

Centrally configuring and deploying the NetSupport School Student extension for Google Chrome

In this guide we will explain how an IT administrator can use the Google Admin Console to centrally configure and deploy (force-install) the NetSupport School Student extension to the required student Chrome accounts. For instructions on how to install the additional NetSupport components required to facilitate a connection between a teacher's PC or Chrome device and student Chromebooks, refer to the companion document, **Configuring NetSupport School for use in a Google Chrome environment**.

One of the benefits of using Chrome devices is that the Google apps and extensions you use can all be managed and deployed centrally at user level using the Google Admin Console, avoiding the traditional need to physically install a program on a device. This is particularly useful when deploying the NetSupport School Student extension for Google Chrome to each student account.


The assumption is made throughout this document that you are already familiar with Google Admin best practice. If guidance is required, refer to Google's online help, but as a starting point, you should ensure the following steps have been taken to ensure a smooth deployment of the NetSupport School Student extension:

- To be able to enforce the policies you set in the Admin Console, make sure you have 'enrolled' your Chrome devices correctly. You must enroll a device before any user signs in to it (including the administrator). If a user signs in first, your policies will not apply, and you must wipe the device to restart enrollment. >>**How to Enroll Chrome Devices**<<
- Configure your Organisational Unit (OU) structure within the Admin Console to allow you the ability to force install/configure the NetSupport School Student extension settings for the required user accounts at the appropriate OU level. >>**How the Organizational Structure works**<<

Centrally deploying the NetSupport School Student extension for Google Chrome

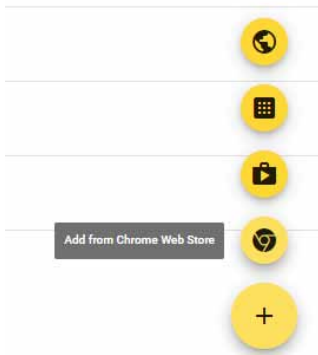
The Google Admin Console enables you to centrally prepare your Google apps and extensions at user (OU) level to ensure they are automatically available when the required users login to their Chrome account from any Chrome device. But in the case of the NetSupport School Student, there is an additional step to follow to ensure each student can then make a connection with the teacher's machine at the start of the lesson.

Step 1 – Set the NetSupport School Student extension to 'force-install' at the correct OU level

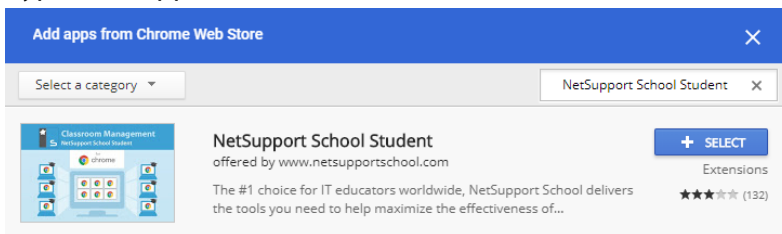
1. Login to the Google Admin Console.
2. Click on the 'hamburger' menu option  in the top left corner of the Console and select **Devices**. (It is recommended that you always use the 'hamburger' menu to navigate and not the icons).
3. Select **Chrome**.
4. Select **Apps & extensions**.
5. Select the OU level that contains the required student accounts that you want to force-install the NetSupport School Student extension onto.



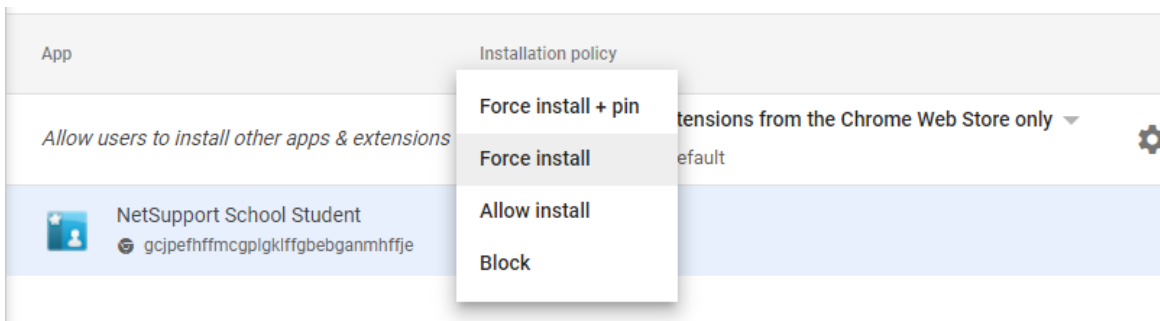
6. Search for the NetSupport School Student. In the bottom right of the screen, click the option to add from the Chrome Web Store.



7. Type "NetSupport School Student" in the Search box and click **Select**.



8. Once added, select the Installation policy drop-down menu next to the NetSupport School Student extension and select **Force Install**. (You can choose to force-install with a pin if required.) This setting can be applied locally or inherited from your top level OU.



9. Click **Save** in the top right of the screen.

REVERT SAVE


10. The NetSupport School Student extension is now set to force-install when the selected users (students) login to a Chrome device.

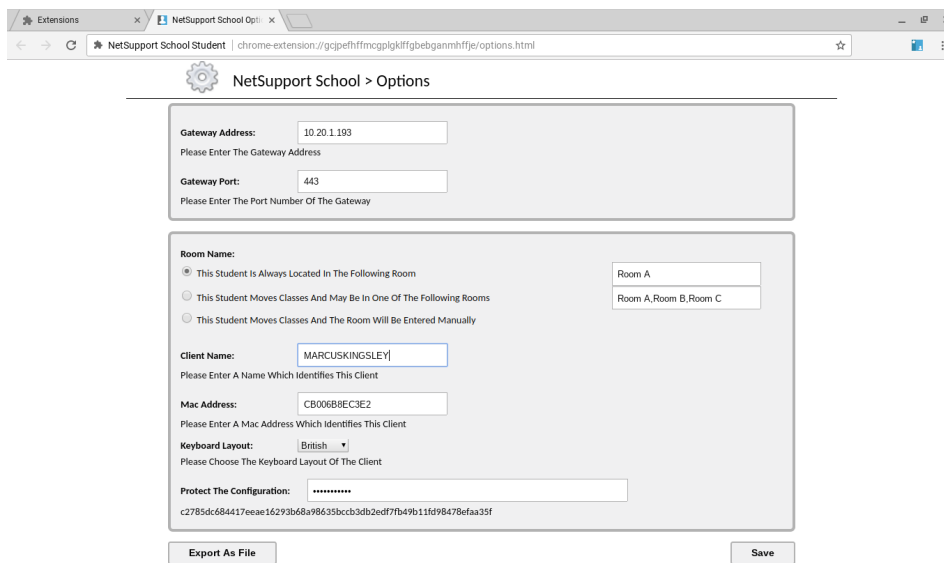
To complete your NetSupport deployment, you also need to generate a configuration file (policy) containing the required NetSupport connectivity settings. It is these settings that will facilitate the connection between the student and teacher machines. Once created, the file is copied to the Google Admin Console.



Step 2 – Creating the NetSupport School Student configuration file

For convenience, NetSupport provides a ready-made template, the 'NetSupport School > Options' page, to help you configure the required connectivity settings (policy). This is accessed outside of the Google Admin Console with the generated file then copied to the Google Admin Console. The easiest way to access the NetSupport School Options page is to install the Student extension on your local machine.

1. Open a Chrome browser on your local machine and go to the Chrome Web Store.
2. Search for the 'NetSupport School Student' and click **Add to Chrome**.
3. Once installed, right-click on the NetSupport School icon  at the top right of the screen and select **Options**. The 'NetSupport School > Options' page will appear.



Gateway Address and Port

A NetSupport School **Name & Connectivity Server (or Gateway)** is required in order to manage connections between the teacher's machine and the student Chromebooks. This needs to be installed on a Windows Server, with the IP address and port (443 by default) of the machine entered on the Options page to confirm how the Student Chromebooks will connect to the teacher's PC or Chrome device. The document **Configuring NetSupport School for use in a Google Chrome environment** provides full installation instructions.

Room Name

To maximise teaching time, NetSupport School's handy **Room Mode** offers a quick and easy method for teacher and student devices to connect to each other at the start of a lesson. Depending on how you organise access to your Chromebooks, the student devices can be configured in one of three ways:

"This Student is Always Located in the Following Room"

If the Student is always assigned to the same classroom, enter the room name here.

"This Student Moves Classes and May Be In One of the Following Rooms"

If the Student moves between classrooms, you can enter multiple room names separated by a comma. (To select the correct room, the Student simply clicks on the NetSupport School Student icon in their Chrome browser and the room list will be displayed.)

"This Student Moves Classes and The Room will be Entered Manually"

Select this option if there are no set rooms and you want the students to enter the room name manually each time they want to join a NetSupport-managed lesson.



Client Name

This is a unique identifier for each Chromebook user and is the name that will also be displayed in the NetSupport School Tutor interface to enable the teacher to identify each Student device. By default, this will display the first part of the logged-in user's email address (as associated with their Google account). Depending on your preferred mode of connection (User Mode, Name Mode etc), you can change the value but it must remain unique and up to a limit of 30 characters.

As explained below, it is recommended that the applied options are protected to prevent students making changes. However, should you find that the page has been accessed during a session and the Client Name field manually changed, you can insert a reset instruction in the configuration file that reverts back to the default Client name next time the NetSupport Student extension is launched.

Enter the parameter as follows: **"resetClientName":true,**

Note: *At the start of a lesson, the teacher also has the option to create a 'Student Register' within the NetSupport School Tutor program that can be used to replace the generated Chromebook Client name with, for example, the actual student names.*

MAC Address

If your Chrome devices are centrally managed and enrolled within the Google Admin Console, NetSupport School will form the address based on the registered device ID up to a limit of 12 characters. Alternatively, the address will mirror the Client Name field, again up to a limit of 12 characters.

In circumstances where the full ID is required in order to fully identify each device, generally when PC Mode is the preferred connection method, a parameter can be added to the NetSupport configuration file (Config.json): **"useFullDeviceIdentifier":true,**

Protect the Configuration

It is recommended that you always password protect the NetSupport School configuration settings. This ensures that if a student attempts to access the Options page from their Chromebook, they are blocked from making changes.

Click **Save** to store the configuration.

Export as File

This final stage creates the file required by the Google Admin Console to complete your centrally managed NetSupport School policy, as explained in step 1. However, before the file is generated, you have the option to allow certain future changes to the Options page, the Client Name and MAC Address. This will allow authorised administrators to manually edit these details if needed.

Policy Export Options X

Enable Client Name Change

Enable Mac Address Change

Generate File

Click **Generate File**. A basic configuration file is generated (named Config.json) and will be stored by default in your downloads folder.

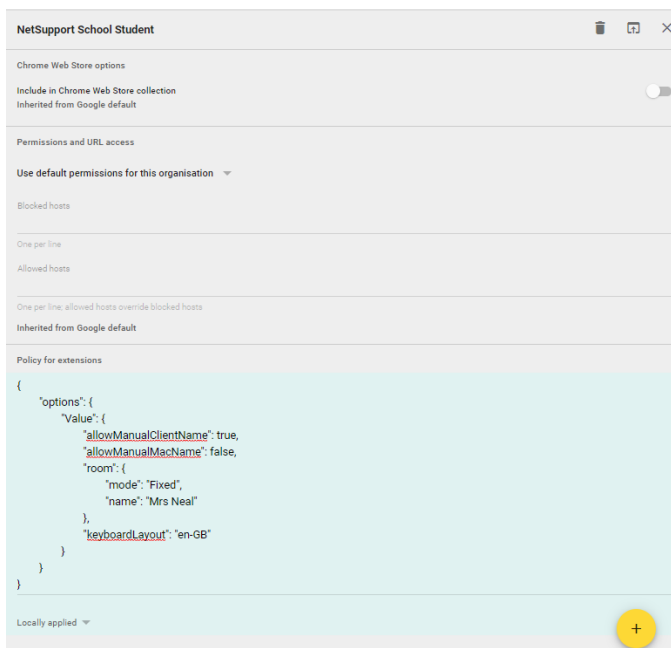


Example content of an advanced Config.json file including the information provided in the NetSupport Options page and any manual entries, such as the Reset Client Name and Use Full Device Identifier parameters:

```
"options":
{
  "Value":
  {
    "allowManualClientName":true,
    "allowManualMacName":false,
    "resetClientName":true,
    "useFullDeviceIdentifier":true,
    "gateways":[{"address":"10.20.1.64","port":443}],
    "passKey":"1cf6d697dffa84ff860591f00c32f722580c602e49dc1b3b06c8526bfc81161d",
    "room":
    {
      "mode":"Fixed",
      "name":"Room1"
    }
  }
}
}
```

4. Open the configuration file and copy the json information. Return to the Google Admin Console, select the NetSupport School Student extension in the required OU (step 1 above) and paste the json information into the 'Policy for extensions' section.

Note: If you are using the json information from the basic configuration file generated from the Options page, you may want to manually add the Reset Client Name and User Full Device Identifier parameters (see above screen shot), as they are not automatically included.



5. Click **Save**. The settings should apply automatically to any connected devices. If not, restart the devices.

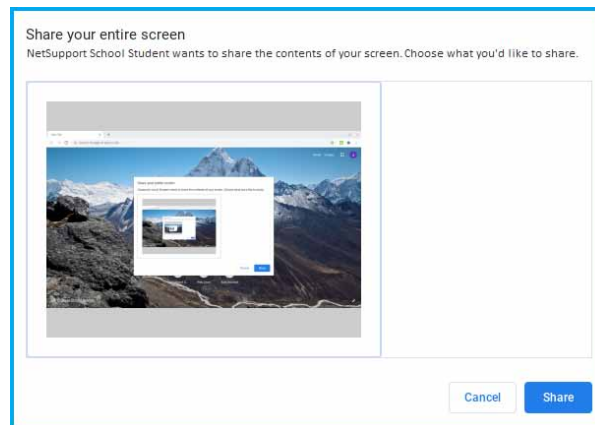


Appendix A

Change of behaviour for viewing student screens from version 2.0.2.0 (released November 2020)

Version 2.0.0.0 of the Student extension introduced the ability for a teacher (using the NetSupport School Windows Tutor) to view, in both thumbnail and view modes, a student's full desktop as well as the previous default behaviour, the open browser window only.

To facilitate this new option, students would need to acknowledge a 'share full screen' prompt that would appear on their screens. Until the students responded, the thumbnails at the Tutor would remain blank.



From version 2.0.2.0, this behaviour has been further modified in order to remove the blank thumbnail limitation.

The previous default of capturing a student's open browser on connection has been reinstated, but the share screen prompt remains, should you also want the flexibility of viewing the full desktop.

However, if you prefer not to offer this option and remain with the student's browser capture only, the prompt can be disabled by adding the following configuration string into the NetSupport School Student policy (.JSON), as explained above. **"useLegacyThumbnails":true,**

We hope that following these instructions will help ensure a smooth deployment of the NetSupport School Student extension for Google Chrome. However, if you require additional help, our [support team](#) will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.