



Screen Use Policy for Early Years Provision

Policy Name: Screen Use Policy

Applies to: All staff, volunteers, students, children, parents/carers and visitors

Review Date: September 2027

Linked Policies: EYFS Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, Online Safety Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour Policy

1. Policy Statement

At Tonacliffe, we recognise that young children learn best through play, exploration, real-world experiences, and responsive interactions with adults. While digital technology can sometimes support learning and development, it must be used carefully, intentionally and in line with children's developmental needs.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance for early years providers, which recommends a precautionary approach to screen use and emphasises the importance of limiting children's exposure to screens. [[help-for-e...ion.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/help-for-early-years-providers)]

2. Aims

We aim to:

- Promote children's healthy physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.
- Ensure screen use supports, rather than replaces, high-quality play and interactions.
- Use digital technology only when it has a clear educational purpose.
- Minimise unnecessary exposure to screens.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage healthy screen habits.
- Ensure all digital content is safe, age-appropriate and developmentally suitable.

3. Principles

Our approach is guided by the following principles:

- Children learn best through active play, exploration and real-world experiences.
- Screens should never replace adult interaction, play, movement, creativity or outdoor learning.
- Screen use must always have a clear learning intention.
- Screens will not be used as entertainment, distraction or behaviour management tools.
- Children will always be supervised when using screens.
- Background television or video content will not be used within the setting.

- Screen use will be carefully monitored to ensure it remains limited and purposeful. [[help-for-e...ion.gov.uk](#)], [[eyalliance.org.uk](#)]

4. Use of Screens with Children

Children Aged Three to Five Years

For children aged three to five:

- Screen use within the setting will be kept to a minimum.
- Technology may be used to enhance learning where it clearly supports curriculum objectives.
- Activities will be planned and led by practitioners rather than solely directed by digital content.
- Screen-based activities will not routinely form a significant part of the daily programme. [[help-for-e...ion.gov.uk](#)], [[eyalliance.org.uk](#)]

5. Appropriate Screen Use

Examples of appropriate use may include:

- Looking at photographs linked to children's interests or experiences.
- Accessing age-appropriate stories, songs or educational content.
- Supporting communication and language development with adult interaction.
- Researching topics linked to children's learning.
- Using digital devices to document learning and celebrate achievements.
- Supporting specific SEND needs through assistive technology. [[help-for-e...ion.gov.uk](#)]

All screen-based activities must:

- Be planned and purposeful.
- Be supervised by an adult.
- Encourage discussion, questioning and interaction.
- Support identified learning outcomes.

6. Content Standards

Any content shown to children must be:

- Age-appropriate.
- Safe and educational.
- Slow-paced and developmentally suitable.
- Free from advertising and inappropriate material.

The setting will not use:

- Social media-style videos.
- Fast-paced or overstimulating content.

- Content that encourages passive viewing for extended periods.
- Content not specifically designed for young children. [eyalliance.org.uk], [gov.uk]

7. Children with SEND

The setting recognises that assistive technologies can provide significant benefits for some children with SEND.

Where appropriate:

- Screen-based assistive technology may be used to support communication, wellbeing and learning.
- Decisions will be made in consultation with parents, carers and relevant professionals.
- Individual needs will always be considered when applying this policy. [help-for-e...ion.gov.uk]

8. Staff Use of Digital Devices

Staff may use digital devices for:

- Recording observations and assessments.
- Communicating with parents through approved platforms.
- Training and professional development.
- Accessing planning and educational resources.

Staff must ensure that:

- Personal mobile phones are not used.
- Children's learning is not disrupted by staff screen use.
- Appropriate safeguarding and data protection procedures are followed at all times.

9. Partnership with Parents and Carers

We will work with parents and carers to promote healthy approaches to screen use by:

- Sharing current guidance and information.
- Discussing children's screen use where appropriate.
- Encouraging a balance of sleep, physical activity, play and face-to-face interaction.
- Supporting parents to select suitable content and use screens together with their children. [help-for-e...ion.gov.uk], [gov.uk]

10. Monitoring and Review

The manager and leadership team will:

- Monitor screen use across the setting.
- Ensure staff understand and follow this policy.
- Review resources and content regularly.

- Update this policy in line with changes to national guidance and best practice.

Policy Approval

Approved By	Date
Headteacher/Manager	_____
Committee/Governing Body	_____
Review Date	_____

Reference: Department for Education, *Help for Early Years Providers: Screen Use*.

Mrs Charlotte Clutterbuck (EYFS lead) September 2026.
