# Electronic Addiction Policy AY2025-26

| Policy Name | Electronic Addiction Policy AY2025-26 |
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| Adopted Date | September 2025 |
| Review Date | September 2026 |
| Approved by | Principal – Olivia Rumah |

**Vision:**

At Oaktree Primary School, our vision is to nurture and challenge everyone in our learning community to be the best they can be.

**Mission:**

At Oaktree Primary School, our mission is to place children and families at the heart of everything we do, creating a vibrant, multicultural community school. Our aim is to create a safe, meaningful, and stimulating learning environment, where every day there is a magical journey of learning and enquiry for children to grow and be challenged to be the best people they can be. We aim to provide a child-centered, innovative, and inspiring curriculum developing lifelong learning skills. At Oaktree Primary School, we believe that we can achieve more when we share a common direction and a sense of community. Our mission is to embed an ethos of respect for each other and collaboration, valuing student, parent, and staff voices.

**Values:**

Oaktree Primary is a caring school, and we have defined four key values using the acronym 'CARE'

**COLLABORATION:** 'Sharing and Learning together'. Collaboration is working together in a team, contributing ideas and listening to each other to achieve our common goals.

**ACHIEVEMENT:** 'Be the best you can be." Achievement is striving to attain your personal goals, demonstrating perseverance and resilience.

**RESPECT:** Respect each other and our environment'. Respect involves taking responsibility for each other. Respect is speaking to and interacting with others in a courteous manner. It is about being honest, reliable and trustworthy.

**EMPATHY:** 'Treat others with care and compassion'. Empathy means trying to understand other people's views or feelings and being supportive and caring towards them.

## Introduction

At Oaktree Primary School, we are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. This policy promotes the healthy and responsible use of electronic devices among students, staff, and parents while preventing overuse or dependency that can negatively impact learning, wellbeing, and social development.

It aligns with the Dubai School Inspection Bureau (DSIB) and KHDA expectations for student personal and social development, safeguarding, and the promotion of positive wellbeing.

## Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, and visitors within the school premises and during school-related activities both on and off campus.

## Definition

Electronic addiction refers to the excessive or compulsive use of digital devices (e.g., smartphones, tablets, computers, gaming consoles, televisions, or wearable technology) that interferes with a child's normal development and wellbeing. It goes beyond healthy, purposeful use and can manifest as an inability to limit screen time, distress when devices are removed, or prioritising screen-based activities over essential responsibilities and social connections.

## Excessive use can negatively impact:

- Academic performance – poor concentration in class, incomplete homework, reduced ability to focus on reading and writing, and declining assessment outcomes.
- Emotional wellbeing and mental health – symptoms of anxiety, irritability, reduced resilience, or dependency behaviours when access to devices is restricted.
- Physical health – eye strain, headaches, disrupted sleep patterns, poor posture, lack of exercise, and increased risk of obesity or fatigue due to sedentary habits.
- Social relationships and communication – withdrawal from friends and family, reduced confidence in face-to-face interactions, dependency on online validation (likes/followers), and difficulty resolving conflicts without reliance on technology.

## Policy Guidelines

a. Responsible Use

- Devices may only be used for explicitly planned educational purposes, such as research, e-books, or approved learning apps, under direct teacher supervision.
- Recreational or entertainment-based use (e.g., gaming, streaming, personal messaging) is not allowed during school hours to ensure learning time is protected.
- Social media, online chat forums, or non-educational websites are restricted, unless formally approved for a specific class project by the teacher and SLT.
- Device use must fully align with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures; inappropriate or harmful content will be reported and investigated immediately.

- Digital citizenship, e-safety, and cyber-bullying awareness will be explicitly taught through the Computing and PSHE curriculum to empower pupils to act responsibly online.

b. Awareness & Prevention

- Ongoing training and workshops for students, staff, and parents will highlight the risks of electronic addiction, covering safe screen-time limits, online etiquette, and practical strategies for balance.
- Digital wellbeing will be integrated into the curriculum (Computing, PSHE, Science, and Physical Education), reinforcing lessons on healthy lifestyles and balanced routines.
- The school will actively promote non-digital alternatives, such as outdoor play, creative arts, reading, and sports, to ensure children develop a variety of interests.
- Designated "Device-Free Zones" (e.g., playgrounds, library, dining areas, assemblies) will encourage personal interaction and help children build healthy offline relationships.

c. Monitoring & Support

- Teachers will consistently observe and monitor student device use in class, and log any concerns related to overuse, distraction, or inappropriate behaviour.
- The school counselling team will identify pupils at risk of dependency, provide early intervention, and work with families to create personalised support plans.
- Parents will be equipped with guidance materials and invited to participate in workshops that promote home-based digital discipline (e.g., family screen-time charts, "no-device" zones at home, setting bedtime cut-offs).
- In cases of significant dependency, the school will collaborate with external agencies or healthcare providers to ensure pupils receive professional support.

d. Restrictions

- Devices are not permitted during examinations, assemblies, or official school events unless specifically authorised for learning support or inclusion needs.
- Gaming devices (e.g., handheld consoles) are strictly always prohibited on campus.
- Mobile phones must be kept switched off or on silent mode during lessons; exceptions apply only with teacher approval for learning activities.
- Pupils in FS and KS1 are not permitted to bring personal devices to school. This is to ensure healthy developmental habits and focus on hands-on, play-based learning.

## Consequences of Misuse

- First incident – Verbal reminder, short counselling conversation, and redirection to positive behaviour.
- Second incident – Formal written warning recorded on the student's file and parental notification.
- Third incident – Device is temporarily confiscated and returned to parents only.
- Repeated misuse – Escalation to SLT, suspension of device privileges, and possible disciplinary measures under the school's Behaviour Policy.

All sanctions will be applied in a fair, consistent, and proportionate manner, in line with KHDA expectations for positive behaviour management and restorative practices.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- School Leadership – Ensure policy implementation, staff training, parent communication, and annual policy review.
- Teachers – Model appropriate device use, enforce rules in classrooms, educate students on digital wellbeing, and report misuse.
- Parents – Monitor children's device use at home, set limits, reinforce device-free times, and support the school's stance on balanced digital engagement.
- Students – Use devices responsibly, follow school rules, and report concerns of misuse or peer dependency.
- Support Staff – Ensure device-free zones are respected (canteen, playground, etc.) and report any misuse.

### Safeguarding and Wellbeing Links

- This policy supports the Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, and Wellbeing Policies, ensuring a consistent approach to student safety.
- Staff must be alert to behavioural and emotional signs of electronic overuse, such as social withdrawal, anxiety, or declining classroom participation.
- The school will track wellbeing indicators (attendance, engagement, attainment data, and behaviour logs) to monitor potential links between digital overuse and student outcomes.

### Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it aligns with emerging research, technological trends, and the wellbeing of students.

### Monitoring and Review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the Oaktree Primary School staff and leadership team for implementation.

Signed:                                    Date:

Principal: Olivia Rumah

Policy Review Date: September 2025

**Policy Review Log**

| Date | Changes | Reviewed By |
|---|---|---|
| 210825 | Annual Revies | Principal |
| 210825 | Policy Review | |
| 290925 | Policy Updated | DOS |