

# Guildhall Feoffment Community Primary School

## Online Safety Guide

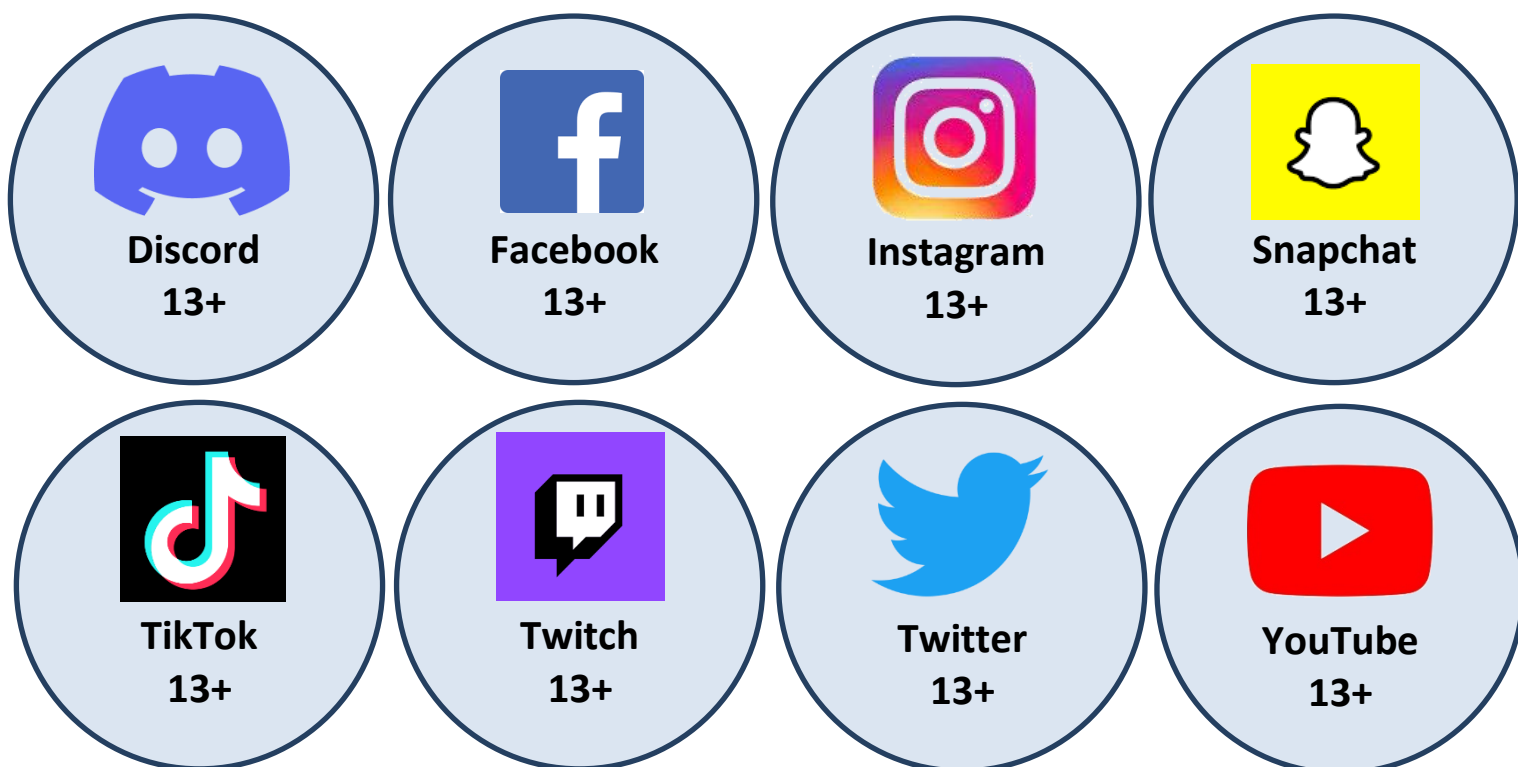
January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

This online safety guide is intended to provide a guide for parents to the various online services that your children might at some point be exposed to. Although many of these platforms are designed for older children (often over 13) they are also in the social consciousness of many KS2 children and used by many of them too. This guide will hopefully help parents in understanding these platforms and help their children stay safe on them. They will also be of interest to parents of younger children too, who may soon discover the online world. We've also included other advice and helpful links for parents regarding broader themes of online safety. We hope that you find this a helpful resource which we have recently updated for 2024 with new emerging issues and services that may be of interest to you.

## Social Media Apps

What age should my child be to use these apps?



### What risks are there of my child using these apps?

Whilst there are benefits to being online, there are risks too regardless of your child's age. Risks include your child viewing inappropriate content, sharing personal information, cyberbullying and grooming.

### Reporting functions

If your child is using any of the above apps then make sure you show them how to use the reporting facilities within each app and ensure your child knows that they must tell you or another trusted adult if they see anything upsetting online. Use the apps together and explore the different security and privacy settings.

### Further information

Is your child too young to use the above apps but is still asking you if they can join social media? Then you could suggest an alternative option. Internet Matters list several apps that have been created for younger children, they are grouped for ages 6 – 10 and ages 11 – 13:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/social-media-networks-made-for-kids/>

Net Aware provide further information about the most popular apps, games and social media sites:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/>

# Your child's online life

There is so much that we can do online nowadays including playing games, chatting with others, watching TV or sharing our videos/photographs. Being online can be great but it's important that we set boundaries for our children to keep them safe whilst they explore being online, develop their digital resilience and understanding of what to do if anything negative happens when online.



So how can we help keep our children safe? We can start by checking age restrictions/ratings. **It's important that we follow these to ensure that what our children are doing or seeing online is appropriate for their age.**

## Where can I find age ratings?

- **Films:** The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rate films. This page includes a link to a 'Parents' Guide to Age Ratings': <https://www.bbfc.co.uk/resources/viewing-films-safely-online>.
- **Video games:** PEGI provides age classifications for video games. PEGI **considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty**. It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration user generated content within games (such as on Roblox) and the chat facilities within games.
- **Apps:** Check the individual age ratings within the relevant app store. We also recommend that you download any apps and play them yourself to check their suitability.
- **Social Media networks:** All social media networks have a minimum age rating; they are all at least 13+.

## What else can I do?

- Explain the importance of age ratings to your child.
- Go online together and let your child show you what they are accessing online.
- Set up parental controls on your broadband, devices, consoles and on any individual apps that your child is using. This will reduce the chances of them accessing anything unsuitable as well as viewing inappropriate content for example whilst on YouTube.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and as always, remind your child that if anything is worrying them about what they see online then they should tell you or another trusted adult.

## What if my child has seen something inappropriate?

This is a useful article from Thinkuknow explaining what to do and who to contact if you have any concerns:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/what-to-do-if-your-child-has-seen-something-inappropriate-online/>

## NSPCC launches new book

The NSPCC has launched a new children's book called Pantosaurus and the Power of PANTS. This book will help families have simple conversations to help keep children safe from abuse. The book is available for £6.99 with all proceeds going to NSPCC. More information available here:

<https://shop.nspcc.org.uk/products/pantosaurus>

## Has your child just got their first phone?

EE have launched PhoneSmart Licence, which is a course to help prepare children for their new phone by teaching them how to stay safe and be kind online. PhoneSmart is free and available to everyone, not just EE customers.

Your child will have to complete 5 sections and as they complete each episode, they will be rewarded with a sticker. Once they have collected all 5, they will be given their PhoneSmart Licence.

The site also includes several useful articles to support you, for example what to do when buying their phone, information about parental controls and where to go for further advice. Follow the link below to access:

<https://eephonesmart.co.uk/>



# Being online

If your child is online (for example playing games, using Snapchat, Instagram etc), then it's important that we talk to our child about **being kind online**, for example only posting positive comments, don't say anything they wouldn't say in real life and treat others as they would expect to be treated.



Your child also needs to be aware that what they see online isn't always the full picture. People only share what they want you to see and images are often filtered. It is also important that your child knows how to block and report any inappropriate behaviour when they see it.

BBC Own It have curated a collection of videos, quizzes, and tips to help make the web a kinder place:  
<https://www.bbc.com/ownit/curations/being-kind-online>



## Further information

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/feeling-good-on-social-media/>

# Yubo Social networking



Yubo is a social network, you must be over 13 years of age to join **although the App store rate it as 17+**. Those aged 13 to 18 years old must have parental permission and will join a separate Yubo community that is only for under-18s.

You make 'friends' by swiping right on someone's profile picture and if they do the same on yours then you can chat with them or stream live videos. **Due to the nature of this app, your child may come across content that is not appropriate to them.** Ensure your child knows how to use the app's reporting facilities.

If you follow the app store rating, then really children should not be accessing this app but Yubo have created the following guides to help make it a safer environment for your child. We really would recommend reading them before you allow your child to access this app. If you don't think this app is appropriate for your child, then talk to them and tell them why and what your concerns are.

**Guide for Parents:** <http://parents-guide.yubo.live/>

**Guide for Teens:** <http://teens.yubo.live/>

## Further information

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/yubo/>

## What is your child playing online?

Is your child playing/viewing games through Twitch, Steam, Roblox etc? If so, they may be viewing inappropriate content, for example watching and playing horror survival games. **Make sure that what your child is accessing is age appropriate.**

## Find my phone

You might choose to set this up on your phone (and for your child) so you can share your location and find out where they are? Talk to your child about why you are setting this up and when and why you will check their location. Find out more using the links below.

### Apple:

<https://www.apple.com/uk/icloud/find-my/> or use this link if you have Family Sharing set up:  
<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201087>

### Android:

<https://support.google.com/android/answer/3265955#zippy=%2Cstep-check-that-find-my-device-is-on> or use this link if you have Family Link set up: <https://support.google.com/families/answer/7103413?hl=en>

## Don't share passwords

Does your child understand that they should not share their passwords with others? The risks include the other user viewing personal information about your child, they could take control of your child's account by changing the password and then use the account inappropriately or they could spend money from your child's account.

### Learn more here:

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/new-online-accounts/how-can-i-keep-my-account-secure/>

## Gaming – has your child been offered gifts?

It has been known for offenders to gift children items (such as loot boxes) whilst playing online games. They may do this to develop trust and a relationship with your child. **This can be part of the grooming process.** Thinkuknow offer further guidance:

- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming/>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/in-game-chat/>

# Discord - Have you heard of it?

## Broadband controls

Most broadband providers include parental controls for free as part of their broadband package, which means that any device that connects to your Wi-Fi will be protected by any controls you set up. Find out how to set yours up here:

### Sky:

<https://www.sky.com/help/diagnostics/sky-broadband-buddy/sky-broadband-buddy>

### BT:

<https://www.bt.com/help/security/how-to-keep-your-family-safe-online-with-bt-parental-controls-an>

### Talk Talk:

<https://community.talktalk.co.uk/t5/Keeping-your-Family-Safe/bd-p/kfshub>

### Virgin:

<https://www.virginmedia.com/broadband/parental-control>

*Remember, children may have devices that use mobile data, so they won't always be connected to your internet so ensure you set up parental controls on those devices too.*

Further information:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parental-controls-offered-by-your-home-internet-provider>



## Discord

Discord is a relatively new social networking app that is used by gamers to **chat to each other**. There can be in app purchases through Discord's premium subscription service. The minimum age to access Discord is 13. The Apple App store rates it as 17+.



### How does it work?

Discord is made up of servers, which are spaces for groups to chat, upload files and share images etc. Anybody can set up a server and they can either be public or private. Users can video call and send direct messages to other individuals or groups.

### How can I make it safer?

Discord have created this article, which outlines four steps to creating a safer account, including how to block users.

<https://discord.com/safety/360043857751-Four-steps-to-a-super-safe-account>

### How is it linked to other games?

Children who play online games such as Fortnite may use Discord to chat about the game (**rather than the game's own chat facility**).

### What do I need to be aware of?

We always encourage you to chat to your child to see why they use different apps/websites and ensure that they know how to block users and what to do if they see any inappropriate content. It's important to be aware that Discord does include video/voice calling which cannot be filtered. Discord is used by an array of users and therefore adult content can be found on Discord as well as inappropriate language. Discord have produced this article, which answers common questions:

- <https://discord.com/safety/360044149591-Answering-parents'-and-educators'-top-questions>

### Further information

- Discord app safety – What parents need to know:  
<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/parents-guide-to-discord-on-how-your-kids-can-use-it-safely/>
- <https://discord.com/safety>

## In-game spending tips

Internet Matters and Barclays Digital Eagles have created this 30 second YouTube video to support you in talking to your child about in-game spending. Watch it here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N\\_060J59YKBI&list=PLJSbhHkqYnrSHEmsr\\_8jwYk7pdJsoHZQcR](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_060J59YKBI&list=PLJSbhHkqYnrSHEmsr_8jwYk7pdJsoHZQcR)



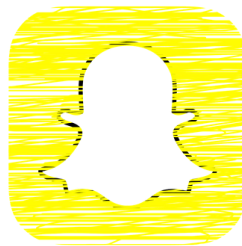
# Snapchat

## What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is an app used for messaging and sharing photos and videos. **You must be 13+ to sign up.**

## How does it work?

Users can send messages (snaps) to others that can only be seen for a set time period e.g. 10 seconds. Users can also upload snaps to stories which then disappear after 24 hours.



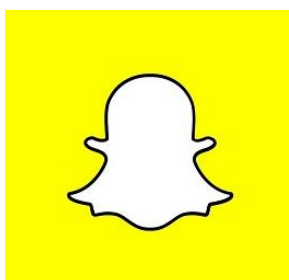
## What should I be aware of?

- **Who is your child friends with** – talk to your child about who they are friends with and why it is safer to be friends with only those they know in real life.
- **Group chats** - in a group chat there may be people that they're not friends with on the app who can then communicate with them in the group. This also increases their risk of interacting with strangers.
- **Snap Map** - The map lets users see where 'friends' are. Location sharing via the map is optional and is off by default (we recommend that it remains off).
- **Snapchat streaks** - Streaks count how many consecutive days two people have been sending Snaps to each other, this can increase pressure to respond daily.
- **Inappropriate content** – due to the nature of the app your child may come across content that is inappropriate.
- **Screenshots** – whilst Snaps disappear, users may take screenshots before they do, potentially resulting in them losing control of what they have shared as it could be sent to other people.
- **Bullying** – there is a risk of bullying on all platforms so please ensure your child knows how to block and report other users if necessary.
  - <https://snap.com/safety/safety-reporting/>
  - <https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/remove-block-friends>

## Safety tips

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are doing online and make sure that they know that they should always talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns. **Please make sure the appropriate privacy settings are set up and your child knows how to block and report other users if necessary.** We would recommend you explore Snapchat with your child and suggest why certain options are safer, for example, setting your account so only friends (rather than everyone) can see your content and only those you are friends with can contact you.

- <https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/article/privacy-settings2>



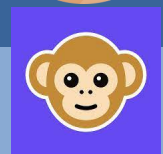
Snapchat  
Safety Centre:  
<https://snap.com/en-GB/safety/safety-center>



## Creating strong passwords

We need to create passwords for everything these days and it's important that our children not only understand that they shouldn't share passwords with others but also that they know how to create a 'strong' password to keep their information safe. Learn more here:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/how-to-create-strong-passwords-online/>



## Monkey (rated 18+)

This is a website and app (available only on Google Play) that allows users to make video calls to strangers. This is a very concerning app/website which has highly inappropriate content on it. The following link provides further information about it:

<https://oursaferschools.co.uk/2021/07/06/safeguarding-alert-monkey-web/>

We recommend not talking about this app/website by name with your child, so it doesn't lead to your child searching for it out of interest. Instead, talk to your child about what they are doing online and if they have any concerns.

## What if someone else posts a photo of your child on social media?

What can you do if somebody posts a photo of your child on social media? The UK Safer Internet Centre explores this question:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/help-%E2%80%93-someone-else-has-posted-photo-my-child-social-media>

# Are you ready to be creative and design a way to travel in space?

You may have read some of Oliver Jeffer's books such as *Here We Are*. He has now teamed up with Professor Stephen Smartt and Nerve Centre to create *Our Place in Space*, which includes a series of online challenges that your child might like to try at home.

You can find out more here:  
<https://ourplaceinspace.earth/learning/monthly-challenge/challenge-4-ella-podmore>



## Online Grooming

Internet Matters have produced a guide outlining what you need to know about Online Grooming:  
<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-grooming-guide-what-parents-need-to-know/>

## Snapchat Family Centre – NEW

Snapchat have introduced a new in-app tool called Family Centre. Family Centre will allow you to see who your child is friends with on Snapchat and who they have been communicating with (you will not be able to see the contents of conversations). You will also be able to see who they are friends with on Snapchat, report accounts confidentially and view resources to help you start conversations with your child about online safety.

Snapchat are also planning on adding additional tools within Family Centre in the future. You can find out more about Family Centre here:  
<https://snap.com/en-GB/safety-and-impact/post/family-center>

## Safety tips

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are doing online and make sure that they know that they should always talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns. **Please make sure the appropriate privacy settings are set up on Snapchat and your child knows how to block and report other users if necessary.**

We would recommend you explore Snapchat with your child and suggest why certain options are safer, for example, setting your account so only friends (rather than everyone) can see your content and only those you are friends with can contact you.

- <https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/article/privacy-settings2>

## More information

You can find out more about Snapchat using the following links:

- <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/snapchat-safety-a-how-to-guide-for-parents/>
- <https://snap.com/en-GB/safety/safety-center>

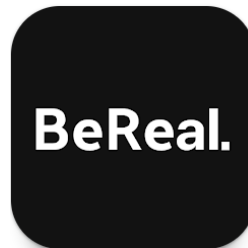
# Social Media Algorithms



Parent Zone have written this article explaining how algorithms work on social media. Algorithms influence what we see on social media platforms and predict what type of content we are most likely to interact with, thereby keeping us online for longer. There are benefits but unfortunately there are negatives, which are outlined in the below article: <https://www.parents.parentzone.org.uk/morearticles/what-are-social-media-algorithms-and-how-can-they-be-manipulated>

## What is BeReal?

BeReal is a new social media app. It notifies you once a day to upload an image of what you are doing. Once you receive the notification, you have two mins to capture and share what you are doing at that moment. All your friends post at the exact same time. Once you have posted, you can then see what your friends have posted. If you don't post your BeReal, then you can't see your friend's BeReals from that day or access the discovery tab.



## What age should I be?

You must be 13+ to use BeReal. BeReal is rated as 12+ by the App store and rated for Teens on Google Play. Users add their date of birth to register (no age verification takes place) although users do need to add a mobile number.

## What else do I need to be aware of?

BeReal is private by default and only visible to your friends. However, it is possible to share with all users by selecting the public option. If selected, your BeReal will appear in the Discovery tab for all users to see and interact with.

There is also an option to share your location. If you don't enable your location, then you can't see other user's locations. Chat to your child about location sharing as it is important that your child understands the risk of location sharing and when it may be appropriate to share.

Discovery tab – this is the area where you can view all other BeReals that have been made public (if you have posted that day). There is an element of risk that your child may see an inappropriate image depending on what others have uploaded.

## How to report

You can report a BeReal or a user by clicking on the three dots (next to the BeReal or user) to report. You can then choose whether you think the BeReal is undesirable or if it is inappropriate. You can block users on Android but not on iOS (BeReal have said this functionality will be available soon). People you have accepted as 'friends' can be deleted at any time.

If your child is using BeReal then talk to them about what they are sharing on BeReal and check that they know how to use the reporting tools available.

## Further information:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/bereal-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers-about-the-new-social-media-app>

## Is your child ready for social media?

Childnet have produced this article answering your questions around social media, such as when should I allow my child to join social media? The article also outlines some alternative sites that have been created for younger children. You can read the article here:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/supporting-your-child-getting-started-on-social-media/>

## WhatsApp Update

WhatsApp will be releasing the following new Privacy features soon:

**1. Leave Groups Silently:** you will be able to exit a group privately so instead of the whole group being notified, only the admins will be.

**2. Choose Who Can See When You're Online:** WhatsApp are introducing the ability to select who can and can't see when you're online.

**3. Screenshot Blocking for View Once Messages**

You can read more about these new features here:  
<https://blog.whatsapp.com/>

## Viewing films safely online

It is important that our children are watching films that are suitable for their age. The BBFC is the UK's regulator of film and videos and they have created this useful article answering the questions they get asked the most.

<https://www.cbbfc.co.uk/resources/viewing-films-safely-online>

# Smart TV / Streaming services

There are so many TV streaming services available now such as Netflix, Prime, Apple TV, Now TV and Disney as well as more families having Smart TVs, which connect to the internet and allow you to download apps and access YouTube for example. This means our children potentially have access to a lot more content, some of which may not always be appropriate to watch.

If your child does access content through these services then, as always, make sure you set parental controls so they can only view content that is suitable for their age.

Each service will have their own parental control settings with most of them using a Parental PIN so you can restrict what can be viewed (and purchased in some cases).



## TikTok refresh

Parent Zone have worked with TikTok to produce a series about safety when using TikTok. You can find out more here: <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/tiktok>

# TikTok

## TikTok

**You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok.**

Users can watch musical clips, record clips (it includes lots of lip synching and dancing), edit them and add special effects.

### Why should I be concerned?

You need to be aware that some of the videos may contain explicit language and sexual imagery, which may not be suitable for your child to view. There is also the risk of strangers contacting your child so make sure you have set up the appropriate settings.

If your child is using TikTok then we recommend setting the account as private (this is the default setting for users under 16 since Jan 2021). Even with a private account, your child's profile information such as their photo and bio are still visible so ensure your child understands the importance of not adding personal information (e.g. location, age and phone numbers) to this area. This article explains how you can strengthen your privacy settings and what features are turned off by default for accounts for children aged 13 – 15: <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/strengthening-privacy-and-safety-for-youth>

### Family Pairing

This allows parents to link their own TikTok account to their child's account. This will allow you to set controls such as restricted mode (limit the appearance of inappropriate content) and screen time management (control how long they can spend on TikTok each day). You can find out more here: <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide/>

### Challenges and Trends

Lots of them are fun and not harmful but sometimes they can be risky. TikTok have produced this resource to help you talk to your child about challenges and the potential risks: <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-sg/online-challenges/>.

### Blocking and Reporting

As with similar apps, there is the ability to report and block other users so ensure your child knows how to use these features:

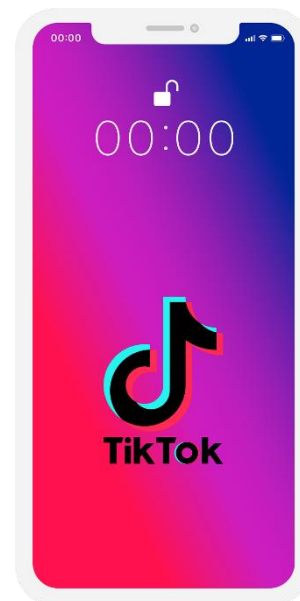
- <https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/report-a-problem>
- <https://support.tiktok.com/en/using-tiktok/followers-and-following/blocking-the-users>

TikTok have introduced new tools to try and promote kindness on their platform. The new 'Filter All Comments' feature means that you can choose which comments will appear on your videos.

<https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/new-tools-to-promote-kindness>

This article may be of interest too as it outlines three features which you should know about if your child is using TikTok:

<https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/three-tiktok-features-every-parent-should-know>





# Fortnite

Is your child playing Fortnite? **It is rated PEGI 12 for frequent mild violence which means it is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age.**

It is important to remember that when rating games, PEGI do not take into consideration the communication features of a game. Fortnite does include a chat facility, which adds further risks.

## What is Fortnite?

There are different versions of Fortnite, including a free-to-play Battle Royale game (although money can be spent within the game) where up to 100 players compete against each other.

## What do I need to be aware of?

- **Chatting to strangers and inappropriate language:** Fortnite contains voice and text chat. Due to the nature of the game, your child may be chatting to strangers and may hear inappropriate language. Ensure your child knows how to report players for any inappropriate behaviour.
- **In app purchases:** All users can purchase V-Bucks directly through the game. This currency can be used to purchase items in the Fortnite store so make sure you don't store your payment details within the game/device and restrict purchases, as these sums can be large.
- **Time spent at the expense of sleep:** We have heard many local stories of our pupils playing this game well into the night and it impacting on their sleep and energy for school.

## Parental Controls

Fortnite includes several parental controls to help you make it a safer environment for your child including disabling voice chat, filtering language and setting privacy settings. Find out more about parental controls here: <https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/parental-controls>. **Also, remember to set up age-appropriate parental controls on the device your child is playing on as well.**

## Further information

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/fortnite-chapter-2-battle-royale-parental-controls-guide/>

# LEGO Build and Talk

LEGO® have created Build and Talk to help you chat to your child about digital safety and wellbeing. Firstly, you pick an activity to do and then you read a story, which includes questions and conversation prompts, whilst they build with their LEGO®. This is a great way to start talking about online safety with your child! <https://www.lego.com/en-gb/sustainability/children/buildandtalk/>

Whilst you're there, view their guides on key topics related to online safety <https://www.lego.com/en-gb/sustainability/children/digital-child-safety/> or play Doom the Gloom with your child, which will support them in using the internet safely: <https://www.lego.com/en-gb/campaigns/kids/doom-the-gloom>.

# BBC Own it keyboard and App

Did you know BBC Own It has a keyboard and app? Download the app on your child's phone to access the special keyboard, which will offer advice as they type and intervenes for example, if they're sharing their mobile number, the app will tell your child to 'think safe' before they send the message. Find out more here: <https://www.bbc.com/ownit/take-control/own-it-app>

BBC Own it also has a dedicated area for you with video guides on useful topics such as '*the transition from primary to secondary school*' and '*supporting children with social media apps*' and links to other useful sites. Click below to access:

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit/curations/parents>

# Apple Guided Access / Android Screen pinning

Does your child use your phone at times? Both Apple and Android give you the ability to restrict what can be accessed when they are using it, so you can restrict your device to the one app that your child would like to use (so all other features are disabled).

Use the following links to find out how to set it up:

## Apple:

<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT202612>

## Android:

<https://support.google.com/android/answer/9455138?hl=en-GB>

# Parental Controls

## Choosing apps

It is difficult to tell you about all the different apps your child may encounter as some are less known, and new ones arrive which we don't know about. So instead we thought we'd provide you with some pointers to help you decide if an app is appropriate or not for your child.

- One starting point would be to look at the age rating – is your child old enough to be playing it? Also please be aware that apps are often rated by the developer themselves. <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news%2Fage-content-ratings-apps-games/>
- Regardless of the age rating, does the app include any communication options such as chat or commenting? If yes, this can add greater risk and you will need to decide if the app is then appropriate. Try to use the app first so you can check it.
- Use the app with your child, show them any blocking/reporting tools.
- Does the app have any parental controls?
- Read the app reviews – is there anything that concerns you?
- Google the app – is there anything in the news that concerns you?
- Play and use the app together
- Talk to your child regularly about what they are doing online.



This is a little reminder about setting up appropriate parental controls for any new phones, consoles or games your child may have.

## Games/consoles

First, check the PEGI rating of any new games to check that your child is old enough to be playing them. PEGI provides age classifications for video games and **considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty**. It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration user generated content within games (such as on Roblox) and the chat facilities within games. Visit PEGI here: <https://pegi.info/> For any new consoles, it is important to set up appropriate controls such as restricting spending limits and managing who they can communicate with. Follow the links below to find out about Parental Controls for each device:

### Xbox:

<https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/community/for-everyone/responsible-gaming>

### PS5:

<https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/>

### Nintendo Switch:

<https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1183145.html>

## Tablets/Smart phones

As well as setting up parental controls on the device itself, remember to check any apps your child would like on their device, is it suitable for their age and review all settings and privacy options for each one. For the devices, use the available settings to prevent purchases, restrict content viewed and adjust privacy settings. Follow the links below to find out more:

**iPhones/iPads:** <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

**Google Play:** <https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738>

## Further information

Information, tips and advice on setting up parental controls:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>

## Disney parental controls

Does your child watch Disney+? If so, have you set up the parental controls to ensure that what your child is watching it, it is appropriate to them? More information is available here:

[https://help.disneyplus.com/csp?id=csp\\_article\\_content&sys\\_kb\\_id=9582efcbdb1aac50055ceadc13961917](https://help.disneyplus.com/csp?id=csp_article_content&sys_kb_id=9582efcbdb1aac50055ceadc13961917)



## A guide to location settings

Many apps and games now ask users to share their location. It's important that your child understands the risk of location sharing and that you can discuss when it is appropriate to share. You can read more here:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/a-parents-guide-to-location-settings/>

# Online Games with chat

## Is your child playing games online?

Children can communicate online through lots of different apps, social media and games (Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram, FIFA, Fortnite for example), so it's important to know what your child is doing online and who they communicate with so you can talk about the potential risks together.



Some games include communication between players, this could be via the in-game text chat, direct messages or talking through headphones. Some games do offer the ability to switch communication off or restrict bad language so make sure settings appropriate to your child are set up for each of the games they play.



### Chatting to strangers

When playing online, your child might be playing games with people they don't know. It can be difficult to moderate online chat so ensure your child knows how to block and report other players that make them feel uncomfortable and that they know to talk to you or a trusted adult if they have any concerns.

### Be kind

It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face-to-face with each other. Talk to your child about how they are speaking to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect, like they would if they were face-to-face.



Ensure that your child understands that if they receive unkind messages (or sees something that worries them) then they should not reply or engage in conversation with the person, but they should instead tell a trusted adult.

### Further information

These additional links will provide you with further guidance and support regarding this topic:

- <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/talking-to-people-online-when-should-i-be-worried/>
- [https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14\\_plus/Need-advice/online-gaming/](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus/Need-advice/online-gaming/)

## Gaming apps with adult themes you should know about

This article also includes tips to help you:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/gaming-apps-with-adult-themes-you-should-know-about/>

## Ian Wright shares tips on gaming responsibly

Ian Wright shares his tips on gaming responsibly including playing games with your kids:

<https://youtu.be/pnWionq9C4c>

You can also visit Internet Matter's Online Gaming hub which provides advice on how to keep your family safe:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-gaming-advice/>

## Helping My Autistic Child Stay Safe Online

The Ann Craft Trust and The Marie Collins Foundation have joined forces to create a resource to help parents and children understand various online risks. The booklet includes information about what online harm is and ways you can effectively help and support your children. Download a copy here:

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/helping-my-autistic-child-stay-safe-online/>

# Highly inappropriate content

This page is designed to highlight a few of the current games and programs that we know some children in the school are exposed to. This is not information that should be shared with your children, as with lots of the issues mentioned in this guide to do so would create a mystique about the content that might encourage children to seek them out.

## Grand Theft Auto (GTA)



GTA is rated 18+ by PEGI (a couple of versions are rated 16+), this is largely because of bad language, violence, glamourisation of crime and the depiction of drugs. **GTA is not suitable for those under this age. There is also due to be released a new online version which will doubtless be a talking point for older children.**

### What do I need to be aware of?

- Mature content
- In game chat
- In game spending – make sure your bank account details are not linked.

## Call of Duty Mobile

There is also a mobile version of Call of Duty for Android and iOS devices. Find out more about this version here: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/call-of-duty-mobile/>

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are playing online and make sure that they know that they should always talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.

### What can we play instead?

You can use this database to search for games based on your child's age: <https://www.taminggaming.com/cgi-bin/taminggaming.cgi>

## PUBG (PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds)

PUBG is available on multiple platforms and is **rated 16+ by PEGI**, therefore it is not suitable for persons below 16 years of age. PEGI state that this game has been rated PEGI 16 “due to frequent, moderate violence towards



human characters and encouragement of drug use” (<https://pegi.info/>).

PUBG is an online multiplayer game, in which a group of players play against each other until they are the only remaining player. One hundred players are dropped on to an island and they need to search for items, such as backpacks, body armour and guns.

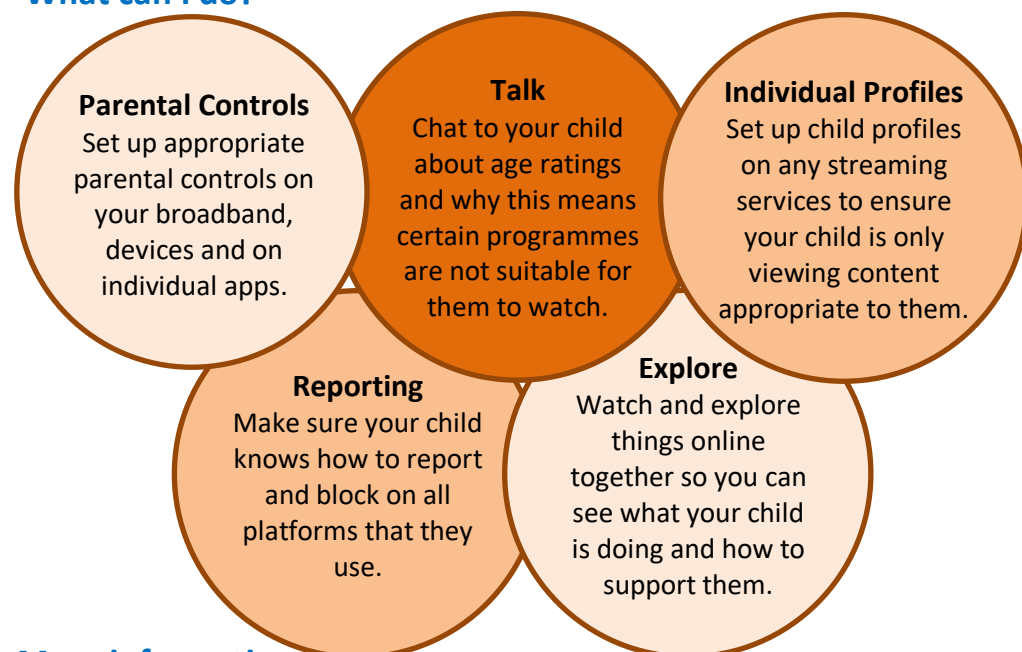
### What do I need to be aware of?

Parents need to be aware that this can be an addictive game, in game purchases are available and due to the live chat, inappropriate or offensive language may be heard/seen. If your child is playing this game, then make sure they know how to use the reporting and blocking facilities within the game and they know to speak to a trusted adult should they need to.

### Further information

Bark provides further information on PUBG as well as how to apply settings: <https://www.bark.us/guides/gaming-pubg/>

### What can I do?



### More information:

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are watching and ensure that they know they should always tell you or another trusted adult if they do see anything upsetting. You can find out more about the type of inappropriate content your child might come across online, how to deal with it and links to further support here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/inappropriate-content/learn-about-it/>



# Whizz – Make new Friends App



Whizz is a social networking platform and is rated for 'Teens' on the Google Play store and as 12+ on the App store. It is free to download but does have in-app purchases ranging from £0.89 to £44.99.

Users swipe through the app to find people who are currently online and who they would like to chat with. **Users will be chatting with strangers, which can present risks.** Internet Matters have produced advice around chatting with strangers here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/connecting-safely-online/advice-for-parents/tackling-the-hard-stuff-on-social-media-to-support-young-people/chatting-to-strangers-online/>

## Is YouTube safe?

The NSPCC have produced this article discussing the risks associated with using YouTube and the safety settings and features that are available depending on how old your child is and what they do on YouTube. You can access the article here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/how-to-keep-your-child-safe-on-youtube/>

## SEND Online Safety Hub

Net Aware have worked with Ambitious about Autism to create a hub featuring online safety tips, advice and activities for parents/carers of children with SEND.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/send-online-safety-hub/>



# YouTube

*YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13, however the App store rates YouTube as 17+ due to the content that can be found on there.*

We are aware that several older children have their own YouTube accounts and use these to share digital content that they have created themselves. Although often this is harmless, it has sometimes involved unkind content being posted.

## How can I make YouTube safer?

- **Turn on Restricted mode** as this restricts the availability of mature content. You will need to set up a Google account to do this.
- **Explore YouTube together** and see what they like to watch. Make sure your child understands that they can **talk to you** if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable online.
- Ensure your child knows how to **report inappropriate content**.

## YouTube Kids



YouTube recommends that **YouTube Kids** is used for children under the age of 13 as it provides a safer environment and offers greater controls (you can select the shows that you would prefer them to watch). Find out how to set up the parental controls here:

<https://support.google.com/youtubekids/answer/6172308?hl=en-GB>

## Supervised experience (Beta version)

Managed by you by creating a supervised Google Account. It allows you to choose from three content settings:

- **Explore:** generally suitable for ages 9+.
- **Explore More:** generally suitable for viewers ages 13+.
- **Most of YouTube:** contains almost all YouTube content (except age-restricted content) so it *will* include sensitive topics that may only be appropriate for older teens. <https://www.youtube.com/myfamily/>



## Posting videos

You should be over 13 years of age to post videos. Talk to your child about posting videos, do they understand what information they should keep private and what to do if they receive negative comments? YouTube have produced these tips:

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802244?hl=en-GB>

## Should I let my child set up a YouTube account?

This article features the benefits and risks of using YouTube and their top tips: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/should-i-let-my-child-set-up-a-youtube-account/>



YouTube, along with several partners have created this family guide to supervised experiences:

<https://tinyurl.com/4k8hdasj>

# Minecraft

## Why be mindful?

Minecraft is rated 7+ or 12+ depending on which version you are playing.

Minecraft remains ever popular and can be a great learning tool that is often used in schools to teach planning skills, recreate famous buildings in 3D and coding. Players use building blocks to create their own worlds. We certainly endorse playing this safely, however if your child is playing Minecraft then you need to ensure that it is being played safely.

### What should I be aware of?

- **Multiplayer** – children can interact with others (including strangers), you can switch this option off within settings.
- **Creative or survival mode?** Creative mode removes the survival elements of the game (no monsters) so may be a more appropriate mode for your child to play.
- **Chat facility** – you do have the option to switch this off.
- **Block and report players** – as with any game that your child plays with others, make sure they know how to block and report players within the game.

In addition, protect your child's privacy by using a nickname (don't include their age/birth year) rather than their real name for their profile and chat to your child to make sure that when playing online they know not to tell others personal information such as where they live, what school they go to and their age.

### Set up appropriate parental controls

Don't forget to make sure you have set up appropriate parental controls dependent on the device your child is using to play Minecraft.

### Further information

This poster includes some great tips for playing Minecraft safely:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/online-safety/minecraft-pdf.pdf>



# MINECRAFT

## Is your child playing Gacha Life?

Gacha Life is rated 9+ on the App Store and Google Play Store. This article provides further information about this app as well as potential concerns:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/what-is-gacha-life-what-parents-need-to-know/>

## The Reverse Selfie by Dove

The Dove Self-Esteem Project have created this powerful video highlighting retouching apps and the pressure to post the perfect selfie. It's worth a watch!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2T-Rh838GA>

### Online Safety activities

Fun ideas to use to chat about Online Safety including colouring sheets, wordsearches and quizzes: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/resources/>

## My Family's Digital Toolkit

Would you like a personalised online safety toolkit? Answer a few questions about your children's digital habits and then you will receive age-specific advice to support your children online. The form does require an email address. You can find out more information here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/digital-family-toolkit/>

# WhatsApp - What's the problem?

**View once messages:** when sending a photo or video, you can set it so it can only be viewed once by respondents. Screenshots are also blocked when using this function.

**Disappearing messages:** With disappearing messages, you can control how long a message can be seen before it is deleted (24 hours, 7 days or 90 days). Once set this will only work for new messages.

**Location sharing:** You can share your location on WhatsApp. Talk to your child about when this would be appropriate to use but also the potential danger of sharing their location, for example with strangers.

## How old is your child online?

**Has your child (or you on their behalf) signed up to access social media/or a game online but have said that they are older than they are so they can have an account?**

For example, did your 8 year old join TikTok and put their age as 13 or did you create their account and put your own age? If so, please read some of the implications outlined below that you should think about.

If TikTok thinks your child is 13 when they join but they are in fact 8, then by the time your child reaches 13, the app will think they are 18. This puts your child at risk of viewing content that is not age appropriate and may mean your child will view adverts aimed at adults. In addition, now the app thinks your child is an adult, they will have access to all functionalities (whereas some apps place restrictions on access to under 18s for example to direct messaging). The following news article from Ofcom explains this in further detail as well as providing tips to help keep your child safe online: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2022/risks-of-children-using-false-ages-on-social-media>

## WhatsApp: group chats



**You must be at least 16 years old to register for and use WhatsApp.** WhatsApp is a free messaging app that allows you to send messages and videos.

### Group chats

One of the main features is that it has a Group chat function that are set up by one person (who is the admin). Everybody in the group, even if they're not one of your child's phone contacts, will be able to see all messages within that group. If your child is added to a group with someone that they have previously blocked, that person can still see their messages and send them messages within the group. You can leave a group chat at any point so talk to your child and encourage them to leave any chat that makes them feel uncomfortable.

In settings, you can change who can add your child to groups, for example, you can change the settings to 'my contacts', which means that only those in your child's contacts can add them to a group.

### Online Bullying

WhatsApp has been used in instances of online bullying (but not as yet in our school), for example sending nasty messages or sharing images of other children without their permission to embarrass them. It's important to have regular chats with your child about their online life and that they understand that they must talk to you or another trusted adult if they are being bullied. This is a helpful article from BullyingUK which talks about what to do if you are being bullied online:

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/what-to-do-if-you-re-being-bullied-on-a-social-network/>

### Blocking/Reporting

If your child is using WhatsApp, then show them how to block and report a contact. You can find out how here:

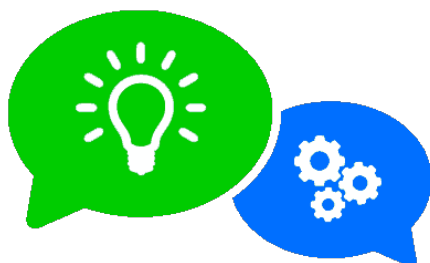
<https://faq.whatsapp.com/android/security-and-privacy/how-to-block-and-unblock-a-contact>

### Be Kind

How we behave online should be the same as how we behave face to face. This YouTube video from Dr Linda Papadopoulos tells us how we can encourage our children to be kind online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BqKi3J7g6Q>

### Further information

- <https://www.whatsapp.com/safety/>



# internet matters



# Scratch Desktop What is it?

## What is Scratch Desktop?

Scratch is a coding tool which many schools use (and which we will be using in school from this January) to develop and encourage coding skills in the children. It is a free online tool, which can be downloaded from <https://scratch.mit.edu/download>.



## Who should use it?

Scratch is designed specifically for young people (ages 8 and up) to help them develop 21st century learning skills: thinking creatively, communicating clearly, analyzing systematically, using technologies fluently, collaborating effectively and designing imaginatively. As a school we do start the children learning scratch in its basic form from Year 1/2.

## What do they Learn from it?

The children learn programming. Creating games is fun, and using Scratch makes this activity accessible even to the youngest learners because compared to other programming languages, Scratch is intuitive and easy to learn. This activity engages students and motivates them to learn.

Many younger students shy away from programming because the syntax is confusing and frustrating. Scratch's drag-and-drop block structure gets rid of the syntax problems while reinforcing the logic and intuition behind programming. Understanding how Scratch works also makes it easier to learn new computer programming languages.

## ScratchJr

Aimed at younger children (ages 5-7), ScratchJr teaches your child programming skills as they create their own stories and games: <https://www.scratchjr.org/>



## What parents should be aware of?

Scratch is a pretty safe tool, but please keep in mind that older children use it too and the online program sharing facility might mean that children see programs written by much older children. There will therefore be a danger of children being exposed to content that may not be appropriate. There is plenty that parents can do to guard against this. For more information about how parents can do this please visit <https://scratch.mit.edu/parents>

# Socialising safely online

Internet Matters have published this helpful article which includes some useful pointers as well as some fun activities for your child:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/socialising-safely-online/>

## Instagram update

Instagram have recently announced several updates that have been released or are about to be released.

### 1. Available now: Option to hide like counts

Users will now have the option to hide like counts on all posts as well as the option to hide like counts on their own posts. You can select to hide like counts on other people's posts in Settings – Privacy – Posts. You can hide like counts on your own posts in the advanced settings for each individual post.

<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/giving-people-more-control>

### 2. Available soon: Restricting DMs between teens and adults they don't follow

Adults will be prevented from sending messages to people under 18 who don't follow them. This feature will partly rely on users giving their correct age when they sign up to Instagram so make sure this is correct on your child's account. Remember you must be aged 13+ to sign up.

<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/continuing-to-make-instagram-safer-for-the-youngest-members-of-our-community>





Omegle was a social networking/chat website that **connected two strangers** together for either a text or a video chat. This platform has now been closed earlier in November. Please be aware though, that there are a number of other apps offering a very similar 'service'. Monkey is probably the next most used app of a similar nature.

## What should I be aware of?

- No registration is required to access these sites (therefore no age verification) and there are no reporting facilities.
- Users are given an option to save the chat's log and share the link. It is always possible for other users to take screenshots of text and video chats.

**We recommend that apps such as Omegle, like Monkey are not used by children due to the potential imagery shared and language used which can be particularly explicit.**

## Additional Links for Instagram

More tips from Instagram including how to manage privacy: <https://help.instagram.com/154475974694511>

### New Supervision features

You can now supervise your child's Instagram accounts. This gives you the ability to see who they follow and who follows them, see how much time they are spending on Instagram, set daily time limits and schedule breaks. Your child can also easily share when they have made any reports to Instagram with you. Learn more here: <https://familycenter.instagram.com/our-products/family-center/>

### Safety Features

Ensure your child knows how to report posts and people as well as how to unfollow and block people, delete and turn off comments. View here: [https://help.instagram.com/269765046710559/?helpref=hc\\_fnav](https://help.instagram.com/269765046710559/?helpref=hc_fnav)

# Instagram

## Instagram

**You should be over 13 years of age to set up an account.** To create an account, you must enter a date of birth (but this isn't verified). Instagram is used to post photos and videos and users can also DM (direct message), add to their stories (these disappear after 24 hours) and broadcast using IGTV.



### A guide to Instagram

If your child is using Instagram, then download a copy of 'A Parent's Guide to Instagram' here: <https://help.instagram.com/377830165708421>

### Wellbeing toolkit

Instagram have collaborated with The Jed Foundation (JED) and Internet Matters to create a toolkit which includes tools and suggestions to make your child's experience of using Instagram more positive. The toolkit is designed to help you start conversations with your child about how they use Instagram.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/wellbeing-and-safety-on-instagram-advice-for-parents-and-carers/>

# Your Digital footprint

## What is a Digital Footprint?

A Digital Footprint is any information that is available online about you (even information shared by others), for example, photos, posts, and comments that you have made. We need to support children in developing a positive footprint by encouraging them to think about what they share and that they have appropriate privacy settings in place.

### Further reading:

Childline provide further information as well as tips on how to protect your privacy and how to delete things online:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/taking-care-your-digital-footprint/>



# Houseparty

Houseparty is a face to face (video) social network available as either an app or web version. It became popular during lockdown and is still used by some groups. **You need to be 13+ to create an account**, however, no age verification takes place when you set up an account.

## What is Houseparty?

It allows you to video chat with other users (your connections) as well as play in app quizzes and games with each other, it's designed to feel like a house party. Up to 8 people can join each room and you can join several rooms at any one time by swiping across.

## How to lock rooms:

Once you are in a video chat (room), your connections and their connections can join the same video chat session regardless of whether you invite them or not **unless** you lock the room. So, if you do not lock the room, then a friend of one of your friends can join that video session. If somebody that isn't your connection is about to join, then you will receive a notice that they are joining the session. We would recommend locking the room by simply tapping on the padlock at the bottom of the screen once everybody that you want is in the room/has joined the session.

If you enable privacy mode, then **every room you go into will automatically be locked**.

## Reporting

As with all apps, it's important that your child knows how to use the reporting tools within it. You can report direct to Houseparty if you see any inappropriate behaviour by tapping their name, then tap the "Friends" button and choose "Report" or "Report or Block". Ensure your child knows how to un-friend or block a person as well.

## What you need to be aware of

- **In-app purchases:** One feature of Houseparty is the ability to play games and quizzes with your friends. These can be chargeable.
- **Content:** Other users may take screenshots/recordings of your private chats without you even realising and there is also the potential to see inappropriate content.
- **Strangers:** your child may encounter people they don't know (friends of friends).

## Further information

- <https://houseparty.com/guidelines/>
- <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/houseparty/>

# Nintendo Switch

Did you know there is a free Parental Controls app that you can download to your phone to link to your child's Nintendo Switch? You will need to set up a Nintendo account first to use it but then you can:

- view a report to see what video games your child has been playing.
- see how long your child has been playing for and set time limits and what time they can play.
- set which games can be played based on their age rating.
- limit in game communication.
- restrict purchases in the Nintendo eShop.



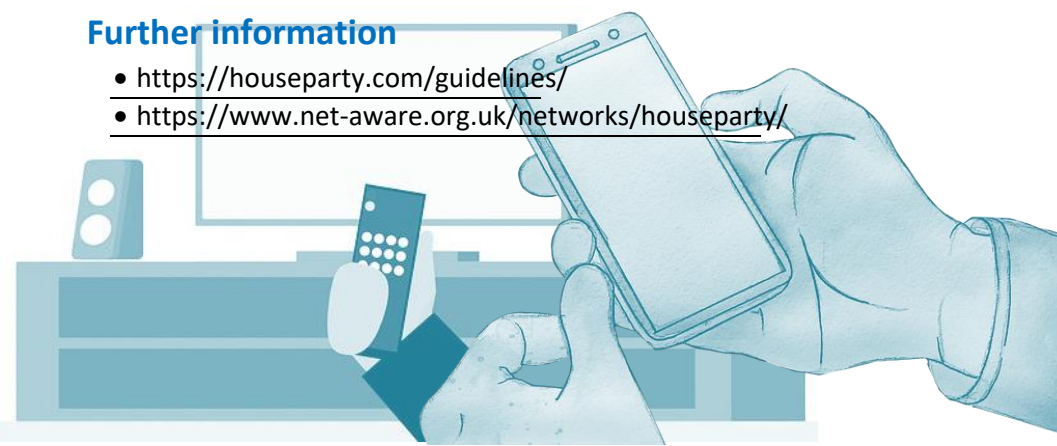
## Further information

- <https://www.nintendo.com/switch/parental-controls/>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/nintendo-switch/>

## What is screen time?

It is the amount of time that we spend on a phone, computer, watching television or on a games console. Often, we worry about how much screen time our children are having and unfortunately, there is a lack of research to determine how much screen time our children should have. Following guidance released in 2019 by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), Professor Russell Viner, President of RCPCH suggests:

*"that parents make decisions about screen time based on their child's development and health, and whether they are getting enough exercise and sleep. It remains a question of balance, as it is when screen use gets in the way or restricts other activities that a child's well-being can be negatively impacted."*

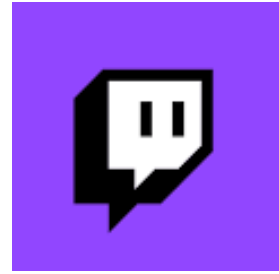


# Twitter and Twitch

## What is a Twitch?

Twitch is an interactive video live streaming service that focuses on video game live streaming, including broadcasts of esports competitions, in addition to offering music broadcasts, creative content, and "in real life" streams. Twitch users can watch anything from video games, to music festivals, professional sports, and tv shows.

The Twitch app is free to download, and streams are free to watch. Twitch users can also purchase an in-app currency called Bits, which allows them to send Cheers to a streamer as a way of showing support.



## What should I be worried about?

Twitch users have the ability to create their own content or they can enjoy Twitch as viewers, tuning into their favorite live streamers and channels. For those interested in live streaming, anyone is able to go live and can start making money from their viewership through Twitch's affiliate program.

Due to its exploding popularity among younger audiences and young gamers, Twitch is definitely a platform that parents will want to pay attention to. When it comes to concerns on the streaming platform, there's a few to consider as it can leave children vulnerable to inappropriate content and online predators.

- **LIVE STREAMING** - Whenever live streaming is involved, parents should be cautious as the content isn't edited and anything could happen. Unfiltered language, inappropriate imagery and more could be shown as there is no delay between what is happening live and what your child is shown on screen. Spam, scams, violent, obscene, and sexual content are all prohibited in Twitch's community guidelines but this doesn't mean that it doesn't happen.
- **TWITCH CHAT MODERATION** - Twitch's chat feature can become chaotic and almost useless on more popular streams with higher viewership, as everyone is typing at the same time in an effort to interact with their favorite streamers. Because these chats get so out of hand on bigger channels, it often becomes a yelling contest filled with cyberbullying, hate speech, and more. When this happens, the moderators on Twitch can't keep up with the overloaded chat and many of the commenters go unpunished. Seeing as these chats aren't perfectly moderated, parents should be able to judge whether their child is ready for this platform or perhaps consider co-viewing with their child.
- **DIRECT MESSAGING** - Twitch also offers direct messaging, a private conversation between two users, and whispers. Twitch whispers are a way for users to interact privately in a public group chat. By typing "/w" into a chat, followed by the username that you want to communicate privately with, only that user will see your message in the group chat.

### Further information

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/register/purchase?purchasing-type=Resource&purchasing-slug=twitch-online-safety-guide-for-parents>

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-twitch>

## Being safe on Twitter (or X as we are now supposed to call it)

You probably know all about Twitter and may well be a user. Occasionally this is used as a vehicle for online bullying and Trolling. This helpful information from Internet Matters will help you with parental settings should your children use Twitter too.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/twitter/>



# Harmful online challenges/hoaxes

"A hoax is a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful. The internet and social media provide a perfect platform for hoaxes, especially hoaxes about challenges or trends that are said to be harmful to children and young people to be spread quickly. You should carefully consider if a challenge or scare story is a hoax. Generally speaking, naming an online hoax and providing direct warnings is not helpful. Concerns are often fuelled by unhelpful publicity, usually generated on social media, and may not be based on confirmed or factual occurrences or any real risk to children and young people."

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes> [Accessed 15.3.21].

Whilst we do not recommend talking to your child about specific challenges (it draws attention to them), we do recommend talking to your child about challenges that may appear on the internet. Make sure they know that they should talk to you about what they see online, particularly if it scares or upsets them as you can help them to block and report the content.



**Reassure your child that challenges that suggest that bad stuff will happen if they don't complete the tasks are not real.**

The following links will provide you with further information as well as content to help you talk to your child:

- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/theres-a-viral-scare-online-what-should-i-do/>
- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/online-challenges-and-peer-pressure>
- <https://www.bbc.com/ownit/its-personal/when-you-see-something-scary-online>
- <https://www.bbc.com/ownit/dont-panic/what-to-do-if-you-see-something-upsetting-online>
- <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/how-can-we-teach-kids-to-spot-fake-news-online/>

**We hope that you have found this guide helpful in understanding the many risks associated with the online world and that you now know where to source support and guidance.**

**Should you experience anything which concerns you regarding your child's online experiences please let us know. Equally if you become aware of new and emerging software or technology that might present risks to children at the school we'd also love to know about it. We are keen to update this advice regularly and your support in keeping on top of what children may experience is key to this.**

## Hollie Guard App

The Hollie Guard app allows you to keep an eye on your child while they are traveling using the Journey feature, so whenever they use this feature, their emergency contacts are informed when they have arrived at their destination.

Users can also use this app to get help quickly if they're in danger. If a user is in danger, they shake or tap their phone, which activates Hollie Guard and automatically sends their location to their designated contacts.

It can also activate a high-pitched alarm. Visit their website for further information: <https://hollieguard.com/>

## Have you checked the age ratings?

When your children request to use a new app or game, it's important to evaluate whether it is appropriate for your child to use it. One of the **first things** we can do is check the age rating. If your child is not old enough then explain to your child, why it is not appropriate for them.

## Spotify Kids



Spotify Kids is available as part of a *paid for* Premium family subscription. With Spotify Kids, your child will have their own account to access child-friendly content (picked by Spotify).

You can also share playlists with them - remember that if this playlist includes songs marked explicit (marked with an E) then your child will be able to listen to them. Further information is available here:

<https://support.spotify.com/us/article/spotify-kids/>





# Early Years

Is your child online? It's important that devices are set up with age-appropriate parental controls and access is restricted to appropriate apps/content. **We would advise that children only access devices when you are with them.** Sometimes, regardless of what controls we have in place, children may accidentally view inappropriate content so it's important we are around to help them if they do.

The Australian eSafety Commissioner has published a short booklet including advice and guidance on how to navigate the online world with your child. This might seem a strange choice but it has specifically been aimed at parents/carers with children under the age of 5: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/children-under-5/online-safety-for-under-5s-booklet>



## Personalised Digital Toolkit

Answer some simple questions and get age specific advice and recommendations:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/digital-family->

# Roblox

## Roblox – updated PEGI rating

PEGI have announced a change to the age rating for Roblox. PEGI used to rate Roblox as 7+, however because of the huge level of user generated content within Roblox, PEGI have changed the rating to a Parental Guidance label (icon shown right). You can read more about this change here: <https://pegi.info/news/pegi-changes-rating-advice-roblox>



### What is Roblox?

You can either use Roblox to create games or play games that other users have created. **As a lot of the content is user generated, it may mean not all games will be suitable for your child to view/play. It is important to set up Parental controls appropriate to your child.**

### Allowed Experiences - NEW

Roblox has introduced Allowed Experiences, which allows you to select age-appropriate experiences, so your child can only join experiences that match their age set. Please note that experiences above the age restriction set may be seen in search results. Age categories available are 9+, 13+ and all ages. You can find out how to set up Allowed Experiences here: <https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/8863284850196-Allowed-Experiences-Controls>

### What should I be aware of?

**Chat Facility** - Players can chat to each other on Roblox. You can add parental controls to turn this feature off completely or add restrictions.

**Virtual Currency** - Players can buy Robux (their virtual currency) to buy in-game upgrades or accessories. If you do not want your child to purchase them, then ensure you set the Monthly Spend Restriction to zero.

**Game content** – as mentioned, games are created by different users so sometimes the content may not be appropriate for your child.

**Blocking users and reporting** – ensure your child knows how to do this.

### What should I do?

- Play the game with your child.
- Explore the parental controls within Roblox and set as appropriate.
- Show your child how to use the Report Abuse system within Roblox to report inappropriate content and how to block other users.

### Further information:

- <https://corp.roblox.com/parents/>
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/roblox>



# Livestreams

## Broadband set up

Have you set up appropriate settings on your broadband/Wi-Fi? Most broadband providers include parental controls for free as part of their broadband package, which means that any device that connects to your Wi-Fi will be protected by any controls you set up. Find out how to set yours up here:

### Sky:

<https://www.sky.com/help/diagnostics/sky-broadband-buddy/sky-broadband-buddy>

### BT:

<https://www.bt.com/help/security/how-to-keep-your-family-safe-online-with-bt-parental-controls-an>

### Talk Talk:

<https://community.talktalk.co.uk/t5/Keeping-your-Family-Safe/bd-p/kfshub>

### Virgin:

<https://www.virginmedia.com/broadband/parental-control>

*Remember, children may have devices that use mobile data, so they won't always be connected to your wifi. Ensure you set up parental controls on these devices too.*

### Further information:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parental-controls-offered-by-your-home-internet-provider>

## Test Your Internet Filter

SWGfL have created a tool to test your filtering to give you an indication that your broadband is blocking certain categories. Access it here: <http://testfiltering.com/>

## Does your child watch livestreams?

### What is livestreaming?

Livestreaming is when an individual broadcasts video live over the internet. People can watch livestreams from any device that is connected to the internet.

### Who is watching livestreaming?

Research from Ofcom reported that 57% of 3 – 17 year olds have watched live streams and the most used platforms to watch live streams were YouTube and TikTok. The research also showed that the percentage watching content on livestreaming app/sites increased by age. A third of 3-4 year olds were watching live content with this number growing to eight in ten of 16-17 year olds. This is reported in [Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2022 \(ofcom.org.uk\)](#).



### What are the risks?

There are risks associated with watching livestreams that you should be aware of. The main risk being that your child may see or hear something inappropriate as your child may come across themes or content that is not suitable for them. It is difficult to moderate live content as it is happening in real time.

### How can I help my child?

- All online platforms have an age rating, ensure your child only accesses platforms that are appropriate to their age. For example, TikTok has an age rating of 13.
- For any platforms that your child uses, ensure appropriate parental controls and privacy settings are applied.
- Take an interest in what your child is doing online and on a regular basis, ask your child to show you what they are accessing.
- Ensure your child knows how to use any reporting/blocking tools on the app that they are using and as always please ensure that your child knows to talk to a trusted adult if they see anything that concerns them online.

### Further information

- <https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/livestreaming-parents/>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/what-is-live-streaming/>

# Be kind online



It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face to face with each other. Talk to your child about how they are speaking to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect and kindness, like they would if they were face-to-face.

Dr Linda Papadopoulos (Internet Matters Ambassador) provides tips on how you can help your child to be kind online in this

YouTube video such as teaching them how to be inclusive and think about how they would like to be treated online themselves:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BqKi3J7g6Q&t=9s>

Ensure that your child understands that if they receive unkind messages (or see something that worries them) then they should not reply or engage in conversation with them, but that they should tell a trusted adult. You can use the tools within an app to report any offensive or hurtful content as well as block people so they cannot contact you again in the future.

Unicef have a comprehensive area on their website, which talks about what Cyberbullying is and how to stop it:

<https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>

Childline also have a lot of information about Cyberbullying, including advice to those that might be bullying:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/>

# How can the law help me?

Whilst we wait for the Online Safety Bill to be passed, which will hopefully improve Online Safety, there are certain laws already established to help protect us online. For example, in the UK we have the Malicious Communications Act 1988 that states it is an offence to send a communication that conveys an indecent or grossly offensive message or a threat. We also have the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which covers threatening behaviour or harassment online.

Report Harmful Content have curated a list of laws that are relevant to online behaviour here:

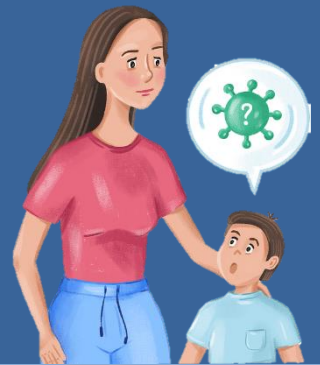
<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/when-should-you-go-to-the-police/>



## Online Safety with Google

As part of Google Families, Google have a hub of resources that you can use including conversation starters with links to additional tools and advice and information about parental controls. Google also provide you with resources to help your children build healthier habits and stay safe online. There is also a selection of ideas on how to use technology as a family in a fun and engaging manner such as exploring the world and learning how to code. You can access the hub here:

[https://families.google/intl/en\\_uk/](https://families.google/intl/en_uk/)



## CEOP: Updated 4-7s website and guide

This updated website from CEOP Education is designed for children to visit with their parents/carers. The children answer a series of questions as they work towards collecting badges. You can find out more here:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/resources/4-7s-website/>

## Screentime advice

We're often asked how long children should spend on their devices each day. Childnet have created a blog discussing why it is difficult to specify a limit and what you should consider. You can read it here:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/screentime-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>



# Fall Guys

Fall Guys is a free, online multiplayer game in which players team up to take on obstacle courses and puzzles to try and be the last player standing. Fall Guys is available on multiple platforms.

Whilst this game has a PEGI rating of 3 (suitable for all ages), you need to be aware that up to sixty people will be playing in one game at the same time and it does have the option of **voice chat** and **in-game purchases**. Voice chat is off by default and is not needed to play the game. An Epic Games account is required to play Fall Guys, which does include parental controls. You can find out more here:

<https://www.epicgames.com/site/en-US/parental-controls>

# Instagram: new features

*You must be at least 13 years old to have an Instagram account.*

Instagram have introduced several new features, including 'Quiet mode,' how to hide content as well as additional tools to help your child.

## Quiet mode

This gives users the ability to put their account in quiet mode, so you do not receive notifications and if you receive a DM, the sender receives an auto reply. This mode will help provide less distraction whilst studying and at nighttime.

## Recommendations

You can now hide content in Explore that you do not wish to see/are not interested in. Instagram will use this information to avoid showing you that type of content in other areas where content is recommended as well.

## Hidden words

You can already hide comments and DMs containing specific words, but this feature has now been expanded to recommended posts. If you add a word, emoji or hashtag that you want to avoid to your hidden words (in privacy settings) then Instagram will try to no longer recommend content with those words in the caption/ hashtag.

## Updated Parental Supervision Tools

You can see your child's Instagram settings (if you have set up a supervised account), including their privacy and account settings and accounts your child has blocked. If your child updates a setting, then you will receive a notification to inform you.

## Find out more

You can read more about the new features here:

<https://about.fb.com/news/2023/01/instagram-quiet-mode-manage-your-time-and-focus/>



## Sky Broadband Shield

Do you have Sky Broadband? Sky offer a set of free tools to all customers to help make the internet a safer place for your family, for example safe search. You can find out more about the settings available and how to set it up here:

<https://www.sky.com/help/articles/sky-broadband-shield-start>

## Spotify

There have been news reports claiming grooming has taken place on Spotify (source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-64262918>).

Spotify is a music streaming service. You should be over 18 years of age to agree to the terms, or if older than 13, obtain parent/guardian consent.

There is a Spotify Kids version, but it is only available as part of a Premium (paid for) Family plan.

Spotify have produced this Parental Guide to assist you with further information but if your child does use Spotify then it may be beneficial to have a chat about what they are viewing. [https://www.spotify.com/privacy/files/Parental\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.spotify.com/privacy/files/Parental_Guide.pdf)

You can find out more about Grooming and who to contact here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/>

## Is your child playing Gacha Life?

Gacha Life is rated as 9+ on the App Store and for 'Everyone' on the Google Play Store. Players can dress up characters and add props (including weapons) and create scenes with their characters as well as play games. The app does allow in-app purchases ranging from £1.70 to £17.99 and does include adverts. This article from Internet Matters provides further information and discusses in detail what you need to be aware of: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/what-is-gacha-life-what-parents-need-to-know/>



# Social Media Influencers

## Rec Room

Rec Room is available across different platforms and is free to play. It can be played with or without a VR headset. Rec room consists of player created rooms, in which players can play games and interact with others.

**Rec Room is rated as 9+ by the App store.** For players under 13 years of age, they are assigned a junior account. When creating a junior account, you can also add your own email address, which will allow you to manage your child's password and other settings such as in app purchases. Users with a junior account will not be able to message each other.

You should be aware of the following if your child is playing Rec Room:

- In app purchases: make sure your bank account details are not linked to the device your child is playing on.
- Chat: if your child does not have a junior account then there is a chat facility within Rec Room so there is a risk that your child could communicate with strangers.
- Inappropriate content: your child may come across themes or content that is not appropriate for your child.

Rec Room does have reporting facilities so if your child is playing Rec Room, then please ensure they know how to use them and to talk to a trusted adult if they see anything that concerns them.

You can find out more about Rec Room here:

<https://recroom.com/parents-guide>

### What is an Influencer?

An influencer is somebody prominent on a social media platform such as YouTube and Instagram, who have a high number of followers. Influencers share their opinions/ideas and may be paid to advertise/promote products through their account. Whilst there are some great influencers, there are some that choose to share their own opinions, which could be misogynistic or racist for example. These opinions can be expressed or interpreted as fact. It is important to talk to your child about the spread of misinformation online and how we should fact check and critically analyse what we see and hear online.

What we see on social media platforms is influenced by algorithms, which predict what type of content we are most likely to interact with. Whilst there are benefits of algorithms, it can mean that once we start looking at certain content, our social media feed can become more aligned with that opinion, so we don't see a balanced picture. You can find out more here: <https://www.childnet.com/blog/algorithms/>

### Further information

The NSPCC have created an article detailing what you need to know about online influencers. You can read it here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/2023-05-16-the-influence-of-influencers/>

## HiPal – Walkie Talkie



**HiPal – Walkie Talkie is a social media app and rated 12+ on the App store and for 'Teens' on Google Play.**

When first accessing HiPal, it asks you if you are under or over 12 years of age. The area available to under 12 year olds states that no stranger interaction can take place. Users with this account type invite friends by sharing a code/QR code. As with all messaging apps, there can be instances of cyberbullying, so it is important to monitor who your child is interacting with.

If a user selects that they are over 12 years of age, then there is the risk of communication from strangers. HiPal features a public square where you can message strangers as well as an explore tab where you can view people's images and videos from around the world. There is a risk of viewing content that is not suitable or inappropriate. There are reporting and blocking features within the app. You can find out more from Safer Schools NI here: <https://saferschoolsni.co.uk/hipal-walkie-talkie-and-wizz-social-apps/>

# Omegle

**Omegle have updated their terms and conditions. You must be 18+ to use Omegle.** Omegle is a social networking/chat website that **connects two strangers** together for either a text or a video chat. Chats are anonymous unless a user provides this information.



**Omegle should not be accessed by children due to the potential imagery shared and language used which can be explicit.**

## What should I be aware of?

- No registration is required to access Omegle (therefore no age verification) and there are no reporting facilities.
- Users are given an option to save the chat's log and share the link. It is also possible for other users to take screenshots of text and video chats.

You can find out more information from Internet Matters, including imitation apps that you should also be aware of:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/what-is-omegle-what-parents-need-to-know/>

# Money Savvy Online



## Have you been scammed online?

As scammers become more sophisticated, it's important that we learn about the different approaches that they might use and what to look out for so we can protect ourselves. Barclays have listed some of the most common scams on their website:

<https://www.barclays.co.uk/fraud-and-scams/scams-protection/>

## MoneySense from NatWest

NatWest have an area on their website full of useful articles and guidance to support your child and enhance your understanding. Articles include avoiding fraud and online scams, information on digital game currency, the dangers of fraud and do you know what a money mule is?

The site also includes activities to complete with your child to enhance their understanding of money including a 'savings challenge' for ages 5 – 8 and 'money and your mental health' aimed at young adults. You can find this information and lots more here:

<https://natwest.mymoneysense.com/parents/>

## JusTalk

Users can use this app to video chat, call and text. There are two versions – JusTalk and JusTalk Kids with both versions having the option to unlock further functions via a premium subscription. **JusTalk is rated as 12+ and JusTalk Kids is rated as 4+ on the App store.** Even though the apps may be rated as age appropriate for your child, there are still risks in using either version, such as in app purchases.

The Ineqe Safeguarding Group provide an overview of JusTalk, including the risks you need to be aware of: <https://ineqe.com/2023/02/08/what-is-the-justalk-app/>

## Free Webinar

London Grid for Learning (LgFL) are working with the Early Years Alliance to deliver a 1-hour webinar on Thursday 8th June 10-11am to parents of children aged 0-5 years, about simple steps to take to keep children safe when using online devices. You can find out more at the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/family-connect-screens-in-the-early-years-tickets-633434709267>

## What is artificial intelligence (AI)?

AI is when a computer/machine can learn and perform tasks like a human. Its popularity is increasing due to the likes of ChatGPT and more recently, My AI from Snapchat. Internet Matters have created a guide about using AI with your child and lists some popular AI tools that you should be aware of: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/parent-guide-to-artificial-intelligence-ai-tools/>

In addition, Childnet have produced this blog about Snapchat's My AI: <https://www.childnet.com/blog/snapchats-new-ai-chatbot-and-its-impact-on-young-people/>

# Playing games online

Does your child play games online? We have outlined some points that you may wish to consider to try and create a safer experience for your child.

## Have you set up parental controls?

As well as setting up appropriate parental controls through the game's setting, ensure you have set them up on the console/device your child is playing on. For example, many consoles allow you to restrict the games accessed by age.



## Chatting to strangers

Some games will allow communication, for example (FIFA and Fortnite). Depending on the game, this may be via the in-game text chat, direct messages or talking through headphones. Some games do offer the ability to switch communication off or restrict bad language so make sure settings appropriate to your child are set up for each of the games they play.

It can be difficult to moderate online chat so ensure your child knows how to block and report other players who make them feel uncomfortable and that they know to talk to you or a trusted adult if they have any concerns. It can also be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they would not if they were face to face with each other. Talk to your child about how they are speaking to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect, like they would if they were face-to-face.

## Is the game age appropriate?

Before buying the game, check that your child is old enough to play it. All games will either have a PEGI rating or be rated by the App Store /Google Play. UK Safer Internet Centre have published a blog, which shares tips on what to do if your child asks about playing a new game:

- <https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/help-my-child-wants-to-play-games-that-are-too-old-for-them-2>

## In app purchases

In addition to the above, you should be aware of in app purchases as lots of games include the option to purchase additional items/subscriptions so ensure you do not have payment cards saved or set up restrictions/pin code to approve.

## Further information

The NSPCC provide further guidance and support regarding this topic:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/>

## Skill-building app suggestions from Internet Matters

Internet Matters have curated a list of apps that will help your child to develop skills and new interests in different areas, for example Game Builder Garage (7+), which helps children to create their own games and Tayasui Sketches to develop art skills. You can find the full list here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/skill-building-apps-guide-for-kids/>

## Scary Teacher 3D

Scary Teacher 3D is a game rated as 12+ by the App store (due to Mild Realistic Violence) or as 'Teen' on Google Play (due to violence). The game does include in-app purchases as well. Players must scare their teacher by completing different activities. There are lots of videos of this game on YouTube as well.

As with all games your child is asking to play, please take note of the age rating and play the game first to see if you think it is appropriate for your child.

## Teaching children about money

Lloyds bank have published information and resources to help us help our children develop good financial habits. The information is split into age groups so you can find support tailored to your child's age. You can find out more here:

<https://www.lloydsbank.com/help-guidance/family-finances/teaching-children-about-money.html>

# Stay Smart

As a school we believe in following the SMART code for being safe online. The poster below will explain what they means.



## BE SMART ONLINE



**S**

**SAFE** Keep your personal information safe. When chatting or posting online don't give away things like your full name, password or home address. Remember personal information can be seen in images and videos you share too. Keep them safe to keep yourself safe.



**M**

**MEET** Meeting up with someone you only know online, even a friend of a friend, can be dangerous as this person is still a stranger. If someone you only know online ever asks you to meet up, for personal information or for photos/videos of you then tell an adult straight away and report them together on [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)



**A**

**ACCEPTING** Think carefully before you click on or open something online (e.g. links, adverts, friend requests, photos) as you never know where they may lead to or they may contain viruses. Do not accept something if you are unsure of who the person is or what they've sent you.



**R**

**RELIABLE** You cannot trust everything you see online as some things can be out of date, inaccurate or not entirely true. To find reliable information compare at least three different websites, check in books and talk to someone about what you have found.



**T**

**TELL** Tell a trusted adult if something or someone ever makes you feel upset, worried or confused. This could be if you or someone you know is being bullied online. There are lots of people who will be able to help you like your teachers, parents, carers or contact Childline – 0800 11 11 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)





**BE SMART WITH A HEART** Remember to always be smart with a heart by being kind and respectful to others online. Make the internet a better place by helping your friends if they are worried or upset by anything that happens online.



[WWW.CHILDNET.COM](http://WWW.CHILDNET.COM)

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