

Screen Usage Charter

Dear parents,

New technologies are now a major challenge in education.

Agnes School has established a **SCREEN USAGE CHARTER** with two main objectives:

- 1 Clearly communicate the school's position on the place of screens in school learning and explain how they are managed in the school;
- 2 Invite parents to question the domestic uses of screens and establish a dialogue with them about the rich and diverse options available to them to use screens with intelligence and moderation.

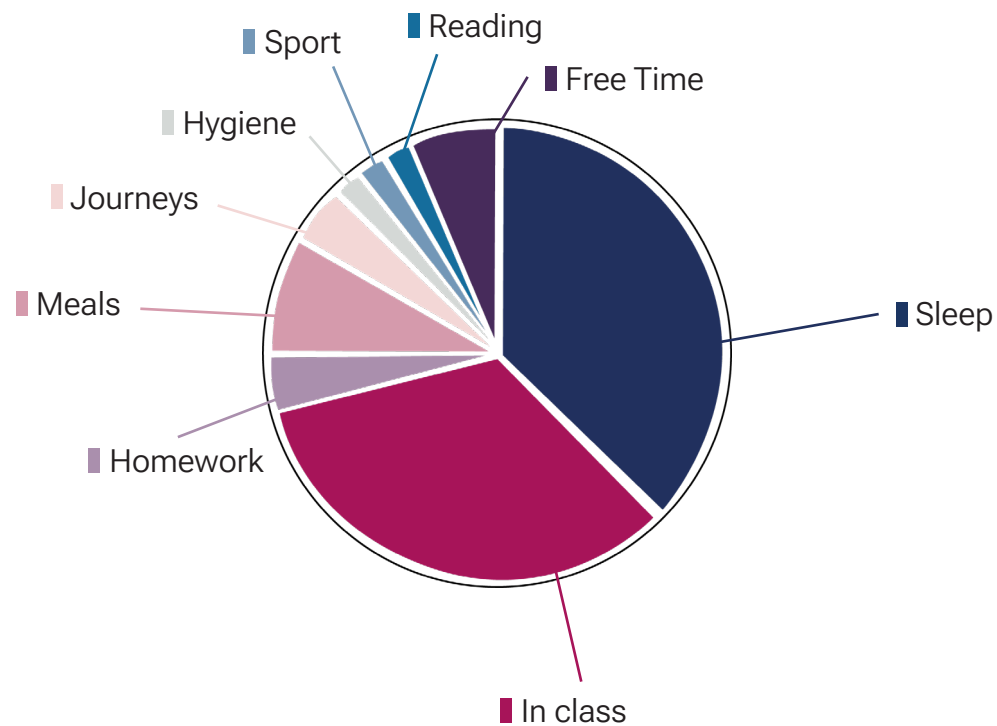
This charter is an integral part of Agnes School's pedagogical project. It is the result of a reflection begun several years ago with the relay-parents. It is intended for all families whose children are enrolled in the school, whether in kindergarten, primary or secondary.

Some elements are included in the internal school rules, signed by the pupils'-rents at the beginning of the school year.



The facts

TIME USE DURING AN AVERAGE DAY



Children spend too much free time on screens. Although figures vary depending on age and studies report about three to five hours a day, including after bedtime!

This is a source of fatigue, irritability, disengagement or even school demotivation.



A TYPICAL DAY

On top of a minimum of 9 hours of **sleep** and the **time at school** (8h), *there are 7 hours left.*

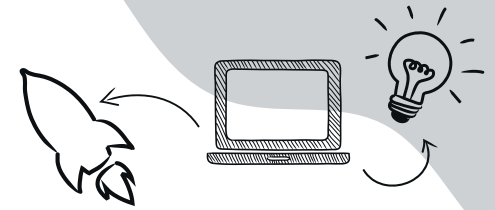
We want our children to do (minimum) **half an hour of sport** (park, garden, be on the move) and half an hour of **reading** (1h). We want **meals** to be pleasant family time (2h). Let's count 1 hour for **homework**, 1 hour for **commuting** and 30 minutes for **daily hygiene**. That leaves half an hour of free time.

*If he spends 3 hours a day on screens, where does he find that time?
Is it taken on time for sports, work, family meals or sleep?*

We want our students to know how to make **good use of screens**, without it spilling over precious family time, or time for work or friendships, equally important. Let's help our children make healthy use of it and have balanced lives where everything has its place.

Deciding to limit screen time has a **positive impact** on family life, friendships, as well as on health and intellectual development (academic results, but also reading and creativity).





When we talk about new technologies and screens, it is important to **distinguish** :



- **The tools:** phone, connected watch, computer whether fixed or portable, tablet
- **The services:** communication, information, entertainment, research
- **The usages:** offline or online
- **The contents**

New technologies are like handy tools that allow you to build wonderful things when you have enough maturity and training to make good use of them (building something vs injuring others).



It is therefore important for parents and teachers to **work collaboratively** so that these wonderful tools are used well and to prevent them from harming their soul, heart, body or intelligence.

Some parents fear that their children are missing the bus. However, **acquiring the technical skills** to use digital tools **is quick and easy**.

On the other hand, the vast majority of the **skills necessary for a profitable use** of digital tools are not technical, but are the result of the intellectual and moral maturity of the person. These are **complex skills** : setting goals and pursuing them , enjoying time, following a schedule, optimizing choices, developing a moral awareness, active listening, selecting the right source, staying focused on a task...





These are the skills that allow users to be active, not passive subjects of the computer tool. They require long and progressive training to be acquired. This process is not given by the tool itself (on the contrary it is often designed to capture the attention of the user), it is the fruit of education. Studies clearly show that young people who spend the least time in front of the computer are those who make better use of it.



The screens and the dimensions of the person

LET'S HELP OUR CHILDREN THINK:

Does this content and/or tool bring me to the True, the Beautiful or the Good?

 BODY	 HEART	 INTELLIGENCE	 SOUL
<p>+ THE POSITIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiration for sport (cycling sports challenges, matches to follow, Pilates app). • Inspiration for food (recipes). 	<p>+ THE POSITIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with loved ones (family, friends). • Good movies, good series that inspire et form character. 	<p>+ THE POSITIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to a vast amount of knowledge: databases, intellectual content, quality training, useful applications. 	<p>+ THE POSITIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to good content (applications, training-videos, online catechism, Vatican website,...)
<p>THE DANGERS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distorting the relationship with the body - repetitive feeding on impressive images (extreme body-building, slimming/sweetness (anorexia), too important to the body (nombriism)... 2. Time spent in front of the screen: increasing immobility (lack of sport, posture/back, head, vision problems) 3. Impact on sleep (time and quality) 	<p>THE DANGERS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living in comparison on social networks + distorted relationships online (harassment) 2. Trivialisation of gender-related topics and hyper sexualisation in reality TV shows-, series, films) 3. Pornography 	<p>THE DANGERS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Too much time spent diminishes the ability to concentrate; install a laziness; impoverishes memorisation (because it no longer seems necessary to memorise); this prevents in-depth reflection. 2. Fake news and misinformation/bad information 	<p>THE DANGERS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Soaking in the atmosphere of a society without God 2. Difficulty living in silence to get in tune with your soul.



What we aim for!

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That children feel good about themselves;• That they have a taste for sport, that they are not sedentary;• Let them be able to stop in time to sleep enough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That children be able to use the tools for good things;• That they are able to deal with inappropriate content to shut down and come and talk to you about it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whereas children develop a broad general culture that allows them to have a critical mind;• May they have rich and varied sources;• That the human bond (child/parent, child/teacher) is first in education encouragement, in order to be able to help, encourage, value in a personalised way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May children grow up in holiness, that they may give the screens a proper place (let us draw inspiration from Blessed Carlo Acutis).
---	---	---	---







Summary of regulations and recommendations on the use of screens

SCHOOL

INTERNAL REGULATIONS AT SCHOOL — COMPULSORY

HOUSE

RECOMMENDATIONS — AT THE DISCRETION OF PARENTS

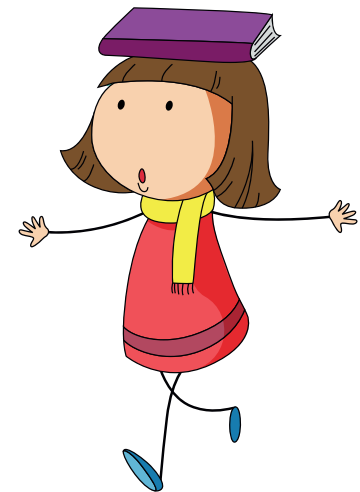
	<p>NO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smartphone possibly from 15 years old (see below) • Knowledge of the legal framework of applications
	<p>YES Under the supervision of the teacher, for school purposes (-re-mealing, exceeding, research — PP document, Word)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the supervision of parents, for school purposes (creation of documents, presentations) or recreational purposes with a specific and educationally interesting purpose • Parental control installation (filters and time limits) as a basis for an open discussion with children
	<p>YES Under the supervision of the teacher, for school purposes and-training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the supervision of parents • In a fixed and passing place (no internet access in rooms or in isolated places)
	<p>RARELY Punctually, a teacher can propose a film-or docu mentary to deepen, illustrate or enrich knowledge. Ex: "It's not sorcerer" or Karrewiet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That children feel good about themselves; • That they have a taste for sport, that they are not sedentary; • That they are able to stop in time to sleep-enough.



Recommendations for the parents

BELOW IS A NON-EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF PRACTICAL TIPS FOR MANAGING SCREENS AT HOME.

- 1 **Living coherently.** The parent is the first educator. They must set an example by using screens wisely.
- 2 Adopt a **screen policy that is adapted to each individual** within the sibling group: 'We have set up something for you, for your work and research, but these resources may not be suitable for your brothers and sisters'.
- 3 Keep the **dialogue open** (give parents some sample questions for their children):
 - Tell me why you like this game, why would you want to play it? Then we'll see together if it's suitable for you.
 - Explain the importance of using filters.
 - Explain how the screen distracts and depletes our attention and make your children understand that the ability to pay attention is rare and precious.
 - Explain what the developers have done to make us spend as much time as possible on screens, and why they create addictive games.
 - Explain preventively what a child should do when confronted with content that shocks them: close your eyes/computer, come and talk to me about it right away, help them to get it off their mind. See the book called Good pictures bad pictures by Kristen A. Jensen.



4

Use a **family computer**, which is :

- Fixed,
- Shared between family members,
- In a public place (avoid screens in bedrooms),
- With time limits agreed and set together.

5

Establish a **family schedule**, as a family.

6

Use a wifi box (anti-wave).

7

Live the different **meals as a family 'screen free'**.

8

Turn off the screens after dinner for the children.

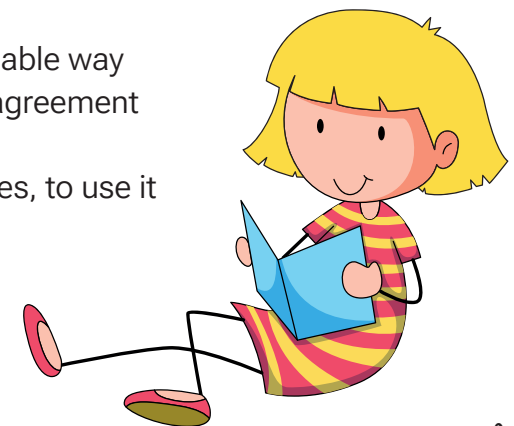
9

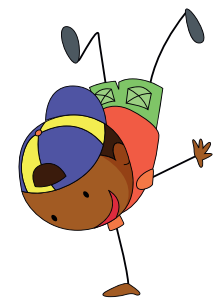
Keep the moments of sleeping and waking up (without screens).

10

Realize that **the smartphone is a powerful tool**. Giving a smartphone to a student should be a carefully considered choice by both parents. Here are **three questions to ask**:

1. Does my child need a smartphone knowing that there are alternatives (e.g. a 9-touch with Whatsapp)?
2. Is he/she able to limit his use to his real needs, in time and quality, in a reasonable way (contact with family, friends; playing a game chosen for a predefined time in agreement with the parents)?
3. Is he/she mature enough to be able to discern the true facts from the false ones, to use it for what is good and beautiful?





11

Remember, above all, **the alternatives to screens are so rich.** It is thus essential to :

- develop the pleasure of being in nature, in the woods, going to the park, playing soccer, riding a bike, going swimming, ...
- give priority to audio over visual materials and try to develop the taste for listening to stories (Lunii, Morphee-Box, Tiptoi, The small mole,?)
- favour the real over the virtual (playing cards in real life rather than on the computer, puzzles, memory games, coloring in real life rather than on a tablet),
- develop a taste for reading and the immense pleasure that can be derived from it,
- develop the pleasure of having friends,
- set up a «workshop» where the child can draw, tinker, paint, ...
- create the taste for cooking and baking,
- create the interest to play an instrument or to sing,
- give the taste for board games and construction games (Duplo, Lego, Kapla, Magnetiles, ...)



12

When a child is in front of the screen, **ensure quality content** and take the opportunity to work on languages. Don't hesitate to share your good tips with friends.

