



# BYOD Policy 2023 – 2024

Approved by:	Ms. Jan Steel
Date of review:	September 2023
Next review date:	September 2024

### Technology and Devices

Devices and technology are now part of everyday life and are used as a useful learning tool in the classroom and at home. BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) is an initiative that requires students to bring their own devices, iPad / tablet and headphones, to school to support their learning. The use of personal devices in the classroom can enhance learning opportunities while promoting responsible digital citizenship as based on global research. GRDS is set up with secure Wi-Fi coverage to access the school network and internet, allowing students to bring in their own devices and use them for educational purposes within the classrooms.

To achieve school-wide BYOD we require that:

- **Year 1- 4 bring an iPad (or similar tablet device).** This is specific to Year 1- 4 and is designed around the work they will do and the apps/software they will access.
- **Year 5 & 6 bring an iPad (with keyboard) or laptop. No smartphones are allowed.** We believe students need to start working in a way that will prepare them for secondary school and the future beyond.

There is guidance within this policy on minimum required technical specifications and safe use of devices.

#### Minimum Technical Specifications for BYOD

Device	Laptop Y5-6	iPad/tablet Y1-4
Screen Size	10"-13" preferred	Any iPad or tablet
Hard Drive	120GB minimum	16GB minimum (64GB preferred)
RAM	8GB minimum	N/A
Battery Life	4 hours +	N/A
Accessories Required	Protective bag/case. Headphones	Protective bag/case. Headphones
WI-FI	2.4/5Ghz supported (802.11a/b/g/n)	2.4/5Ghz supported (802.11a/b/g/n)

Devices which do not meet the minimum specifications, usually older devices, may experience difficulties operating within the school or accessing live lessons/digital content. We do not permit the use of smart phones at GRDS. Although smartphones may meet the required specifications in many respects, the smaller screen sizes limit their benefit for reading and writing extended pieces, presentations are more difficult to edit, and their battery life tends to be shorter than that of a tablet. Smartphone apps such as Snapchat and WhatsApp are also prohibited for use by anyone under the age of 13 years by the UAE authorities and, as such, we do not wish to encourage the use of smartphone devices at school.

All devices must NOT have access to 4G (or this should be disabled) and should not have a VPN. The use of VPNs is prohibited in the UAE.

### **Downloading apps/software**

There will be occasions where the school requires students to have access to educational apps and software. As young children should not have access to accounts such as Apple Store or Google Play, we will require parents and carers to ensure apps are downloaded and updated regularly. We highly recommend you do not share these passwords with your children. A full list of required apps and software will be shared with parents regularly.

### **Device Insurance**

At GEMS Royal Dubai School, we do all we can to provide the best conditions so that damage does not occur. However, it is possible that an accident could happen. To be covered in this instance it is recommended that you have the device covered in your own Home and Contents insurance or similar. GRDS will not be liable for damage caused to any device brought into school. Protective cases for technology are encouraged. If using an Apple device, the activation of 'Find my device' is recommended.

### **BYOD- Staying Safe Online**

Students will be required to adhere strictly to the rules for BYOD usage and understand the consequences of not following these rules. **GRDS members of staff may access a child's device at any time if they feel it is being misused.**

- Devices can be used only in the classroom as a learning tool under the direction of the teacher; always respecting the classroom rules and teacher instructions regarding device usage.
- Devices are not allowed outside the classroom in the corridors, playgrounds, cafes or toilets unless directed to by a member of staff.
- Devices may be used on the school transport system, but only with headphones attached.
- Students may not record, transmit or post photographic images or video of a person, or persons.
- Students must not engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others, staff or students. E-safety lessons and guidelines are offered to students by the school.
- Students must not use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Parents must not contact children on their device during school hours. Please contact through school reception and/or appropriate email channels.
- GRDS IT has the right to collect and inspect any device that is suspected of being the source of an attack or virus infection.
- Students may only access files on the computer or internet sites which are relevant to classroom curriculum.
- Students must ensure that the private content and media stored on the device is not used during school time.
- Students must report security or network problems to a teacher or administrator.
- In using the network and internet, users should not reveal personal information such as a home address or telephone number.
- Printing from a student's personal device may not be possible at school.
- Devices must be charged prior to bringing it to school and run off their own battery while at school. Limited charging resources will be available in school, but this is not guaranteed.



**National Online Safety** GEMS RDS is a member of National Online Safety. AT RDS we take Internetsafety very seriously and we are working towards our National Online Safety certification.

All teaching staff are required to complete an Internet Safety Course to make sure they are aware of the dangers pupils may face online. NOS also provides updates and information on apps and social media networks to keep teacher knowledge up to date. <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/login>

**Common Sense Media** - The Scope and Sequence of this curriculum covers a wide range of issues and challenges the children to think about how they look after themselves online.

<https://www.common sense media.org>

**Childnet** - Very informative website for children and adults. The key is the SMART anagram which the children learn and understand. This is also great for parents to use at home.

<https://www.childnet.com>

## stay safe online

Remember the 5 SMART rules when using the Internet and mobile phones.

- S SAFE**: Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your full name, email address, phone number, home address, photos or school name – to people you are chatting with online.
- M MEET**: Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present.
- A ACCEPTING**: Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!
- R RELIABLE**: Information you find on the internet may not be true, or someone online may be lying about who they are. Make sure you check information before you believe it.
- T TELL**: Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

**In acknowledgement of the GEMS Royal Dubai School BYOD policy...**

**Students must agree to:**

Seek permission from a member of staff to use their device and share for what purpose. If abused, privileges will be taken away. By bringing your device into school, you agree to abide by the above policy and guidelines. You further understand that any misuse may result in the loss of network privileges.

**Parents and carers must agree to:**

Follow all the details contained within this policy and support the school with BYOD. Digital/E-safety training and support will be available throughout the year in sessions offered by the school.

**GEMS Royal Dubai School agrees to:**

Ensure all networks and school systems are safe and in line with the GEMS Education ICT policies and practices. All members of staff will intervene and report any E-Safety issues and malpractices via the GEMS HSE portal to enable investigations to be carried out rigorously and in a timely manner.

Any violation of this policy will be brought to the attention of senior members of staff where the consequences of these actions will be reviewed. The purpose of using BYOD is to enhance the learning experience.

**All GRDS staff, students and parents/carers will be asked to sign a Responsible Use Agreement.**

**Our students in FS1 to Y3 will complete this with their parents. Students in Years 4 to 6 will complete their own personal agreement form.**

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### GEMS Royal Dubai School BYOD FAQ's

#### **What does 'BYOD' mean?**

Bring Your Own Device. That simple!

#### **Do I need any accessories for my iPad/tablet or laptop?**

We would expect students to have a set of headphones that they can use with their device in school. A detachable keypad would be a suggested accessory for an IPAD; however, this is not a requirement until years 5 and 6.

#### **Where should we buy the device?**

Any store would be fine. There are several Dubai stores that have great deals - Carrefour, Geant, Sharaf DG, Emax and many more. You are spoilt for choice! If you are buying Apple products, we advise you buy from an Apple Authorised Reseller or the Apple Store and keep all of your receipts (proof of purchase) in a safe place. Always write your Apple ID's and passwords down and store them in a safe place as well. Please also see the GEMS Rewards App for great deals on devices.

#### **Will BYOD mean that students will no longer be using books, pens & paper?**

Technology such as laptops and other electronic devices are classed as educational tools just like paper, pens, and print books. 'Traditional technologies' will still be used, and it will be up to the teacher's discretion as to which tool would be the most appropriate for the class. Having said that, our BYOD Policy will allow students to access our network on their own devices in order to further their learning and narrow the divide between home and school learning.

#### **Will the school provide alternatives to use while a student device is in for repairs?**

GEMS Royal Dubai School will have a limited supply of extra devices to be used in the classroom. This will provide web access so students can retrieve and work on online resources, documents, and projects. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure any work saved locally on their own device is backed up regularly.

#### **Will the school teach students how to use, maintain, and update their own devices?**

GEMS Royal Dubai School teachers will be able to assist students and show them how to use online tools required for class activities and projects. Teachers will assist children on how to download their Office 365 accounts onto their desktops. While there will be times where they may also have time to assist our students in providing some tips and direction in the maintenance and updating of their devices, the ultimate responsibility will rest with the student and their parents/carers. Support from a local retailer may be necessary for support with software installation, virus protection software or repairs/upgrades.

#### **Will students be required to go online at home, after school hours?**

Many of the tools and resources used at school are 'online' resources which require an internet connection in order to work. We strongly recommend a home internet connection.

#### **Will GEMS Royal Dubai School provide Internet filtering?**

Yes. Students who connect to the internet at school will be protected from inappropriate content by the UAE and school internet filters. These filters will only work while students are connected in school and on the school network and it is the parent's responsibility to monitor their child's Internet use at home.



**What if the battery runs out during school?**

Student devices will be required to have an expected battery life of at least 4 hours. For most students this will be enough to get them through the school day. Students are required to have their devices fully charged for the start of each school day.

**Can my child leave their device in school overnight?**

There are no safe places to store devices within school. If a child does leave their device in school by accident, we will do all we can to keep the device safe.

**What about viruses and security issues?**

The school infrastructure is designed to minimize the risk of viruses, trojans and other malware from external devices. There are a variety of programs to keep your computer 'virus free' as well as several good free ones. An antivirus software that comes highly recommended is

<http://www.avast.com/>

**Is the GEMS Phoenix App/Zoom safe?**

GEMS Education have partnered with Zoom to assign individual usernames and passwords to all GEMS employees and students. This allows GEMS to restrict access to certain aspects of the Zoom platform and ensure there is no way anyone outside of the organisation can access it. You can find out more information about GEMS Zoom via their policies and agreement forms available on GEMS Connect.