

iPad Use: Position Statement

For Parents in Year 4-6



Why we use iPads at WLPS

At WLPS, iPads are learning tools—used purposefully to build core skills in reading, writing, maths, and thinking; to differentiate for diverse learners (including EALD and extension); and to give students efficient ways to create, practise, and demonstrate understanding. We pair iPads with explicit teaching and hands-on learning so that technology enhances (not replaces) great teaching.

What iPad use looks like in our classrooms

- Planned, not constant: iPads are used during specific lessons and tasks with clear learning goals, and put away when not required.
- Teacher-directed: Apps and activities are selected by the teacher; free play is not part of lesson time.
- Balanced learning: iPad tasks sit alongside books, paper, talk, manipulatives, and outdoor learning.
- Safe and age-appropriate: Devices are managed and filtered; students are taught digital citizenship and safe, respectful behaviour online.
- Visible and accountable: Teachers actively circulate, monitor screens, and reteach expectations.

Guardrails that keep use healthy at school

- Managed devices: School-approved settings, apps and filters are applied; unnecessary notifications are off during class.
- Clear routines: “Apples Up” routines reduce distractions and transitions are practised.
- Time-bounded tasks: Activities have time limits and “close-down” steps to make stopping smooth.
- No personal messaging or games at school: iPads are for learning tasks only.
- Wellbeing first: Movement breaks, handwriting, talk-time and eye-breaks are built into lessons.

How we use iPads at WLPS

- Teachers most often use iPads for assessments, reading fluency practice, writing planning, maths fluency, however use can range from coding and graphic design, to research and word processing.
- Typical in-class iPad time ranges from 30-60 minute blocks, 1-2 times per day.
- The WLPS ICT Integration Planner (developed in 2024) is a cross-curricular, multi-levelled tool that assists our teachers in using devices in a manner supportive of innovative learning and aligns to the SAMR model for evaluating and integrating technology in education.

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Our partnership with families: preventing “tech tantrums” at home

We know some parents worry that school iPad use can make “switching off” harder at home. The evidence is clear: predictable routines + clear limits + calm transitions reduce conflict. Here’s our recommended home plan:

1. Agree the rules in advance (and write them down):

- Where the iPad lives at home (e.g., on the kitchen bench, not bedrooms).
- When it can be used (days/times) and for what (homework, creative projects).
- Who is in charge of ending time (the adult).

2. Use the same close-down routine every time (kids love predictability):

- Give a 10-minute warning, then a 5-minute and 1-minute reminder.
- Use a visual timer that counts down.
- Say what comes next: “When the timer ends, iPad on the bench, then snack and outside play.”

3. Create an “off-ramp”/alternative to something appealing but calm:

- Choices help: drawing, LEGO, trampoline, bike, audiobooks, helping with dinner, bath, story.
- Keep the first activity screen-free for 20–30 minutes after stopping.

4. Use built-in tools to make stopping easier:

- Set up Apple Screen Time (Family Sharing) with app limits and a scheduled Downtime.
- Turn on Do Not Disturb/Focus during homework and from one hour before bedtime.
- Consider Guided Access for single-task homework sessions.

5. Keep sleep sacred:

- No devices in bedrooms.
- All devices charge overnight in the family charging spot (again: the kitchen bench works well).

6. Model calm:

- If emotions rise, pause. Acknowledge feelings (“It’s hard to stop when you’re having fun”), restate the plan, and redirect to the off-ramp activity.

7. Be consistent:

- If the routine is the same at school and home, children adapt quickly and conflict reduces.

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What we ask of families

- Maintain the family charging station and keep devices out of bedrooms.
- Use Screen Time/Downtime and keep notifications off during homework and evenings.
- Reinforce the same “time’s up” routine we use at school.
- Let us know early if stopping is hard at home—we can help with tweaks.

What families can expect from us

- Transparent communication about the purpose of iPad use in class.
- Guidance on recommended settings and updates for home.
- Ongoing teaching of healthy habits, digital citizenship, and safe online behaviour.
- Continuing review of iPad use to ensure it stays purposeful, balanced, and age-appropriate.

Frequently asked questions

Will more iPad time at school cause more screen fights at home? Not when routines are aligned. Consistent rules and predictable close-downs reduce conflict. We’ll help you set these up.

Do students need entertainment apps for school? No. iPads at school are learning tools. Entertainment apps should be managed at home and are not used in class.

Can I restrict the iPad after school if behaviour slips? Yes—just make it predictable (e.g., “If homework isn’t complete, no iPad until tomorrow after school”), and always offer a non-screen alternative.

What if my child says ‘but we use it all the time at school’? They don’t. Use the language of routines: “At school and home, iPads have set times. Right now, it’s bench time.”

Contact

Questions or feedback are welcome. Please speak with your child’s classroom teacher or the Associate Principal. Together we can keep iPad use purposeful at school and calm at home.