Using the Back-Up Drive

Back-up drives came with the laptop bundles and anyone using a school laptop will be sent a back-up drive in the near future. **The school will not be maintaining a copy of children’s files, so these devices must be used at least weekly at home.** The backing up of work is your child’s responsibility. The process has been demonstrated to them.

Using the drive is simple. It doesn’t require external power; just plug it into a USB port on the MacBook. The first time you plug it in, you will be guided through the back-up process and it will take a couple of hours (it doesn’t require you to sit with it for very long). Make sure you have the MacBook connected to power. The back-up drive will make a copy of everything on your computer’s hard drive, using a program called Time Machine. This program’s icon is a circular arrow in the top menu bar. While the arrow is rotating, the drive is backing up data. You can click on the icon to see the time remaining. Alternatively, Time Machine may be accessed through System Preferences, under the Apple menu.

**When the back-up is complete, do not simply unplug the device. You must eject it, otherwise the disk may become corrupted.** You can eject it in a couple of ways, but the easiest way is to open a Finder window (the blue, smiling icon on the left hand side of the Dock, positioned either on the bottom or the side of the screen) and click on the eject button beside Time Machine. Otherwise, drag the desktop icon into Trash, and that will also perform the eject function.

Each subsequent back-up will only take a few minutes at most, depending on how much new data has been created on the MacBook.

The back-up drive has a capacity of 320GB and will store many back-ups over time, side by side. When the disk becomes full, it will overwrite the oldest back-up.

Make sure you treat the back-up drive with the same care as your MacBook. It can easily be damaged by dropping or knocking it. Also, make sure the drive is stored separately to the MacBook. If the computer is stolen, you don’t want the back-up drive stolen as well.

The back-up drive should be kept at home in a safe place.

In the event of any child needing to use Time Machine to restore lost files, this should be communicated to us via the log book, which will travel with the MacBook to and from school. We will happily do it for you or guide you through the process, but in all likelihood, it probably won’t be necessary to do.