

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS & CARERS

Finding the Right Screen Balance

A Practical Guide from EYFS to Year 6 (Ages 3–11)



“Technology is a fantastic tool for learning and play, but getting the right balance helps our children sleep better, learn faster, and stay healthy.”

Based on Official Guidance From:

- UK Department for Education (DfE)
- NHS & Royal College of Paediatrics



Early Years & Key Stage 1

Nursery, Reception & Years 1–2 (Ages 3–7)



Under 2s

Avoid screens (except family video calls).

Ages 2–5

Max 1 hour / day slow-paced content.

Ages 5–7

Max 1–2 hours recreational use.

Key Advice for Young Minds:

- **Co-viewing:** Watch together and talk about stories to build language skills.
- **Slow Pace:** Avoid fast-cut, over-stimulating clips.

Key Stage 2 Guidance

Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 (Ages 7–11)



- **Limits:** Keep non-educational screen time under 2 hours daily. (Schoolwork does not count).
- **Visibility:** Keep devices in family spaces, not behind closed bedroom doors.
- **Age Ratings:** Check PEGI ratings for games and apps (e.g., PEGI 7, 12).
- **Smartphones:** UK DfE supports delaying personal smartphones in primary school.

Talk Early & Talk Often

- **Daily check-in:** “What was the most fun game or video you saw today?”
- **Reassure:** “Did anything online feel strange or make you feel worried?”

Safe Swaps & Family Hacks

Healthy Screen Swaps

- **Instead of TV in background:** Play audiobooks, music, or kids podcasts.
- **Instead of morning screens:** Try quick card games or drawing challenges before school.
- **Instead of bedtime tablets:** Enjoy 15 minutes of shared reading.

Setting Up Your Home

- **Broadband Filters:** Contact your Wi-Fi provider to block adult content at the router level.
- **Built-In Controls:** Use Apple Screen Time or Google Family Link for automatic bedtimes.
- **Family Agreement:** Agree on screen-free zones together so boundaries are clear.

 ***Remember: Small, consistent changes make a huge difference to your child's wellbeing!***

4 Golden Rules for Families



1. Bedrooms Screen-Free 🌙

Keep devices out of bedrooms overnight to protect vital sleep hygiene.

2. Protect the Pre-Bed Hour 🕒

Turn off screens 1 hour before bed so blue light does not disrupt sleep.

3. Screen-Free Mealtimes 🍽️

Meals are key for family talk. Keep tables clear of phones and tablets.

4. Lead by Example 👤

Children mirror adults—mindful adult device use creates healthy family habits.

Useful Resources & Support

Parental Controls & Online Safety

- **Internet Matters:** Step-by-step guides for controls on Wi-Fi, consoles & phones. (internetmatters.org)
- **NSPCC Safety Helpline:** Advice line: 0808 800 5002 (nspcc.org.uk)
- **National Online Safety:** App guides & PEGI ratings. (nationalonlinesafety.com)
- **Aspire Academy Trust: Online Safety** (aspireacademytrust.org/1094/online-safety)

UK Government Guidance

- **Best Start in Life:** Official UK advice on health & early childhood screen limits. (gov.uk)

School Contact & Support

Questions about digital wellbeing? Contact our school safeguarding team:

- **Safeguarding Lead:** Mrs Measom and Miss Manley
- **School Office:** 01566 781388
- **Website:** hello@warbstow.org.uk

FAMILIES & SCHOOLS: COLLECTIVE ACTION

TOGETHER, LET'S PROTECT CHILDHOODS FROM UNSUITABLE TECHNOLOGIES

Restrict

* Keep devices out of private spaces such as bedrooms. Only using devices in shared home areas is the best physical way to stay aware of your child's screen-based choices and activity.

* ALWAYS restrict and time-limit devices with the free tools supplied by major tech providers. e.g. Family Link (Google); Parent Dashboard (Amazon); Family Sharing/Screen Time (Apple). All games consoles also have such functions.

Step-by-step guidance for devices

* Set age-appropriate restrictions, so that NO unsuitable games or ANY social media apps can be accessed by children. (Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp etc. are all 13+)

* Set web browsers - such as Chrome, Safari or Edge - to allow NO websites except for those that you approve for access.

Understand

* Follow age-restrictions and enable parent supervised settings on games.
* Stay aware of the dangers surrounding technologies that children may become interested in as they grow older. Follow guidance on [Aspire's Online Safety page](#).

Limit

* Make space for activities away from tech - especially separate screens - to help provide a healthy, active, sociable balance.
* In later years, consider alternatives to 'smartphones' until children are older.

Explain

* Keep conversations with children open and regular.
* Maintain support, while letting children become competent users of technology at an appropriate pace.

