



# Verdala International School

## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

Verdala International School recognizes that technology supports its mission and educational goals. BYOD System is a part of this strategy and students of the middle school and high school are expected to bring their own laptops to school to enable the growth of blended learning in the classroom.

This guide contains important information regarding Verdala International School's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programme. Specifically, families will find:

- Minimum specifications for all devices
- Information about free software students should download
- Frequently asked questions about our BYOD program

If you have any questions about the content of this document, please do not hesitate to contact the respective Principal or the IT teacher.

### **Minimum Specifications**

The following chart should help you in selecting and purchasing a laptop for your child to use while they are at Verdala International School. While there are many options, there are minimum specifications that we require to support your child's learning at VIS.

*Please be aware that our curriculum programmes are designed to work with the specifications below, devices that do not meet these will make it difficult/impossible for students to fully engage with learning activities. Devices older than 4 years may well not meet these requirements.*

*If you have any queries about the suitability of a specific device, please speak to the relevant Principal.*

Machine Type	Laptop
Platform	PC/Mac <b>Tablets or Chromebooks can not be supported</b>
Screen Size	11 inches or more
Processor	Intel i3 or higher AMD Athlon II or higher
RAM	4 GB or higher
Hard Drive	120 GB or higher
Operating System	Windows 10 Home or later, Mac OS Sierra or later <b>The operating system must be in English.</b>
Virus Protection	The laptop must be equipped with an up-to-date licenced virus and malware protection software.
Wireless	802.11n or higher <b>Must support WPA2 encryption</b>
Ports	1 USB port, 1 HDMI / 1 VGA / audio in/out, in-built microphone
Input	Keyboard Pointing device (touchpad, mouse) <b>Headphones with mic</b>
Battery Life	4+ hours (4+ cell or higher)



# Verdala International School

## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

	<i>Students are expected to bring a power supply cable (UK plug) with them to school on a daily basis</i>
Portability	The laptop must be conveniently portable to and from school, independently by the student. <b>A sleeve needs to be purchased for the laptop for better protection and students are expected to carry the laptops in the sleeves at all times.</b>

## Software

The laptop must be equipped with an up-to-date licenced virus protection software. Students are expected for updating and installing the applications on their laptops. The following free software should be downloaded and installed on your laptop for use in school. Teachers will expect student to be able to work with these applications at any time.

### Internet Browsers

- Google Chrome (Mandatory)
- Firefox (recommended)
- Internet Explorer (recommended)
- Safari

Google Apps for Education Suite of applications will be used for academic purposes. Therefore, the installation of chrome browser is required. A second browser should also be installed. All should be the latest stable version.

### Laptop/Mobile location tracking (highly recommended)

*Be aware that the school accepts no responsibility for lost laptops - it is the student's responsibility to take care of their device(s).*

- <http://preyproject.com/>
- For Mac users signup for an apple account <https://www.icloud.com/> and enable Find My Mac

### Online Storage/Backup

- Backup and Sync (sign in with school Gmail account)
- DropBox (optional)

### Other Software

- Adobe Reader, Air, Shockwave Player [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)
- Java - <http://www.java.com/en/download/index.jsp>
- Google Earth <http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>

### Video Players

- VLC Player <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/> (Recommended)



# Verdala International School

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## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

- iTunes <http://www.apple.com/itunes/download/>
- Quicktime Player <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>
- Real Player <http://in.real.com/>

**Additional software requirements will be communicated by the teachers throughout the year. Mostly students will have a collection of applications to choose from but there will always be a free option to choose from.**

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **What are the advantages of BYOD?**

The advantages of student-owned devices are greater than that of a standardized device program where the school maintained control of many features of the device because:

- there are greater opportunities for more personalized learning
- students have greater agency in choosing what tools to use
- students developed greater familiarity with the technology
- there are increased opportunities for more responsible use of technology

The locus of control is now with the student and, by extension, the family of the student.

### **How is responsible use of technology supported?**

In order to promote responsible use of technology, VIS provides support through:

- discussions and activities about technology topics throughout a range of lessons
- parent information and education sessions
- professional development for teachers
- publications and information updates to the VIS community

VIS recommends the following resources to help support parents in appropriate technology use at home:

- [\*Facebook for Parents: Answers to the Top 25 Questions\*](#) by Linda Fogg Philips
- [\*Help Your Child Learn with Cell Phones and Web 2.0\*](#) by Liz Kolb
- [\*Rewired: Understanding the iGeneration and the Way They Learn\*](#) by Dr. Larry Rosen
- [\*The Modern Parent's Guide to Facebook and Social Networks\*](#) by Scott Steinberg

Please contact Ms. Veronica Calleja ([callejav@verdala.org](mailto:callejav@verdala.org)), the school Librarian, if you'd like to borrow a copy of any of the above books.

### **Who is responsible for purchasing education-specific software on student-owned devices?**

Each student has a Verdala account that provides access to Google Applications for Education which is free for all educational institutions. Google Drive is used for sharing, collaborating and storing



# Verdala International School

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## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

resources and files. There will be a variety of applications for some of the educational activities and VIS will make use of free applications for educational software. The students may choose to purchase the paid versions of some of these educational software on their devices which will not be a requirement.

### **Who is responsible for the maintenance and updates of these devices?**

All maintenance for the hardware device, operating system, software and/or apps purchased by the family are the responsibility of the family. Families should ensure a quick maintenance turnaround for student devices. All computers should be equipped with up-to-date virus and malware protection software.

### **How do students or staff store and share their digital work?**

Students and staff will use the cloud-based storage service, Google Drive for saving and sharing documents. These services are available from any device with an internet connection and student accounts..

### **How do we ensure access to the same applications for students?**

Most applications that students use are internet (cloud) based, thus ensuring access to all students with laptops that meet the minimum requirements. In addition, there are circumstances in which it is preferable for students to select their own application to complete a task. Computers are powerful means of differentiating and personalizing a child's education, and student-owned devices facilitate student choice over which application they prefer. Teachers work with students to ensure everyone can access and view student's final work in appropriate formats as necessary.

### **Do I need to purchase Insurance for my BYOD device?**

When purchasing your laptop, it is advisable that you purchase damage protection for your laptops. For Apple products, please purchase Apple Care. You may also need to obtain additional insurance for damage protection, as it is not covered under Apple Care. This ensures that your laptop is protected against accidental damage to your child's device on and off the school campus. Fire, theft, and acts of God are usually not covered under these programs and we request you to include it in your personal or home insurance. In the case of a laptop being insured as part of a home or personal insurance, the laptop should be insured for accidental damage and loss by fire and theft when outside the home. The insurance can be purchased with your computer vendor or any insurance company. All insurance claims must be settled between you and the insurance company. Students are expected to not leave their laptops unattended and ***VIS will not be held responsible for damage to students' devices at any time, while on campus or at home.***

### **How do we ensure access to the same digital content for all students?**

As with Google Applications For Education, VIS has moved nearly all digital content to the internet.



# Verdala International School

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## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

### **How do we ensure students remain “cybersafe” in and out of the classroom?**

Digital citizenship is an essential component of the BYOD program and it will be integrated with classroom learning. All students will be expected to sign the Responsible Use Policy which will outline the use of technology in the online community. For more information on staying cyber safe at home, please click [here](#) for Parent Resources Website for tips and information on internet security.

### **What are the guidelines for responsible use of these devices?**

VIS has a Responsible Use Policy for use of computers and other networked devices both internally and externally. The guidelines, rules, and recommendations shared in this document are adhered to in the classroom and should also be reinforced at home.

### **What are some examples of healthy habits about “screen time” that can be promoted at home**

Recent research is providing evidence that heavy use of screen time, particularly in the final 30-60 minutes before sleeping, can have implications on quality of sleep. With this in mind, VIS will work with parents to take a united front on establishing positive healthy habits with digital technologies. Throughout the year, we will offer parent education sessions where we provide guidance to parents in developing family guidelines around the use of technology.

### **Which laptops are acceptable/approved?**

The laptops that make the minimum specification list mentioned in the document are acceptable for use in the classroom. If you have questions about whether a specific model of a laptop will meet the requirements, please feel free to contact the respective Principal.

### **What Operating System must be installed? Can I use a Mac?**

For a PC, the operating system must be Windows 10 or Higher as technology advances. . If you are using a Mac, the operating system must be Mac OSX 10.12 or Higher

### **What about cloning?**

We do not clone student laptops.

### **What if I forget my laptop at home?**

Students will be required to bring their laptops to school each day; students without laptops will not be able to access the full academic program. Students will be responsible for accessing their work through internet (cloud) based solutions like Google Apps and Managebac.

### **What about malicious hacking?**

Students at VIS receive digital citizenship guidance. If you have questions or concerns about appropriate computer use please refer to our Responsible Use Policy.



# Verdala International School

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## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

### **What about file sharing? (P2P)**

Students at VIS can share files digitally using approved file sharing services such as Google Apps. File sharing services that are generally used for software piracy will not be accessible at school. Although students will be bringing their own devices to school, VIS's strong filtering software will still be working across all platforms when students are on campus.

### **What are the school rules? What documents do I need to know about? (What are the laptop use rules?)**

All of the information you need to know is contained in the Student Handbooks.

### **How many devices may I bring?**

Students can bring two devices to school to be used on the school internet. This means that they could bring, for example, a laptop computer and an iPad or a laptop computer and an Android phone. If students routinely bring three devices to school, we will only allow two of them on the network.

### **What are the rules about surveillance (monitoring student laptops)?**

We do not monitor students' laptops. We do, however, keep a log of internet traffic on the VIS network. All VIS Responsible Use Policy guidelines will apply to misuse of the internet or the VIS network.

### **Will there be tests using the laptops?**

Yes, students can expect to use their laptops daily for a very wide variety of learning activities, including digital assessments.

### **How can I use my laptop during my free times?**

Specific guidelines for laptop use during breaks, lunch, and other free time can be found in the student handbook.

### **Will the school be providing laptop bags again for the students to safely carry their computers?**

Students are required to purchase a laptop sleeve or bag to transport computers. Students will be expected to keep their laptops in these sleeves which fit easily into backpacks.

### **As a parent, how can I best support my child at home with the laptop?**

We strongly encourage you to work as a family to set ground rules for the care, maintenance, and usage of the laptop. Families should have set work routines that allow for completion of homework tasks separately from play or socializing on the computer. Given the safety and family concerns of some internet content, we strongly suggest students use laptops in such a way to provide family members a direct line of sight to laptop screens and have on-going family discussions about



# Verdala International School

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## *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide*

appropriate internet use. Also, parents should have access to passwords for their children's accounts online. Families can also help by encouraging students to have only one program open at a time

in order to engage more completely with one task. We also strongly encourage families to set ground rules about the use of chat programs or other social networking programs while students are working on their laptops at home.

### **What does the technology curriculum cover regarding appropriate use of technology?**

Our student technology program (delivered through homeroom and Technology lessons) covers a wide range of topics including appropriate use and digital citizenship. Students are introduced to our Responsible Use Policy, which communicates the expectations of students as they use technology in their learning while at school.

Dr. Rosen, in his book *Rewired*, suggests a similar family contract be created between parents and children for technology use. Expectations for parents are also included in this contract. Another book that VIS recommends to parents is titled *Help Your Child Learn with Cell Phones and Web 2.0*. The book suggests creating a cell phone rules chart that contains rules for both children and parents for appropriate use of that device.

### **What online resources are available for families?**

There are many online resources that provide guidance for families and you may like to check out [here](#) for some of the links on the Parent Resources Website that include tips and advice, videos and contract templates that address many issues that are common to families.

### **What about internet filtering for my child's laptop at home and school?**

The school has a secure firewall that takes care of internet filtering on the school campus. However, you can opt to purchase Net Nanny for a home device (<https://www.netnanny.com/>). This is not recommended to be installed on the same laptop that's used in school as it will conflict with our firewall.