EYFS Screen Use and Digital Technology Policy

Little Crickets at Park School

Policy date	September 2026
Review date	September 2027

Little Crickets at Park School recognises that young children learn best through hands-on experiences, play, exploration, physical activity and meaningful interaction with adults and peers. Technology may be a valuable tool when used appropriately, but it must never replace high-quality teaching, responsive communication, active learning or social engagement.

The setting has regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework and current Department for Education guidance on screen use when implementing this policy and making decisions about children's access to screens and digital technology.

Aims

- Promote healthy child development through play-based and real-world learning.
- Ensure that any screen use is purposeful, carefully planned and linked to specific learning and development aims.
- Minimise unnecessary and sedentary screen use.
- Support children's communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, and interaction with others.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage healthy, safe and balanced screen habits.

Guidance for Screen Use

Children under 2 years

Children under two will not routinely use screens. Screen use will only take place in exceptional circumstances, for example where assistive technology supports an individual's need or where a brief shared activity supports communication, interaction or connection with parents or carers. Any such use will be purposeful, brief, and supported by an adult.

Children aged 2 to 5 years

For children aged 2 to 5, screen use will be:

- Limited and carefully planned.
- Used only where it enhances learning and development.
- Adult-led or closely supervised, with active adult co-engagement.
- Age-appropriate, educational, and suitable for the child's developmental stage.

Current DfE guidance advises that screen time should be avoided for children under two, other than in exceptional circumstances, and that children aged 2 to 5 should have screen time limited to one hour a day, and less where possible. Staff will bear in mind that children may already reach these limits at home when deciding whether screens are needed in the setting. Screen use at Little Crickets will normally be limited to no more than approximately ten minutes within the nursery day, except where screen-based assistive technology is required to meet an individual child's needs.

Screen activities will never replace opportunities for:

- Outdoor play and physical activity.
- Creative, sensory, and imaginative experiences.
- Stories, songs, and shared books.
- Face-to-face social interaction.
- Communication and language development.
- Rest, sleep, and calm routines.
- Responsive interaction with adults.

Sedentary screen use will be avoided wherever possible. Technology will not replace physical activity, outdoor experiences, sleep or rest, imaginative play, face-to-face communication, or responsive adult interaction.

Appropriate Use of Technology

Technology may be used to:

- Research topics that support children's interests, e.g. finding out information on dinosaurs.
- View carefully selected photographs or short videos linked to learning experiences.
- View own home observations uploaded to Ovivio by parents.
- Listen to stories, music, and age-appropriate language programmes, such as phase 1 phonics games.
- Access educational games and activities such as Ten Town, Izzy's Island and Mini Mash.
- Support children with SEND where technology assists in communication, accessibility, or learning.

Any digital content used must be:

- Educational, age-appropriate, and relevant to a clear learning purpose.
- Free from unsuitable advertising, links and content.
- Checked by staff before it is shared with children.
- Slow-paced and suitable for young children's development.

Staff will avoid content that is fast-paced, overstimulating, social-media styled or designed primarily for passive entertainment.

Online Safety and Data Protection

- Internet-enabled technology will be closely supervised and configured to reduce access to unsuitable content.
- Appropriate device safety settings and approved, age-appropriate apps, websites and content will be used.
- Children will not access internet-enabled devices independently or use screens alone with other children without adult co-engagement.
- Staff will follow the setting's safeguarding, online safety, acceptable use, data protection and photography/image procedures.
- Personal information and images are not used on the learning programmes used with children.
- Any online-safety concern will be managed in accordance with the settings safeguarding procedures and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff Responsibilities

- Ensure all screen use has a clear educational or developmental purpose.

- Remain actively involved during screen-based activities and encourage conversation, questioning, and interaction.
- Monitor children's engagement, comfort and wellbeing, ending an activity if it is not beneficial.
- Turn screens off and remove them from view when they are not in purposeful use.
- Never use screens as a substitute for supervision, teaching, interaction, or behaviour management.
- Ensure children are never left alone to access digital devices.
- Model safe, responsible, and proportionate use of technology.

Background Screens

The nursery does not use televisions, tablets, or other screens as background entertainment. Screens will not be left on during free play, mealtimes, rest periods or routine activities.

SEND and Additional Needs

Some children may benefit from screen-based assistive technologies. Where appropriate, digital tools may be used to support communication, accessibility, language development, wellbeing, and individual learning needs. These uses will be planned around the child's individual requirements and, where appropriate, in consultation with parents, carers, and relevant professionals. General screen-time limits do not apply in the same way where screen-based assistive technology is essential to meeting a child's individual needs.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Little Crickets at Park School will:

- Share this policy and information about healthy, safe screen habits.
- Encourage a balance between screen use, sleep, physical activity, play, and family interaction.
- Discuss any concerns about screen use, online safety or child development with parents and carers.
- Promote consistent approaches between home and nursery where possible.
- Encourage shared screen use in which adults talk, ask questions and engage with children rather than children viewing alone.

Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Managers will monitor the use of screens and digital technology throughout the setting to ensure that it remains safe, appropriate, purposeful and aligned with the EYFS statutory framework, current DfE guidance and the setting's safeguarding arrangements. The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where statutory requirements, guidance, technology, safeguarding risks or setting practice change.