



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Families,

Whiteboard Pens

As you know whiteboards are an essential element of our approach to teaching and learning. This equipment allows students to develop good learning habits enhancing classroom engagement whilst giving real-time opportunities for our teachers to assess student understanding. This interactive approach helps identify learning gaps and reinforces key learning points, making whiteboards indispensable in creating an adaptive learning environment. **Students consistently tell us how much they enjoy and value using whiteboards.**

Environmental Cost

We have been reviewing our approach of providing replacement whiteboard pens for free and it has become clear that this has an environmental cost that cannot be overlooked. We recently surveyed pens that students had handed in to exchange for a replacement and we found that nearly half were still in working order. Clearly, the practice of discarding pens that are still in working order contributes significantly to waste.

As proud holders of the Eco-Schools Green Flag, we must lead by example in promoting responsible resource use. Encouraging students to use their pens until they are completely empty can greatly reduce waste.

Change of approach

Whilst well intentioned, we cannot continue to give out whiteboard pens to students without cost because this does not incentivise students to make full use of their equipment, and this is leading to ever rising costs as students take this service for granted. Therefore, **from Monday 24th February, students will be expected to purchase their own whiteboard pens and to keep a small supply of these in their pencil cases.**

We have considered the impact of this change on students facing disadvantage and we will contact those students to ensure that this change does not cause any detriment and that they have separate arrangements.

Where can I buy whiteboard pens?

Bundles of pens can be purchased through MCAS and collected by students from Student Services.

Filled pencil case (see MCAS for contents. Includes a whiteboard pen) - £1.80

2 whiteboard pens and a whiteboard - £1.00

3 whiteboard pens - £1.00

Alternatively, whiteboard pens can be purchased from a stationary shop or online, however these must not be permanent markers.

Please note: we are a cashless school. If you are not set up on MCAS please contact parentsupport@robertsmyth.tgacademy.org.uk to request a log in.

Behaviour Policy

Please note that as whiteboard pens are part of the listed school equipment, students will be subject to the Behaviour Policy if they are not equipped with a pen. We are writing this notice now so that families have sufficient time to buy some pens ahead of the return following the half-term break.

I hope you have a great weekend and spare a thought for those of us who will spend most of it monitoring the weather forecast and hoping that any snow passes us by!

Yours sincerely,