



Brookland Infant and Nursery School

Screentime policy

Governors: February 2026



1. Intent

At Brookland Infant & Nursery School, our curriculum is designed to spark curiosity, build confidence, and provide every child with strong foundations for future learning. We believe that young children learn best through play, talk, exploration, storytelling, creativity, and secure relationships with adults and peers.

Alongside this, we follow the National Curriculum to teach the statutory elements of computing, ensuring that children develop early digital skills in an age-appropriate and balanced way. This supports children to begin understanding technology as a tool for learning, while also helping them to develop healthy, sensible habits around screen use from an early age.

Our curriculum places high value on communication and language, personal, social, and emotional development, and learning through first-hand, real-world experiences. These elements help children make sense of the world, build resilience, and develop a lifelong love of learning.

Technology can, when used thoughtfully, bring learning to life, introduce topics, support whole-class teaching, and make abstract ideas more concrete. However, in the early years and infant phase, screens must never replace rich interaction, active learning, or imaginative play, which are central to our curriculum intent.

This policy ensures that any use of technology:

- Supports curriculum aims and learning objectives
- Enhances development where it adds clear value
- Protects time for play, talk, creativity, reading, and human connection

Aligned with our school motto, *Be Kind, Grow Together, Learn Forever*, screen use at Brookland is purposeful, limited, and carefully chosen, ensuring learning remains active, social, and deeply human.

For the purposes of this policy: “Early Years” refers to Nursery and Reception, “Infant classes” refers to Nursery, Reception, Year 1, and Year 2. For the purpose of this policy, “screens” refers to any digital, screen-based device or display used to present visual or interactive content.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Interactive whiteboards used to show video or digital content
- Chromebooks
- Tablets (e.g. iPads)
- Visualisers when used with a screen

2. Core Principles

Purposeful, Curriculum-Led Technology Use

At Brookland, our learning principles of being creative, healthy, curious and ambitious shape everything we do. Technology is used only to enhance high-quality teaching, supporting explanation, modelling, and shared understanding where it adds clear value. Staff prioritise direct teaching, discussion, storytelling, and interaction, recognising these approaches are central to children’s progress, confidence, and enjoyment of learning.



Minimal and Intentional Use

Screen use in infant classes is kept to the minimum necessary. Technology is always used with clear educational intention, under adult guidance. Staff model balanced, mindful use of technology, demonstrating that screens are tools used purposefully.

Age-Appropriate and Curriculum-Driven

Technology is used only when it supports a specific curriculum objective. Staff avoid over-reliance on slides, videos, or other passive screen-based methods, especially where direct teaching, shared reading, discussion, or practical activity would be more effective. Technology is never used for passive entertainment or convenience during learning times.

Prioritising Play, Talk, and Interaction

In the Early Years (Nursery and Reception), learning through play, exploration, communication, interaction, and creative expression takes clear precedence over screen-based activities. Screens never replace imaginative play, storytelling, physical activity, or sustained talk, which are essential to children's development.

3. Teaching and Learning with Technology

Teacher Role

Staff model balanced, mindful use of technology, prioritising in-person interaction, dialogue, and hands-on experiences. Screens supplement, not replace, rich classroom discussion, storytelling, physical exploration, and creative tasks.

Digital Skills and Literacy

Children are gradually introduced to age-appropriate digital skills in line with the EYFS statutory framework and the National Curriculum and the school's curriculum intent. Lessons emphasise safety, curiosity, purpose, and critical thinking rather than passive consumption.

4. Technology and assessment

Required Screen-Based Assessments

While screen use is generally limited, purposeful, and supplementary, some government-mandated assessments require the use of technology. For example, baseline assessments in Reception must be completed within the first six weeks of a child starting school.

These activities:

- Are age-appropriate and supervised by staff
- Are part of statutory requirements and support planning for individual learning
- Are balanced with ongoing play, hands-on learning, discussion, and creativity
- Do not replace rich, interactive teaching or social experiences

We use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised for phonics and within this programme there are assessment activities which require the use of a screen.

These activities:

- Are **age-appropriate** and **fully supervised** by staff
- Support accurate assessment and inform next steps in phonics teaching
- Are **scheme-aligned** and used only where required for assessment purposes



- Are balanced with ongoing **active phonics teaching**, oral rehearsal, physical resources, and teacher-led interaction
- Do not replace high-quality, interactive phonics instruction

Staff ensure that these assessments are completed efficiently, with minimal disruption to daily routines, and maintain the overarching principle that learning remains active, social, and deeply human.

5. Guidelines for Screen Use in School

Appropriate Uses

Screens may be used when all of the following apply:

- The activity directly supports curriculum goals (e.g., introducing a topic, modelling a concept, supporting phonics, maths, or structured computing skills)
- The use is teacher-led, purposeful, with clear learning outcomes
- Screens are part of a balanced learning sequence, followed by off-screen activity

Inappropriate Uses

Screens must not be used:

- As a quick entertainment tool or default quiet time activity
- At the end of the day where unstructured screen watching replaces reflection, story time, or interaction

Quiet moments are instead filled with reading or enjoying a story with an adult.

Wet Play and Inclement Weather

At Brookland, we are committed to ensuring that learning and play remain hands-on and engaging, even during wet play or indoor time due to inclement weather.

Staff will:

- Prioritise wet play boxes and creative, hands-on activities to occupy children, such as crafts, building, sensory exploration, or small-group games
- Ensure screen use is avoided wherever possible, maintaining rich interaction, communication, and play
- Use screens only as a last resort if other activities cannot safely engage the children, and for minimal, purposeful periods

While every effort is made to provide stimulating off-screen experiences, it is acknowledged that screens may occasionally be necessary to manage safe, supervised indoor play.

Ad Hoc Resource Bank

A carefully curated bank of educational resources is available for staff to select from in specific circumstances. Resources are chosen responsibly and in line with curriculum aims.



Screens as Rewards

Occasionally, screens may be used as part of a class reward system, once agreed targets are met (e.g., when the class fills a marble jar). Screen-based rewards are carefully selected, age-appropriate, and supportive of learning and wellbeing.

At the end of term, a short, supervised film or video, (appropriate movie age ratings **U** (Universal)) may be shown as part of a celebratory activity. This is always planned, limited in duration, and does not replace key elements of learning, reflection, or story time.

6. Homework and Screen Time

Technology is used thoughtfully to support learning. Play, hands-on activities, and interaction remain the priority. Guided screen use at home may support curriculum goals and should involve adult supervision. We recognise that screen-based homework can present challenges for families, including managing access to other online content, maintaining healthy routines and balancing screen use with off-screen learning. Families are not expected to provide unsupervised access to devices, and parents and carers should use appropriate device settings, filters and supervision to support safe use at home.

Homework Practices

- Half-termly homework sheets in Year 1 and Year 2 provide hands-on, screen-free activities aligned with the curriculum
- Weekly online homework is offered for mathematics in Years 1 and 2, and spelling in Year 2, designed to be short, purposeful, and completed with adult support. As homework is supplementary and not compulsory, families may choose whether their child completes screen-based homework.

All homework is supplementary and not compulsory. Screen-based homework is intentional and curriculum-focused, reinforcing understanding without replacing practical or interactive learning. Families will not be disadvantaged if they choose a screen-free alternative. The school will continue to provide clear, manageable opportunities for children to practise learning away from screens.

7. Engagement with Families

Families play a vital role in how children engage with technology. We encourage parents and carers to:

- Support low-screen routines at home and no-screen routines before bedtime. We recognise that families may have different circumstances and routines, and encourage parents and carers to choose approaches that support their child's wellbeing and sleep.
- Engage in shared reading and conversation rather than screen use as a default
- Model balanced digital habits themselves

8. Smartphone-Free School

Brookland Infant and Nursery School is proud to be a Smartphone-Free School and a signatory to the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign. This commitment aligns with the Department for Education's strengthened national guidance, which makes clear that schools should be phone-free environments throughout the school day.



In an infant and nursery setting, this policy is not about children bringing mobile phones to school. Rather, it is about the culture we create, the boundaries we model, and the message we send about the importance of presence, attention, and human connection in early childhood.

In line with national guidance, Brookland Infant and Nursery School maintains a phone-free environment during the school day, meaning that:

- Mobile phones are not used in classrooms or learning spaces during the school day.
- Phones are not used for teaching, entertainment, or classroom management.
- Staff prioritise face-to-face interaction, play, talk, and shared experiences with children at all times.
- Adults model healthy and respectful technology habits, demonstrating that people come before devices.
- Parents and carers support this approach by limiting phone use on the school site during drop-off, pick-up, and school events, unless absolutely necessary.

(Exceptions apply for safeguarding, medical needs, or emergencies, in line with school procedures.)

By maintaining a smartphone-free environment, we:

- Protect children's attention, wellbeing, and sense of security
- Support calm, focused, and nurturing learning spaces
- Encourage warm, responsive relationships between children and adults
- Reinforce our commitment to intentional, minimal use of technology

This approach reflects both national expectations and our school values. We believe that early childhood should be filled with conversation, imaginative play, storytelling, and real-world discovery. By setting clear, age-appropriate boundaries around mobile phone use, we ensure that Brookland remains a place where children feel fully seen, heard, and supported to thrive.

9. The Brookland Playdate Pledge

As a school community, we invite families to support our approach beyond the school gates through the Brookland Playdate Pledge.

As families with infants and young children, we know that little ones learn best through simple, real-life play: playing games together, building with blocks or LEGO, engaging in art and craft activities, exploring sensory materials, moving their bodies, and discovering how the world works through trial and error. At this age, children do not need screens to be entertained or connected.

A shared, screen-free playdate agreement can help take the pressure off parents and carers. When families are on the same page, those who choose to limit screens at home can feel confident that their child will have a similar experience during playdates elsewhere. It also helps create an environment where no child feels left out and no adult feels uncomfortable about saying "no screens."

Participation in the Brookland Playdate Pledge is entirely voluntary and is intended to support, not judge, individual family choices.



Playdate Pledge:

We believe that young children learn best through hands-on, social play. By supporting this pledge, we agree that during playdates for our children:

- Playdates will be screen-free, with no television, tablets, phones, or computers used for entertainment.
- Children will engage in in-person play, such as toys, books, music, movement, imaginative and creative activities.
- Social media platforms (including YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, or similar apps) will not be used around children during playdates.
- Adults will model healthy technology habits by limiting personal screen use during playtime.
- Our focus will be on safe, joyful, and developmentally appropriate play.

We understand that this pledge supports children's social, emotional, and cognitive development, and helps build healthy habits from the very beginning. By working together, we strengthen our shared commitment to nurturing confident, creative, curious, ambitious and healthy children.

10. Wellbeing, Safeguarding and Safety

Technology use aligns with our safeguarding and wellbeing practices, ensuring all children are safe in digital environments. Devices and online access are filtered and monitored in line with UK safeguarding standards.

11. Review and Communication

This policy is reviewed every 2 years, or sooner if national guidance or statutory requirements change, and shared with staff and families. It complements our wider Child Protection and safeguarding Policy, Curriculum Policy, Early Years Foundation Stage Policy, Online Safety policy, Home-School Acceptable Use Agreement and the ethos that every child should feel safe, happy and be ready to learn.