Frequently Asked Questions about the Personal Learning Device Program

Students entering Year 7, 9 & 11 in 2016

What cost is involved?
The St Pius X PLD Fee. Details are outlined in the Personal Learning Device Program Flyer and in the PLD Rental Agreement.

Is the PLD Fee going to be the same every year?
The fee will remain unchanged across the two years of the agreement. Beyond that a new device and a new charge will be determined.

At the end of the life cycle of the PLD, can I buy it outright?
St Pius X College leases the devices. At the end of year two, and once all payments have been made you can elect to purchase the device with a residual payment. The College will ask you to elect this option in Term 4, 2017.

What if my son leaves St Pius X College before payments are complete?
The PLD is to be returned immediately and in good condition. Other arrangements are outlined in the Termination section of the PLD Rental Agreement.

What if my son decides he just does not like working with the PLD? Can he opt out?
No. For the PLD Program to be successful, every student will participate. Every effort will be made to support students in their learning, and in using the PLDs. As with any situation, if the student is experiencing difficulty we should communicate and work together to create solutions.

We have a family computer at home. Will my son require continued access to it?
Generally, your son will be able to produce all required tasks on the PLD. Your home computer may be required to supply your WiFi network at home.

Depending on the subjects your son undertakes, software requiring a highly specified computer may be required and access to the College’s computer labs will be arranged.

We do not have wireless access at home. Do we need it?
Your son will be required to access the College’s Learning Management System (eAccess) and other digital content via the Internet. Wireless access would facilitate the use of the PLD at home. However, most tasks can be completed on a broadband enabled computer, at the College Library or at a local library where home wireless access is not available.
Will my son have to take his PLD to the College every day?
Yes. The PLD Program has been designed to integrate into almost every aspect of the curriculum. There may be rare occasions when the computer should not be brought to school (for example, the Swimming Carnival).

Will my son still use pen and paper?
Yes. Computers are a tool for learning. PLDs will not replace all methods of teaching and learning, and there will continue to be a place for writing on paper. The development of good penmanship will remain a focus of teaching and learning at St Pius X College. The selected PLDs also have an improved stylus to facilitate handwriting on the tablet devices.

Will PLDs replace text books altogether?
No. Our survey of students indicate that there is a high preference for a paper copy of textbooks. Most required textbooks come in an electronic format and will be made available to students. This is where students will access multimedia digital content.

Will Book Hire books remain in circulation?
Yes and electronic copies of them will be made available.

Will the PLD make the school bag too heavy?
The PLD is light. The PLD will be loaded with digital copies of some textbooks offsetting some weight.

My son has an iPad/Android device at home. Can we use this instead?
No. It is important that all students have the same PLD. The St Pius X College PLD is an integrated package of learning integration, support, hardware, data, spares, apps, software, warranty and service agreement. During repairs students are provided with an equivalent PLD to ensure no interruption to their workflow.

The College provides the device to ensure that all machines are loaded with essential apps and software, internet security can be maintained and that maintenance is streamlined.

My son has a learning difficulty. Will this make high school harder?
St Pius X College offers individualised support for students with individual learning needs. For the past number of years, technology has been found to assist many students with their individual needs. Please contact the Learning Support Coordinator if you have any queries.
What are the procedures for students when they attend PDHPE classes and/or their bags are stored outside classrooms? Will the PLD survive the rough handling of boys?

Students will be encouraged to use lockers wherever possible to store their PLDs. However, there will be times when PLDs need to be carried to class and stored. All teachers will store PLDs in secure and appropriate locations. Students must keep the PLD in its sleeve.

What if the PLD breaks, stops working or is stolen?

Report any problems to the College’s ICT Help Desk. The problem will be managed at school and through our insurance provider, iBroker. Please check the PLD Rental Agreement for specific details. Students will be provided with an equivalent PLD once all forms have been received and processed.

What happens if my son loses his stylus pen?

The PLD can still be operated without the stylus pen. Replacement pens will be available from the College at a charge for Lenovo products. Microsoft Surface Pro accessories can be purchased from major electrical retailers in the Chatswood CBD.

Our family is not so good with computers. How can we support our son at home if he has a technical problem?

Report any problems to the College’s ICT Help Desk as soon as possible. It is open every school day from 8am to 4pm.

What if my son uses the computer to access inappropriate websites or chat rooms? Or just surfs the net to waste time?

Most students use their PLDs responsibly and teachers will educate them in appropriate use. St Pius X College has security and filters in place, but these are not infallible. A helpful teacher or parent nearby at home is the best filter.

Will my son be able to load his own apps onto the PLD?

Students will be able to add legally acquired apps but with this facility comes responsibility. Apps must be appropriate for school use. Parents should check their son’s PLD regularly.

How will my son purchase apps?

Paid apps can be acquired through the use of the Microsoft Store Gift Card. These are available in denominations of $25 from major electrical retailers in the Chatswood CBD. 

Parents should not provide their credit card details to their son for the purpose of purchasing apps.

Will my son be able to access games on the PLD?

Yes. Students will be able to access games. However, our teachers are preparing our students for a workplace of learning and inappropriate content and use of games in class will be a discipline issue.

What if my son forgets to charge the battery and it runs out at school?

Students are required to have the necessary equipment, such as texts, pens and paper. An uncharged battery is treated in the same manner as forgotten learning
equipment. A replacement is not available for use in the day. There will be no designated charging stations.

**Won't it take a long time to log on and off at the start and end of each lesson?**

Students should only need to perform one full login at the start of the day, which will typically take less than 1 minute. Resumption from standby is an instant on.

**How will my son manage files etc. across multiple machines?**

Students will be explicitly taught how to use their OneDrive account to access their files on multiple devices. USB memory devices should be used to take a backup. Students are responsible for their own backing up!

**How will my son print?**

At home or through the College Library (charges apply). Assignments from time to time will need to be printed, but the College is moving towards more electronic submissions. Examinations will still be handwritten.

Printing will not be facilitated in general purpose classrooms.

**Will the PLD work on our home wireless network and home printer?**

Yes. If you are familiar with networking, the PLD can be added to a home network, as long as the College’s network and security settings are not interfered with. Please contact the ICT Help Desk for further information.

**Will my son use an electronic diary?**

In 2016, students will continue to use the College Student Diary. However, your son will access his timetable through the College Portal. Timetables will no longer be printed by the College.

**Will my son require headphones?**

Yes, any standard set of ear phones (ear plug type) can be used. A recycled set of mobile phone headphones with a microphone are suitable for use at school. The Uniform Shop sells suitable sets.

**Does a PLD get viruses? How secure is it? Can my son access inappropriate content?**

While using the College Wi-Fi network, all online content will be filtered to prevent students accessing inappropriate content. Provision of internet security and appropriate use at home will be the responsibility of families. The College encourages parents to discuss expectations with their son regarding appropriate use of the device. It should be noted that no device can be guaranteed to be 100% secure.

**What level of IT support will St Pius X College provide?**

Our ICT Helpdesk personnel will be available to support PLD users. We will provide assistance with technical issues, such as ensuring that the student’s PLD connects to the Wi-Fi network and all available services such as email. The College will not undertake mechanical repairs. All PLDs will be under warranty, so any technical faults will be addressed under the terms of the warranty. Please see the PLD Rental Agreement for details.
What professional development will teachers receive?

All teachers in 2016 will participate in a series of professional development workshops throughout the year. They will be given time to learn how to use the device and then explore curriculum integration strategies to effectively plan and implement learning programs on the PLD.

Will my son still require a calculator?

Yes. School examinations and external testing will require a compliant calculator. The PLD is not suitable for examinations.

What if my question is not answered here?

Please ask! We understand that there may be some early confusion and questions not included in this FAQ. We welcome input from parents, students and staff and would be grateful for any feedback.