

May 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Year 9 BBC micro:bit initiative

In 2016, the BBC had their most ambitious education initiative for 30 years, up to 1 million devices were to be given to every 11 or 12 year old child in Year 7 or equivalent across the UK, for free. It was a one-off project that formed part of the BBC's Make It Digital campaign, and it has not been repeated. The UK currently faces a critical skills shortage in the technology sector, and the BBC and partners aimed to help change that through the project. The Holt School was successful in applying for the project but due to difficult circumstances there has been a delay in rolling it out.

If your child was a student at the school in year 7 then they are going to be offered a BBC micro:bit. The BBC micro:bit is a pocket-sized, codeable computer that allows children to get creative with technology. Your child will receive their own micro:bit computer along with a USB cable and a battery pack and it will be theirs to own, keep and use.

The computing department will introduce the students to the micro:bit and show them how to create a program using the BBC micro:bit website. If your child feels, after their introductory lesson, that they will not intend to continue to use it at home, then they can leave their micro:bit at school instead so that it can be used by other interested students, such as the programming club.

For more information on the micro:bit please visit www.microbit.co.uk. The 'Teachers and Parents' section has some good resources and videos, including some on getting parents started. The website allows people to create code using four different programming languages without needing to login, and it includes emulators so you don't even need to have the device available.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

We would like to direct you towards the website terms of use and the house rules – available at www.microbit.co.uk/terms-of-use and <https://www.microbit.co.uk/house-rules>. By allowing your child to use the BBC micro:bit service, you will be allowing your child's contribution to be freely used, shared, copied, redistributed, adapted, remixed or transformed. As a parent or carer, you are responsible for their activity outside of the classroom. We will let the children know that they shouldn't include any personally identifiable information within their own scripts but we would ask that you encourage this too. More about what to do if you are concerned can be found on the website.

We hope that your child has an enjoyable experience and is inspired to explore and learn from the coding activities on the site and through the device itself. We wish your child many hours of challenging fun learning to code and programming their BBC micro:bit.

If you would like any further information on what we will do in the introductory lessons, please do get in contact.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Dearing
Head of Computing