Screen Use and Digital Technology Policy

Version 1.1 | Updated: 7 October 2026 | Next review: October 2027

Our Approach

At Butterflies Toddles & Nature Pre-School, we believe young children learn best through real-life experiences, play, exploration and meaningful interactions with caring adults. As a nature-based setting, our day centres on indoor and outdoor play, curiosity, creativity, communication and physical development. We do not provide routine recreational screen time. Limited, purposeful screen use may support our Little Link interactive speech and language programme, with an adult actively involved throughout.

Children's Use of Screens

Children only use devices for educational purposes and with a member of staff. They do not have access to televisions, tablets, computers or other digital screens outside of the Little Link sessions. Our everyday provision prioritises outdoor exploration and adventures; storytelling and books; singing, music and rhymes; creative arts and messy play; physical activity; hands-on learning; and social interaction with peers and adults.

Little Link Speech and Language Programme

Little Link may be used as a planned resource to support communication and language. Any screen-based element will have a clear learning purpose and be delivered by a member of staff, individually or in a small group. Staff will model language, pause for responses, encourage turn-taking and connect activities with real objects, play and conversation. Face-to-face support is always at the forefront of our learning, planning and curriculum delivery. Little Link is used as an assessment tool and support.

How Sessions Will Be Managed

Sessions will be brief, with screen time kept to the minimum needed for the activity and adjusted to each child's age, developmental stage, attention and individual needs. Staff will follow programme instructions and any relevant advice from speech and language professionals. Children will be supported to take breaks or stop if they lose interest, become tired or appear uncomfortable. Alternative hands-on activities will be available. Screens will not be used during meals, to settle children to sleep, as a reward or to occupy children without adult interaction.

Safe Use of Digital Resources

Only nursery-authorised devices and resources approved by the manager will be used. Staff will check content before sessions and control access so children cannot browse freely or access unrelated content, advertising or automatic playback. Devices will be positioned safely, with comfortable sound levels, and stored securely after use. Staff will follow our safeguarding, online safety and data protection procedures. Any concern will be reported promptly to the safeguarding lead. Identifiable information about children will only be entered into digital services through an approved process, with appropriate privacy checks and any necessary parental permissions.

Staff Use of Technology

Staff only use digital devices for professional purposes, including delivering Little Link sessions, recording observations on Tapestry, emergency communication, accessing safeguarding information and taking photographs for children's learning journeys using authorised nursery devices. Personal mobile phones are not used within children's learning environments, in line with our Mobile Phone Policy. Device use must not distract staff from supervision or interactions with children.

Supporting Healthy Development

Active play, conversation, outdoor experiences and relationships remain central to our curriculum. Little Link activities will be balanced with movement and practical experiences, with opportunities to practise communication skills throughout the nursery day. The programme does not replace assessment, specialist advice or referrals where these are needed.

Partnership with Parents

We will explain to parents how Little Link is used and share relevant communication goals and practical ideas for home. We encourage families to prioritise shared experiences such as reading together, outdoor play, singing and conversation. Where screens are used at home, we encourage purposeful shared use with an adult and a balanced daily routine.

Monitoring and Review

The manager and SENCo will monitor how Little Link is used, including session length, children's engagement and how skills transfer into everyday interaction. Staff will review and adapt activities to individual needs and discuss progress with parents. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if the programme, our practice or relevant guidance changes.