



Holly Park School Screen Time Policy

1. Intent

At Holly Park School, our curriculum is designed to spark curiosity, nurture confidence, and give every child strong foundation to grow as happy, capable learners.

Technology can, when used thoughtfully, bring learning to life, introduce topics, support whole-class teaching, and make abstract ideas more concrete. However, screens must never replace rich interaction, active learning, or imaginative activity.

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 and human connection

Aligned with our school values, *Respectful, Resilient, Kind and Inquisitive*, screen use at Holly Park is purposeful, limited, and carefully chosen, ensuring learning remains active, social, and deeply human.

When we talk about screens in this policy, we mean use of Smart Screens on the classroom walls, Chromebooks, laptops and iPads used to present visual or interactive content.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Interactive whiteboards and classroom display screens 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 Holly Park, our learning principles of being creative, healthy, curious and ambitious shape everything we do. Technology is used 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 is kept to the minimum necessary. Technology is always used with clear educational intention and 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, Oracy 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.

In all classrooms, oracy and human interaction is prioritised.

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, 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 using a laptop and the Multiplication Check on Year 4 is done on laptops.

These activities:

- Are age-appropriate and supervised by staff
- Are part of statutory requirements and support planning for individual learning

We use Bug Club for phonics (and reading in EYFS and KSI) and within this programme there are reading tasks, activities and assessments that are done as whole class 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
 - Are balanced with ongoing active phonics teaching, oral rehearsal, physical resources, and teacher-led interaction
 - Do not replace high-quality, interactive phonics or reading instruction
- Are part of a DFE approved phonics scheme

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 or reading, 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 except for a planned marble treat.

Wet Play and Inclement Weather

At Holly Park, 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 games and creative, hands-on activities such as drawing etc
- 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 be necessary to manage safe, supervised indoor play.

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

Guided screen use at home may support curriculum goals and should involve adult supervision.

All screen-based homework is intentional, curriculum-focused, and reinforces understanding of learning at school.

Reading in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 is done electronically. This reinforces the reading done at school. It is not bedtime reading – it is a specific homework task. Children also take home a real book.

In Year 4 children do 20 minutes of multiplication homework each week on a screen on Times tables Rock Stars. This supports learning ahead of the Year 4 national test.

In Year 6 children can use My Maths online at home to do extra maths (separate to planned homework) to support them in the lead up to the national tests.

We use Google Classroom and all homework tasks are written on this so that parents can see what their child needs to do. The tasks however are done off line.

7. Engagement with Families

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

- Support screen-free or low-screen routines at home, especially before bedtime
- Model balanced digital habits themselves
- Attend our annual parent workshop about online safety.

8. Smartphone-Free School

Holly Park 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 line with national guidance, Holly Park 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 or classroom management.
- Staff prioritise face-to-face interaction, play, talk, and shared experiences with children.
- Adults model healthy and respectful technology habits.
- Parents and carers should support this approach by limiting phone use on the school site during drop-off, pick-up, and school events, unless absolutely necessary.

By maintaining a smartphone-free environment, we:

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

9. 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.

10. Review and Communication

This policy complements our wider Child Protection and safeguarding Policy, Curriculum Policy, Teaching & Learning policy and our Online Safety policy. This policy is available to parents on the school website.

Document Control

This policy will be reviewed biannually. Responsibility is delegated to the Governors Teaching & learning Committee.

Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Revised By	Revision
1.0	Spring 2026	Ann Pelham	Policy written
2.3	Summer 2026	T&L committee	Reviewed and ratified

Signed by

	Name	Signature	Date
Headteacher	Ann Pelham		Summer 2026
CO-Chair of Governors	Clare Hegarty		Summer 2026

Distribution

Shared with
• Staff via Google Drive • Parents via Website • Governors via committee meetings

Date for next review
Summer 2028