

SCREEN TIME POLICY

Please also refer to ICT policy

Policy Statement

At Box Pre School Playgroup we recognise that digital technology is part of children's lives. However, we prioritise play-based, social, and interactive learning, using screens only in a limited, purposeful, and educational way.

This policy is informed by national guidance, which recommends that children aged 2-5 should have no more than around 1 hour of screen time per day, and less where possible . Within our setting, screen use is kept well below this level.

Purpose of Screen Use

Screens will only be used to support learning and development, such as:

- Topic-related learning (e.g. short clips linked to themes or interests)
- Educational programmes (e.g. early maths, language, or social development such as *Numberblocks* or *Daniel Tiger* and *Sesame Street* for turn taking)
- Supporting children's understanding of the world
- Enhancing communication and interaction such as story telling programmes e.g. Julia Donaldson stories

Screens will **not** be used for passive entertainment or to occupy children.

Time Limits

- Screen use will be short and time limited
- Typically no longer than 10-20 minutes in a single session
- Total screen exposure within the setting will remain **minimal**

This reflects guidance to limit overall screen time and ensure it does not replace play, interaction, or physical activity .

Quality of Content

All content will be:

- Age-appropriate and educational
- Slow-paced and easy to follow
- Supportive of language, social skills, or learning goals
- Free from inappropriate or overstimulating material

Fast-paced or social media-style content will not be used, as it may affect children's ability to concentrate and learn .

Adult Involvement (Co-Viewing)

- Screens will always be used with adult supervision
- Staff will engage with children during screen use, asking questions and encouraging discussion
- Screen use will be interactive, not passive

Co-viewing supports children's development more effectively than watching alone .

Safeguarding and Online Safety

- Devices will have appropriate filters and parental controls
- Internet access will be restricted to pre-approved content only
- Children will not access screens independently

Screen-Free Environment

We ensure that:

- Most of the day is screen-free
- Screens are not used during mealtimes

- Screens are not used as a behaviour management tool
- There is no background television or device use

This supports children's communication, play, and social development .

8. Supporting Children with SEND

We recognise that some children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may benefit from screen-based tools.

- Assistive technology may be used to support:
 - Communication (e.g. visual aids, AAC apps)
 - Emotional regulation
 - Access to learning
- Use will be:
 - Individualised and planned
 - Balanced with opportunities for play and interaction

This reflects guidance that screen-based technology can be an important communication tool for some children .

9. Exceptional Circumstances

In rare situations where children need calming due to an emergency or extreme situation such as very hot weather, screens may be used as a supportive tool.

Screen use in these circumstances will be **short, purposeful, and focused on emotional regulation** · An adult will **always co-view** with the children, engaging and reassuring them throughout · Content will remain **educational, slow-paced, and age-appropriate**, consistent with our quality standards · Screens will only be used until children are settled and safe, after which normal screen-free practice will resume

Partnership with Parents

We will:

- Share this policy with parents/carers
- Encourage consistent approaches to screen use at home
- Provide guidance on healthy screen habits where needed