

Serangoon Garden Secondary School

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers National Digital Literacy Programme

Questions about the Personal Digital Learning Programme

1 Can my child not purchase the personal learning device (PLD)?

Every student is required to have a PLD for teaching and learning purposes and is encouraged to purchase one through the school via MOE's bulk tender procured at discounted prices. Students are strongly encouraged to use the PLD model prescribed by the school, as the uniformity of systems and software would ensure a smooth learning experience for everyone. The PLD purchased through the school will come with the necessary warranty and insurance as well.

Students who do not wish to purchase a PLD because they already have their own devices will have to check with the school to ascertain whether the specifications of their existing devices meet the schools' requirements. These existing devices must also be installed with a Device Management Application (DMA) software to provide a safe learning experience for them and to prevent misuse of the devices. The DMA is fully funded by the school and will be uninstalled from the devices when they graduate/leave the school.

**2 Do all students in a school have to use the same PLD?
What about students who opt out of using the school-selected PLD and wish to use their own? How will this affect their learning?**

Students are strongly encouraged to use the PLD model prescribed by the school for a smooth learning experience. If students wish to use their own devices, these devices must meet the necessary specifications stated by the school. They must also be willing to allow the school to install a DMA software to provide a safe learning experience for them and to prevent misuse of the devices. If parents have questions about the devices, they can approach their child's teachers or HOD/ICT for assistance.

3 Can students share one PLD with their siblings?

For a smooth learning experience, it is strongly encouraged that each student has his/her own PLD as prescribed by the school. This is because different schools may tap on specific PLD for teaching and learning. In addition, the student will be required to use the PLD in school daily and for their learning after school, hence it might not be practical to share the PLD with their siblings.

4 Is the price of the PLD similar or lower than market prices?

The prices are similar or in most cases, lower than market prices. MOE has a process to review the prices with contractors to keep the prices competitive.

5 Will the PLD and SLS resources replace textbooks?

With the PLD, this allows students to access curriculum-aligned resources in the SLS in and out of class at their own pace to complement their learning. The PLD and SLS resources will not fully replace textbooks as textbooks are currently designed as curriculum-aligned reference for students.

6 How frequently will the PLD be used in class? Is there a recommended limit to screen time in class?

There is no recommended screen time as it depends very much on the nature of the activity. According to the American Academy of Paediatrics (2016), there is no one-size-fits-all approach to limiting the amount of screen time for teenagers. The academy recommends that screen time takes into consideration a child's developmental stage, how the technology is used, the quality of the content and design of the material. Schools will design their learning programmes to ensure that the students' use of PLDs is balanced in relation to other activities and modes of learning.

However, all PLDs will be installed with DMA, which allows teachers to manage students' screen time if they so desire. Teachers will also continue to ensure that the amount of assignments set (both online and offline) is guided by the school's homework policy.

Questions about the Personal Learning Device (PLD)

7 What is the battery life for the laptops?

The battery of a fully charged device will be sufficient for a typical day of school activities, with a mixture of active use and idle periods. Students are to ensure their PLDs are fully charged at home before bringing them to school.

8 What is the expected shelf life of the PLD? What happens to the PLD after the student graduates?

The PLDs have an average shelf life of 3-4 years, to cover the time a student is in a secondary school. The school will uninstall the Device Management Application (DMA) from the PLDs upon students' graduation, and students will have full control over their PLDs afterward.

Questions about the Warranty, Insurance and Security

9 What is covered by the insurance?

The PLD will come with a 3-year warranty and insurance coverage allowing for claims of two repairs or one replacement. The following events are covered by insurance:

- Fire
- Lightning
- Power Surges
- Accidental e.g water spillage, drop etc
- Theft due to forcible entry
- Robbery

10 What happens if the device is stolen/lost?

The insurance coverage is only applicable to situations of damages and loss where the student has taken all necessary precautions to safeguard the PLD. A police report will need to be made for the insurance claim.

11 Does a police report need to be made if a student loses his/her PLD due to negligence?

Accidental loss due to negligence is not covered by insurance and a new PLD will need to be purchased by the parent. The school will assist in purchasing a replacement PLD.

12 What if the PLD is faulty?

Technical support will be provided to students through:

- The School's Service Desk set up after school from 3 to 4pm daily
- Acer Service Centre at 29 International Business Park (1.1km from Jurong East MRT)

13 What happens if students damage their PLD accidentally?

If the PLD is damaged, the parents/student can report it to the school. The school will coordinate with the vendor on the assessment of damage and repairs. If there are additional costs incurred, the vendor will contact the parents/student before proceeding with the repair. All additional costs for repairs will be borne by the parents/student if not covered by insurance.

Edusave funds cannot be used to pay for the cost of repairs.

If the device is damaged beyond economical repair and is not covered by insurance (coverage against damage and loss/theft), the replacement device will have to be paid for by the parents/student.

14 Would it not be better if the devices could be insured/have a warranty period of 4 years as a standard?

Extended warranty beyond 3 years for computing devices is not available in the open market. It would be very costly to incorporate such a requirement and it makes more economical sense to replace the device when it is beyond economical repair after 3 years.

15 Where will students store their PLDs when they go for recess or PE lessons? Will students be allowed to store the PLDs in school overnight?

The school has installed lockers for students to store their valuables. Students are expected to secure their PLDs in the lockers when they are away from their classrooms. Students should bring home the PLDs at the end of the school day so that they can utilise the PLDs for learning at home as well as charge them for use the next day.

Questions about the Device Management Application (DMA)

16 Is it necessary to install the DMA?

DMA software will be installed on your child's PLD to provide a safe learning experience and to prevent misuse of the PLD. The DMA will be uninstalled from the PLD when your child graduates/leaves the school.

17 Who manages the parental control for DMA?

The Parent/guardian of the student will manage parental control. The school may structure control of device management such that parental control is enabled after school hours, during weekends and school holidays. However, parents will not be able to override the base set of device management rules (e.g. restriction of sites) set by the school.

18 Will the PLDs be programmed to disallow students from downloading games?

As part of user management, DMA can determine the appropriate teaching and learning applications as well as security patches, to be installed into every student's PLD. For example, inappropriate websites as well as gaming and gaming websites or applications can be restricted (through either whitelisting or blacklisting). The school will have the discretion, in the interests of their students, to decide what applications and websites to enable/disable.

Questions about Edusave, Subsidies and Payment

- 19 **Can students use their Edusave Fund to purchase PLDs from vendors not engaged by the school?**

Edusave fund can only be used for purchases facilitated by the school through MOE's bulk tender.

- 20 **Can the 2020 Edusave top-up of \$200 only be used for the purchase of the PLD?**

Although the one-time Edusave top-up of \$200 in April 2020 is not ring-fenced for the purchase of the PLD, its intent is to enhance the affordability of PLDs for students. Parents are thus encouraged to draw down on the Edusave funds to offset the purchase of PLDs.

- 21 **Can Edusave be used to pay for purchase of accessories/peripherals for the PLD?**

Edusave can only be purchased for accessories/peripherals that are bundled with the initial PLD. Edusave cannot be used for individual's purchase of optional accessories / peripherals from the vendor.

- 22 **For students whose parents do not want schools to deduct their Edusave for the purchase of PLDs, can they pay cash instead?**

It is compulsory for all MOE FAS students to use their Edusave to purchase the PLDs. This authorization is already covered in the 2021 FAS application form.

School-Based FAS students are strongly encouraged to sign up for the PDLP Standing Order so as to minimize the cash outlay.

For Singapore Citizen students who are not under MOE FAS or School Based FAS, parents may choose not to use the Edusave and pay the amount through AXS/AXS mobile app/cash upon receiving the school bill. Parents opting to pay cash and are onboard GIRO should ensure sufficient amount in their bank account.

- 23 **I require financial assistance for the purchase of the PLD. How can I apply?**

Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents and International Students who require financial assistance and meet the income criteria of Gross Household Income (GHI) \$4,000 or less, or Per Capita Income (PCI) \$1,000 or less, may apply for financial assistance through the school's General Office.

If you are recently retrenched, please produce a "Letter of Retrenchment" from your company.

When assessing GHI and PCI of needy International Students, parent's income will be based on the income of parents who may be residing overseas, and not the local guardian's income. Electronic signatures are acceptable in the application if the parents are residing overseas.

MOE FAS and School-Based FAS students do not need to apply for subsidy.