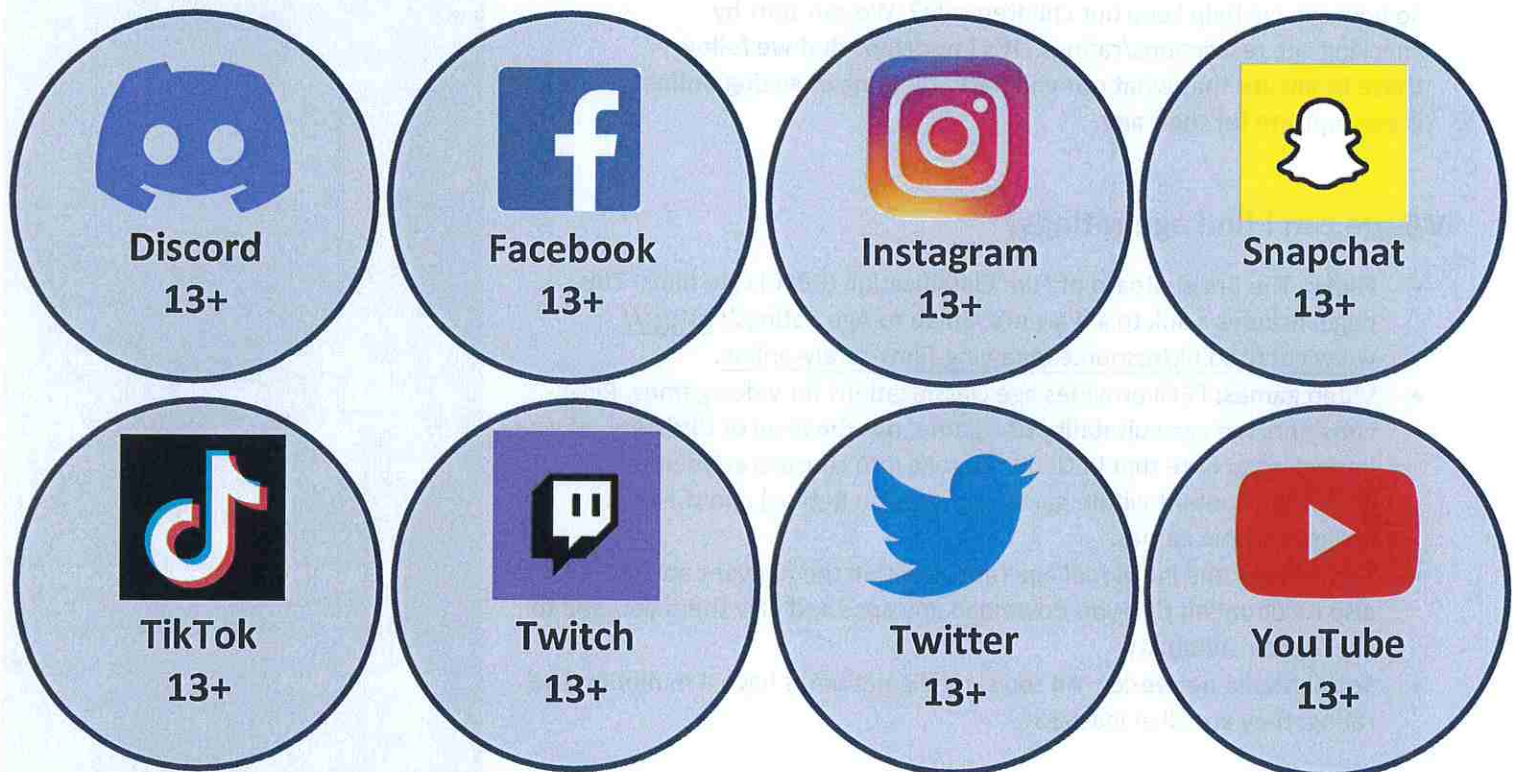


Dear Parents and Carers,

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

If your child is 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/>



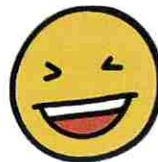
Being online

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:

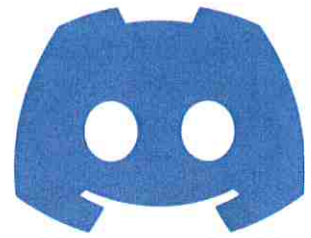
<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parental-controls-offered-by-your-home-internet-provider>



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=N060J59YKBI&list=PLJSbhHkqYnrSHEmsr8jwYk7pdJsoHZQcR>

Snapchat

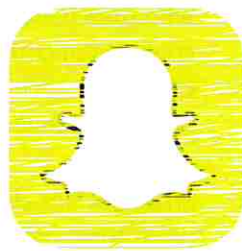
What is Snapchat?

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.



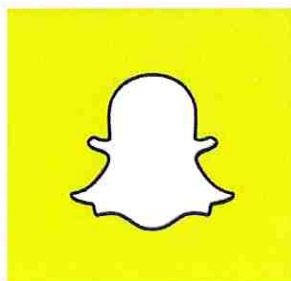
What should I be aware of?

- **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>



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 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/2021/06/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 Jeffers'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-bella-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/curation/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=9582efc8bdb1aac50055ceadc13961917



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/

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.

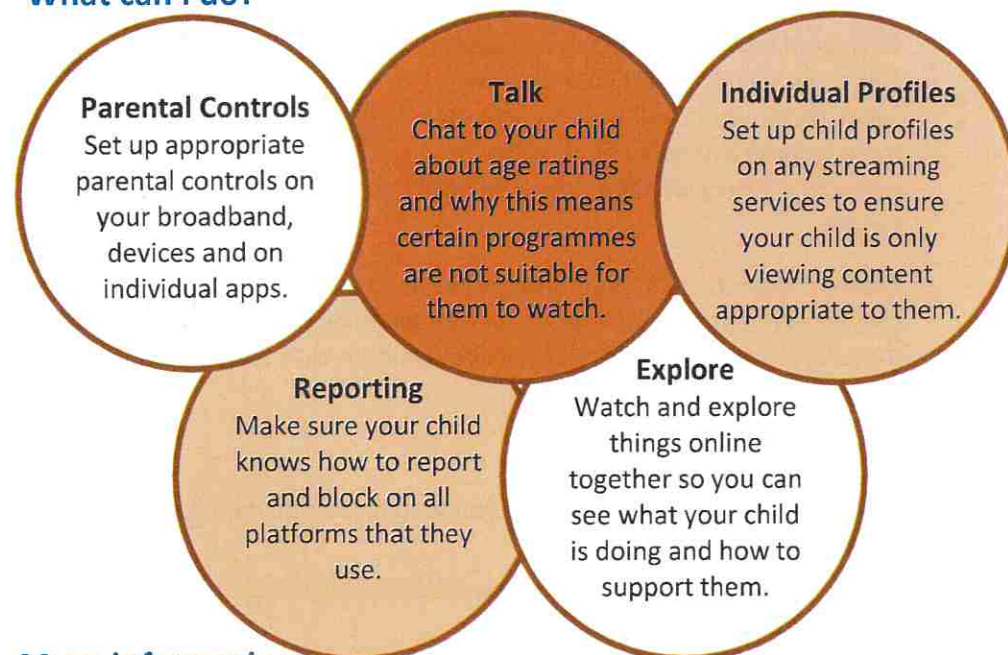
What do I need to be aware of?

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 is a present risk.** 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

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=zT-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/>