

3rd February 2015

Dear Parents/Carers

In ICT this half term we have been looking at Robotics and Systems, and have focussed on Raspberry Pi's. The **Raspberry Pi** is a low cost, credit-card sized computer that plugs into a computer monitor or TV, and uses a standard USB keyboard and mouse. It is a capable little device that enables people of all ages to explore computing, and to learn how to program in languages like Scratch and Python.

A lot of children have expressed an interest in these devices, and have been asking the best place to purchase them. Starter kits such as we have in school can be purchased through Amazon. The current version is the B+. The B+ model is very similar to the B model we have in school but it adds two more USB ports, more GPIO pins, uses a micro SD card and has better audio and a neater "look". Everything the children are doing at school they will be able to do with the B+ model.

You can buy the basic, barebones Raspberry Pi for £22.70 (<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Raspberry-Pi-Desktop-700MHz-Processor/dp/B00LPESRUK>). For most people, however, we recommend the Vilros Raspberry Pi B+ Complete Starter Kit for £34.99 (<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Vilros-Raspberry-Pi-Complete-Includes/dp/B00PR0AN9Q>) as this includes a case, a power supply, an SD memory card, an HDMI cable and a wireless adapter to allow the Pi to connect to your wireless network. If you do not already have a USB keyboard and mouse then you can buy a very good basic Microsoft set for £13 (<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Microsoft-Wired-Desktop-Keyboard-Mouse/dp/B004LR878U>).

You can also buy slightly bigger starter kits that include extras such as cables, LEDs and breadboards that mean you can get into more projects. For example, you will see an option for the £44.99 Vilros "Ultimate" kit on the Amazon page linked above.

If you decide to purchase the raspberry pi, please feel free to bring in the SD cards to school, and I will upload the same operating system as we are using in school, which will hopefully mean the children are more confident in navigating and using the Pi.

There are also some books that the children may be interested in to support their learning – Adventures in Raspberry Pi by Carrie-Anne Philbin, and there is also an Adventures in Minecraft by Martin O'Hanlon and David Whale.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Alison Walker