FALKNER HOUSE
LONDON

Go To Guide
Tech At Home

2026 - 2027





Boys

20 Penywern Road, London SW5 9SU

Girls

19 Brechin Place, London SW7 4QB

Go to guide - Tech At Home

Use of technology at Falkner House comes up in many different contexts which are covered in :

- iPad programme Go to Guide
- Use of tech at school is within the Logistics and Academic handbooks.

"Excessive screen time in childhood can impair social skills, creativity, and attention span, hindering holistic development."
- American Academy of Paediatrics

"Childhood is a time of wonder, where the simplest of things spark the grandest of adventures."
- Unknown

At Falkner House, we have always endeavoured to provide our pupils with a strong understanding of technology and the creative ways in which it can be utilised. However, we have also watched with unease the increase in device use at home and, over the last few years, we have seen first-hand its devastating impact on your children. We do not use the word devastating lightly.

We believe that primary school children gain NO benefit from gaming or using social media, messaging or emailing each other. Such communication at such a young age can go wrong very quickly, and it is almost impossible to supervise a child's personal social media or messaging account. The consequences of the misuse of technology at home can significantly negatively affect your children while at school and in our care. We care too much about your children to allow this to continue.

Some pupils at Falkner House are being allowed access to personal emails, messaging and online gaming. Pupil contact through email and messaging has resulted in: upsetting friendship issues, cyber bullying, children accessing bank accounts to buy on-line currency and groups being set up specifically to exclude others. Unsupervised internet access has resulted in access to porn sites and other inappropriate material that has then been discussed at school.

Gaming can lead to unkindness, inappropriate language at school, as well as disturbing security issues with children being contacted by strangers and police being involved after threats of violence. Primary school children are at the beginning of their social development. They are not capable of understanding the intricate nuances of communicating online without supervision. For all of these reasons, Falkner House does not allow pupils to use social media or to message each other at home or at school using home or school devices.

Setting Family Boundaries

When children are young, it is essential to devise a series of rules for technology not only for the present, but also to allow parents to exercise control over how their children use devices when they are older. If parents adopt the same rules, it is far more likely their children will follow; if children see their parents glued to their phones or devices they will, inevitably, wish to copy.

When asked at school, children suggested family tech etiquette rules which included:

- Adults should not look at their phones when talking to their children.
- No use of a phone at meal times.
- Adults should not have their phones/devices with them constantly.

Gaming

The rise in the production of immersive gaming is a key concern for us. As recent research has indicated, gaming is highly addictive and can also be damaging in more subtle ways. When gaming, children are exposed to high adrenaline levels and constant stimulation, which can make it hard for them to find enjoyment and fulfilment in everyday tasks and can especially affect their ability to focus and concentrate at school. As exciting as our lessons are, they cannot compete with virtual worlds and adventures.

The content of popular games is also of concern for us. Many games contain violence and inappropriate language that children will naturally start to mirror in their own life. Storylines and scenarios begin to creep into their English writing, having a negative impact on their work. We do understand that gaming is hugely popular and that, realistically we perhaps cannot expect parents to ban it completely. However, we would say that the following are essential:

- Ensure all relevant restrictions (including disabling the chat function) are in place;
- Set a strict time limit on the devices so that they stop after a certain amount of time;
- Ensure that your child only plays age-appropriate games; and
- Where possible choose games that are multiplayer and more physical i.e. require you to 'play' tennis, dance etc. If you can play games like this as a group or family then it helps remove the isolation that can occur with gaming addictions.

E-Safety

E- Safety is taught in computing lessons but it is essential that this should also be reinforced at home. Despite our recommendations above, you may allow your child some access to a device or they may gain access without your knowledge. At this point they are automatically and unavoidably vulnerable. Just as you would discuss dangerous or difficult everyday scenarios with your child, like crossing the road or playground bullying, it's important to include internet safety and etiquette.

Whilst these topics are taught at school, as they are not going online socially at school, it is essential that there is further discussion at home because this is the environment where it will be used in the future. By

beginning the dialogue when your children are young, the door is open for them to be able to admit later on (to parents or teachers) to mistakes and errors made by themselves and others. Areas to discuss:

- Cyberbullying
- Grooming - if someone happens to be talking to your child online what are the things that they should watch out for, should they talk to people online if they don't know them?
- Inappropriate websites - what should they do if they come across something that makes them feel uncomfortable? Why should they avoid particular websites?
- Internet porn – it is said that 90% of boys under 9 have already seen internet pornography.
- Losing control over pictures and videos they post of themselves online.
- Gaming and its addictive nature.
- Viruses, hacking and security - it's very easy to give away personal information on the internet so the importance of not revealing anything should always be stressed.
- The tempting dangers of pop-up windows, questionnaires, free giveaways and contests.
- The addictive nature of technology and why it is good for all of us to 'disconnect'.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI is becoming a part of everyday life—, and when used well, it can support learning and creativity. But it also comes with risks that parents should be aware of, including:

Misinformation: AI can sometimes give inaccurate or misleading answers.

Privacy: Some AI tools collect data; always review privacy settings and policies.

Overreliance: Children might lean too heavily on AI for answers instead of thinking for themselves.

Inappropriate Use: Without supervision, kids might use AI to generate harmful or age-inappropriate content.

AI should only be used at home with adult supervision at all times.

Falkner House Recommended Rules At Home

No child should have their own personal device

- The parent is always in control
- Easier to enforce rules if the child does not see the device as theirs

No devices to be used in a private space

- Ensures adults are always aware of what their child is doing
- Allows opportunities for discussion about what they are doing

Passcodes on all devices with internet access

- Parents phones, the TV, games consoles, computers, family iPads all should have a passcode that the child does not know
- Means that children always have to ask permission before using the internet

Screen time restrictions on devices

- All devices should have restrictions on the amount of time allowed on them. This can be done by app
- Ensures an appropriate amount of time is spent on a screen

Internet restrictions

- No children should have unrestricted access to the internet
- Children can inadvertently come across inappropriate material or can knowingly search for it. For example, when using unrestricted internet, porn can be accessed in two clicks

No personal email accounts

- Children are not mature enough to use emails sensibly. At this age they should use FaceTime or call each other
- Can lead to bullying, anxiety and stress

No personal social media

- This includes messaging, YouTube accounts, chat forums
- Children are not mature enough to use social media sensibly
- Can lead to bullying, anxiety and stress
- Potentially dangerous if exposed to strangers

Limited gaming – No chat function allowed

- Time limits, no chat function, where possible play games with others physically with you in the room

- Too much gaming can lead to unhealthy habits, less concentration in class, worse behaviour in the playground, limited imagination in story writing and (depending on the game) anger issues
- Gaming chat can lead to bullying, dangerous situations with strangers and friendship issues

No unsupervised YouTube

- Content on YouTube can be inappropriate, leads to bad language, exposure to adult material, bad behaviour

Falkner House Policy in Context

Falkner House policy has always been that if any issues arise at school from inappropriate access to technology, there will be consequences at school for that pupil. These consequences will typically be a temporary suspension from school in first instance and if the offence happens is repeated, potentially permanent exclusion.

A Shared Framework For Parents, By Parents

Our children' s digital lives at home directly shape their focus, friendships, and well-being. We all want them to grow up with a healthy, mature understanding of the technology they use – and the most powerful way to achieve this is together. When parents share the same standards, no child feels "left out" and every parent feels supported by strong technology boundaries. As part of the broader Falkner community, this framework gives us a common approach to bring home – practical and consistent, and built around what matters most: prioritise real-world connection alongside responsible use of technology.

In practice, this shared framework has 7 key pillars to support our goal that can be implemented at school and at home:

Shared Ownership	**Treat all technology (laptops, consoles, tablets, TV) as shared family resources** By maintaining shared ownership of these tools, we stay actively involved in how they are used and model healthy boundaries together.
Screens in Shared Spaces	**Keep digital exploration in the heart of the home** By using devices in shared living spaces rather than bedrooms, we keep tech use transparent, social, and easy to transition away from when it's time for a break.
Being Present	**Commit to being present partners in our sons' digital journeys** Whether we are sitting nearby or staying within earshot, we will provide the guidance and real-time support they need to navigate the online world safely and thoughtfully.
Holding the Keys	**Maintain all security codes and passwords strictly private** Use parental controls and screen time tools not as punishments, but as practical scaffolding while healthy habits are still forming and help ensure a healthy balance between digital exploration and active play.
Mindful Gaming	**Focus gaming experiences to those that are age-appropriate and restorative** Prioritise local and known-friend play, with public servers and chat functions off by default. When friends visit, ensure content stays appropriate for the whole group.
Protect Offline Childhoods	**Social media, personal email, and independent AI use can wait** These are complex tools that reward maturity - any educational AI exploration should happen side-by-side with a parent.
Starting Again	**Commit to consistency and mutual support – not perfection!** Family life is imperfect and so are we. If a boundary slips, we don't treat it as failure – reset and return to these shared practices.

Technology will evolve, and so should this. Ultimately, what matters most for our children is that parents hold each other to the same shared standard. As ever, we are only as strong as each other, and that collective commitment is the greatest thing we can offer our children.

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