



EYFS Screen Time Policy



Reviewed by: Executive Headteacher

Next Review Date: 20 July 2027

Approved and Adopted by: LGB

Approval Date: 14 October 2026

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Screen Time Policy

1. Policy Statement

At Spring Lane Primary School, we recognise that digital technology is part of modern life. However, we firmly believe that young children learn best through real-world experiences, physical play, exploration, and responsive face-to-face interactions. In line with current UK government guidance, any use of screens or digital devices is strictly intentional, limited, and secondary to physical and social development.

This policy supports the school's implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026, including the requirement for providers to have regard to children's screen use.

2. Aims

- Promote healthy physical, social, emotional, and language development.
- Ensure screen use is purposeful and directly supports specific learning and development aims.
- Prevent passive, sedentary, or over-stimulating screen habits.
- Maintain clear safeguarding and online safety standards.
- Work collaboratively with parents and carers to share consistent messages.

3. Age-Appropriate Approach

Spring Lane Primary School provides EYFS education for children aged three to five. Screen use is kept limited, purposeful and appropriate to each child's age, development and individual needs. There is no routine entitlement to screen time and screens do not replace play, movement, talk, reading, exploration or interaction with adults and peers.

- Nursery (ages 3 to 4): Screen use is minimal and only used where it adds clear educational value, for example to support communication, music, storytelling, photographs, research or a carefully planned learning experience.
- Reception (ages 4 to 5): Screen use remains limited and purposeful. Digital technology may be used where it enhances teaching or learning, including carefully selected resources linked to the curriculum and the development of appropriate digital literacy.

4. Operational Principles & Best Practice

When screens are used to support educational aims, staff must adhere to the following rules:

- **Adult Co-Engagement:** Where children use screens, adults actively supervise and, where appropriate, talk with children about what they are seeing or doing so that screen use supports language, thinking and learning.
- **No Routine Passive Viewing:** Screens will not routinely be used for passive entertainment. Any video or digital content used must have a clear educational, communication or wellbeing purpose.
- **Content Selection:** Content must be age-appropriate, suitable for the intended learning purpose and checked by staff before use. Staff will avoid inappropriate, over-stimulating or unsuitable content.
- **Balanced Use:** Screens will not be used as a substitute for high-quality interaction, play, physical activity, outdoor learning, reading or responsive teaching. They will not routinely be used simply to occupy children or manage behaviour.
- **Mealtimes and Rest:** Screen use is avoided during meals and will not interfere with children's opportunities to rest, communicate and interact socially.
- **Background Screens:** Screens will not be left playing unnecessarily in the background.

5. Staff Role and Assessment Use

- School-approved digital devices may be used by practitioners for teaching, communication, administration and assessment-related purposes in accordance with the school's safeguarding, online safety and data protection procedures.
- Assessment in the EYFS is primarily based on practitioners' knowledge of children gained through observation, interaction and professional judgement. Digital tools will not create unnecessary assessment burdens or replace direct engagement with children.
- Photographs and videos of children will only be taken on school-approved devices and used in accordance with the school's safeguarding, data protection, image-use and parental consent arrangements.

6. Partnership with Parents

We work with families to promote healthy and balanced digital habits. Where appropriate, we share practical advice that encourages families to:

- Balance screen use with sleep, physical activity, play, reading, conversation and time outdoors.
- Consider screen-free routines, particularly around meals and bedtime.
- Talk with children about what they watch or use online and choose age-appropriate content together.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where statutory requirements or relevant guidance change. The Executive Headteacher and EYFS Lead will monitor implementation as part of the school's safeguarding and curriculum assurance arrangements.

8. Safeguarding and Online Safety Checklist

The following expectations apply whenever digital devices or online content are used within the EYFS:

Device and Network Security

- **School-Approved Devices:** Staff will use school-owned or school-approved devices for work with children. Personal devices must not be used to photograph, record or store information about children and must be managed in line with the school's safeguarding and staff conduct expectations.
- **Secure Connection:** Devices will use school-approved networks and systems, with appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements in place.
- **Safe Access:** Staff will use appropriate safe-search, filtering and privacy settings and will supervise children's access to online content.

Content and App Verification

- **Checked Content:** Staff will check apps, videos, websites and digital resources before use wherever practicable and ensure that they are appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children.
- **Social Media and Video Platforms:** Children will not independently access social media or public video-sharing feeds. Where an online video is used by an adult for a legitimate educational purpose, staff must ensure the specific content is appropriate and minimise exposure to adverts, comments, recommendations or unrelated material.
- **Age Appropriateness:** Staff will consider published age ratings and provider guidance alongside professional judgement, safeguarding requirements and the educational purpose of the resource.

Privacy and Data Protection

- Privacy Settings: Location services, geotagging and unnecessary camera or microphone permissions will be disabled or restricted on devices used with children wherever appropriate.
- Personal Data: Children's personal information will only be entered into approved systems or services where there is a lawful, necessary and school-authorised purpose.
- Secure Storage: Images, video and assessment information will be stored and shared only through school-approved systems and handled in accordance with the school's data protection and safeguarding procedures.

Supervision and Environment

- Screen Positioning: Where appropriate, screens will be positioned so that use can be appropriately supervised by staff.
- Active Supervision: Children's use of digital devices will be appropriately supervised. The level of adult support will reflect the activity, the children's age and development, and any individual safeguarding or SEND needs.
- Reporting: Any inappropriate content, safeguarding concern or suspected security/data breach must be stopped or contained immediately and reported through the school's safeguarding and information-security procedures, including to the DSL where the concern relates to a child.