the web but also simple things that make the world of difference.





The biggest thing is students being able to look back on resources and modules as and when they need to.

**Tim Rattigan: Deputy Head**



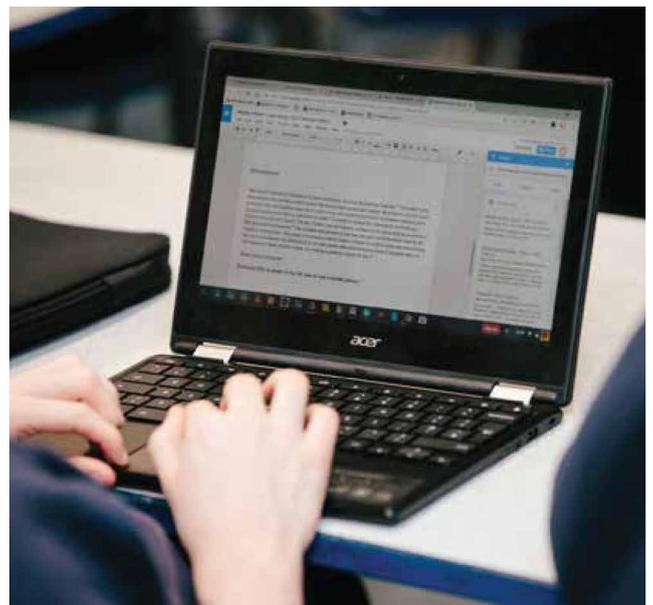
*“The reason we chose Year 11 for the roll-out of 1-to-1 devices was due to their workload increases, to give access to wider range of resources and for help with revision. However, pupils have reported one of the most useful aspects was being able to go back and see teacher’s presentations and information again later on and look at what they been shown throughout the day.*”

*“This is about quality learning; it improves the teaching experience. It allows pupils to access data in real time and to use the web to connect with how the world really works rather than a carefully crafted piece of resource or research that has been artificially generated for the classroom”.*

This roll out of the 1-to-1 devices through the chosen year groups, as well as clearly having academic advantages, has also instilled a sense of pride in the children as they feel important, valued and trusted because they have been given their own devices to use and take care of.



**Student from Year 11**  
“I like how these are touchscreen and they fold like tablets, which makes them easier to use”.



**Student from Year 7**  
“I was nervous that it would be quite heavy to carry around in my bag but it’s not at all”.

