



Struthers Primary School

Supporting Families Online

We understand that keeping your child safe online can be a daunting task, especially with the ever-changing digital landscape. As a school, we want to support you in keeping your child safe online in any way that we can.

In this booklet, we have included some tools and resources that may be helpful when talking to your child about being online and using their devices responsibly.

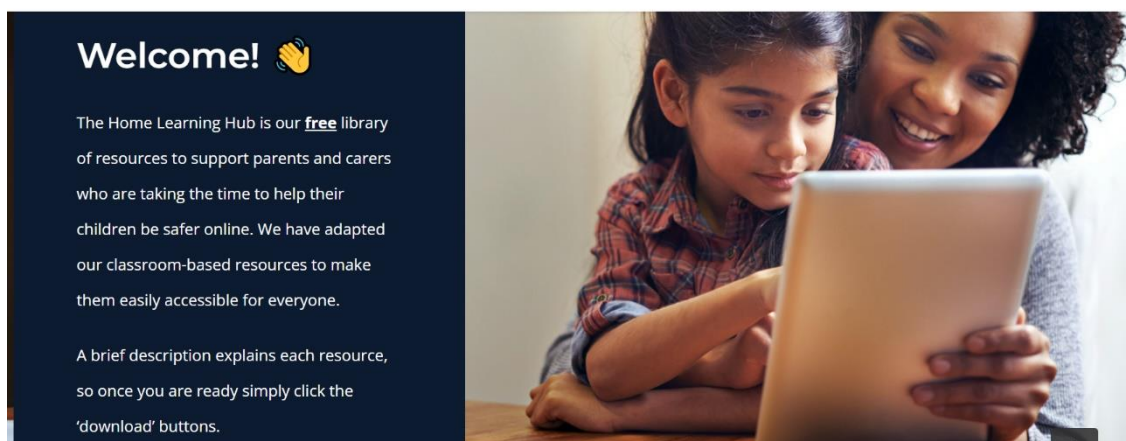
We hope that you find these resources helpful and you can reach out to the school at any point if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued trust in our school's commitment to your child's safety and well-being.

Helpful Websites:

Safer Schools Scotland: www.oursaferschools.co.uk

This website offers a range of helpful hints, tips and resources to help your child stay safe online. The 'Home Learning Hub' part of the website will also have digital access to the information posters overleaf.





A guide to

Parental Control Apps

In the 'real world', we can be there to physically hold our children's hands and look out for - and protect from - possible danger. On devices and online, most children and particularly young people are in the online world without supervision and without an adult who may spot dangers they can't see or recognise.

A parental control app, or parent app, may seem like the obvious answer – simply download an app, set it up and you're good to go...but is it that easy? Or are there pitfalls to avoid?

It's important to remember that parental control apps or content filters are not 100% effective or foolproof.

The Risks

You may be gaining a sense of security, but you risk losing the trust of your child.

By covertly installing a parent app, there's a risk that, if discovered, any sense of trust in the relationship will be destroyed. The potential consequences of that could far outweigh the benefits any parent app can provide. A parent app is a preventative measure – it can't replace the benefits of having a trusted adult to talk to if something does go wrong and a child or young person is upset. Nor can it give them a supportive hug or signpost to further help.

You may be missing out on an opportunity to teach about digital resilience.

In today's digital world, children and young people need to be armed with the knowledge of digital resilience. Teaching a child that certain apps and platforms are for grown-ups only, monitoring their digital device use and educating them on how to talk to a trusted adult about something that upsets them is giving them some of the tools they'll need if you're introducing them to the online world.

Using Parent Apps with Permission

Not every parent app works 'in secret'. Some software will be conspicuous by design or installed with the child or young person's knowledge and permission.

Young people can be secretive, as they go through the natural teenage stages of growing up, exploring who they are and craving independence. They are also often more 'tech-savvy' than their parents, as many now use tech from a young age. With a quick search online, it's easy to find videos and websites with workarounds for most of the popular parent apps.

All of this means that, should a young person want to find a way around having their parent or carer viewing their online activity, it's important to remember that 'where there's a will, there's a way'.

Security and Data Breaches

It's easy – and logical – to think that an app that pertains to protect children online can be trusted to do just that, but all companies are fallible and some of the most popular parent control apps have been exposed to data breaches, with users' data ending up online.

The online world is fast moving, and circumstances change, and new factors come into play all the time, like new platforms being launched, children finding workarounds and breaches in security.

What are the Benefits?

Each app is different and will offer different features, but most are likely to offer some or all of the following:

- Monitor search history
- Block websites or apps
- Alert parents to a child's physical location
- Tell parents who children are talking to online
- Schedule designated screen time
- View call logs and what numbers a child may be contacting / contacted by
- View text and / or audio messages
- An SOS feature that lets children contact trusted adults

Top Tips

There's no shortcut to safeguarding! If you do choose to use monitoring software, it should be in conjunction with a range of other safeguarding measures.

Choose wisely. If you want to use a parental control app, make sure you've done your research first. Read reviews, search online for any news about the app and check what's been done with the data collected.

DIY - Do It Yourself: You may be able to do some of the features offered by parent apps yourself, such as adding safe search filters, adjusting parental controls and safety settings.

Talk and trust are two of the best tools. Don't underestimate how much 'parental control' you can gain just by having open, honest, non-judgemental conversations with a child or young person!



ALL ABOUT TikTok

TikTok is a video sharing social media platform used to create and share short form videos that allows users to express themselves through singing, dancing, comedy, and lip-syncing. It exploded in popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic and has only continued its rise since.

58% of children aged 3-15 use TikTok (alongside other social media).

1 billion global daily users by early 2022.

Online Safety Shareable by:
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HOW IT WORKS

- SHARE**
Upload short videos for other users to view, comment, and like.
- EDIT**
Change or alter videos to include popular filters or themes.
- STITCH**
Use snippets of existing videos to create a new video or trend.
- COLLAB**
Add popular music or audio (including from other users) to videos.
- DUET**
Create a video that is posted directly alongside another user's video.
- MESSAGE**
Users aged 16+ can send private messages to one another.

RISKS

- PUBLIC VIEWS** - For users registered as 16 and over, their profile is 'public' by default and their videos can be viewed and downloaded by anyone.
- INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT** - Some videos include suggestive language, mature situations, and sexualised content without warning.
- SCREENTIME OVERLOAD** - The continuous scrolling design of the app makes it harder for users to look away from their screens, and is likely to increase screentime.
- PAID ADS** - Many brands and companies have taken to TikTok to try and boost product exposure with paid adverts that mix into normal content.
- INFLUENCERS** - Young people may be 'influenced' by popular creators on TikTok, and could spend time or money following someone or trying to become an influencer.
- IN-APP PURCHASES** - Users can make in-app purchases to get 'coins', which can buy virtual gifts to send to influencers on the platform.

WATCH OUT FOR... #TikTokChallenges

Hardly a day passes without a new TikTok Challenge popping up. A 'challenge' is a type of video that is widely shared and copied by others. Many of these can be fun and engaging, incorporating things like dances, songs, and filters.

There are some, however, that can be riskier and potentially harmful - which can make them even more tempting to try! These can include dangerous stunts, mean pranks, or reacting to upsetting content.

NOW

The TikTok Now feature prompts users to take an 'in the moment' photo or video at a random time once a day. Make sure the young person in your care knows to check the content before uploading so they're not unknowingly sharing personal details under pressure!

TOP TIPS

- KEEP PRIVATE** - Ensure your young person's privacy settings are appropriate for their age. Remember - a private profile gives the most control!
- TALK IT OUT** - 'Digital life' should be as much a part of everyday conversation as every other aspect of a young person's life.
- DISCUSS TOGETHER** - Find out what videos and influencers they view, what they like, what they dislike - and why!
- BE HONEST** - Talk about how social media content is often a far from accurate depiction of real life, especially for influencers.
- STAY SAFE** - Some TikTok challenges could be potentially harmful to young people. Remind them that their safety is #1 always!
- GIVE SPACE** - Give them room to voice any concerns they might have around harmful or inappropriate content they come across.

ALERT
TikTok says users must be 13+ to use the app, but our research shows that it is extremely popular with younger children.



Having Supportive Conversations

Having supportive conversations about sensitive topics with children and young people can be difficult, but it is so important! A key part of a child's emotional development is being able to understand and express how they feel. This way they can learn to process, cope, and manage other difficult feelings and situations as they grow.

Every child is different. Their ability to process information will depend on age, ability, and resilience.

Remember – you will know them best.

This toolkit is designed to help you make the right decisions on when and how to have a supportive conversation.

WHAT to say

- ❓ Decide what you want to share.
- ❓ Consider what they might already know.
- ❓ Stick to simple, honest facts.
- ❓ Be prepared to discuss difficult questions or feelings.

HOW to say it

- ❓ Tailor your approach to your child or young person's age and capacity.
- ❓ Use clear, simple language and avoid alarming terms.
- ❓ Actively listen and be honest in your responses.
- ❓ Ask neutral, open questions.
- ❓ Stay calm, reassuring, and interested in the conversation.

WHEN to say it

- ❓ Timing is everything.
- ❓ Choose a nurturing environment if possible.
- ❓ Make sure that needs are met (not tired, hungry, cold, upset, or distracted).
- ❓ Watch for visual cues that your child or young person is looking to talk to you.
- ❓ Create moments for undistracted conversation.

There's a lot going on in the world right now. What do you know about it?

You can always come to me, no matter how small the worry or issue is.

Thank you for being so honest with me. I really appreciate it.

Thank you for coming to talk to me. I care about you so much, and I want to listen and help where I can.

There are no silly questions. You can ask me anything, and I will do my best to answer you. If I don't know the answer, I'd love to figure it out together.

You are loved. What you think and say truly matters to me.



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5 Ways to Keep Children Safe Whilst Gaming

Gaming continues to be one of many children's - and parents! - favourite pastimes. However, many parents have concerns over how to keep their child safe while gaming. Here at Ineqe Safeguarding Group, we've been busy testing consoles and games to identify areas of risk to promote a safer gaming experience for children.

Video games are fun and remain popular among young and old users alike.



Research by Ofcom showed that approximately

62% of adults in the UK

were reported to have played video games in 2020, propelled by the COVID-19 pandemic and the stay-at-home restrictions.



With all this fun, it's important to remember that playing video games comes with risks.

Our online safety experts have compiled the following top tips to promote a safer gaming experience for children.



Some have **in-game purchasing** while others contain **age-inappropriate** content. These risks can significantly increase when a child is playing and interacting with other gamers online.



1 Choose the right child-friendly game

Choosing the right game for the child in your care can be difficult. Some parents and carers feel pressured to buy a game which might not be age-appropriate.

12 To help you make the choice, we have explored the PEGI age rating system and highlight the designated ratings of the most popular games around.

You can use the **PEGI (Pan European Game Information)** labels found on **all major games** to help inform your decision. PEGI is the video game content classification system used for evaluating games based on their themes. It is broken down into the following levels:

3	Suitable for all ages.
7	Includes content with scenes and sounds which might frighten younger children.
12	Slightly graphic violence which is non-realistic/fantasy.
16	Violence included which is similar to real life, bad language, and the use of drugs/tobacco, and alcohol.
18	Includes motiveless and gross violence, the glamourisation of drugs, and explicit sexual activity.

The PEGI rating system also includes content descriptors which are symbols that quickly tell you the themes included in a game. Categories include:



For help with teaching children about PEGI ratings, use our free lesson plan on oursaferschools.co.uk.

PEGI Ratings for some of the most Popular Games around:

- Minecraft - **PEGI 7**
- Among Us - **PEGI 7**
- FIFA 22 - **PEGI 3**
- Call of Duty Black Ops: Vanguard - **PEGI 18**
- Spiderman: Miles Morales - **PEGI 12**
- Fortnite: Battle Royale - **PEGI 12**
- Mario Kart Live: Home Circuit - **PEGI 3**
- Call of Duty: Warzone - **PEGI 18**
- Minecraft - **PEGI 7**



Always remember, PEGI ratings focus on in-game content and not communication between players in online games. Children and young people in your care may be exposed to offensive or inappropriate language from other players via their headset and live chat functions in many games.

Using PEGI ratings and online safety advice can help promote safer gaming for children and young people in your care.

2 Begin the conversation about gaming safety settings and in-game purchases

Whether the children and young people in your care are new to gaming or are experienced gamers, it's important to have conversations regarding the risks and benefits of gaming. This is also the perfect time to talk to them about safety and privacy settings.

You might be met with **opposition** but talking about why privacy and safety settings are important can help keep the gamers in your care onside. You might want to talk about what might happen if these aren't enabled.

Feel free to use the top tips in this article to help guide your conversations.

time, and naturally so will your conversations about keeping safe while gaming.

It's important not to feel like this is a thankless task or pointless conversation when explaining the importance of safety and privacy while gaming. Enabling these settings is something you and the gamer in your care can do together.

Explaining why safety and privacy are important will help support a child or young person's understanding and respect for these decisions.

It can help to focus on how restrictions on games will change as they grow older. This will give you a perfect opportunity to encourage the gamers in your care to continue talking to you about safety and privacy online.

Check out our Console guides on ineqe.com

Loot Boxes have been compared to gambling. This is because gamers pay for items with real-life currency and in-game currency without a full understanding of the risk and reward of these purchases.

Games now provide warnings on their labels if they include in-game purchases.

Games that have in-game purchases include:

- Fortnite
- Grand Theft Auto 5 (GTA5)
- Mario's Spider-Man: Miles Morales
- Call of Duty Black Ops: Cold War
- Call of Duty: Warzone
- FIFA 21
- Rabbit
- Among Us

Remember, if a child or young person in your care wants to play online, they may have to pay for a subscription service if they are using a PlayStation, Nintendo or Xbox console.

3 Usernames: Keep it random to keep kids safe online

This is the name you are identified by on your online gaming accounts (PlayStation Network or Xbox Live).

Whether they're playing Fortnite Chapter 3 or Call of Duty: Vanguard this Christmas, children and young people in your care will need a username.

When using consoles and games, users are required to create a username, which is sometimes called a 'Gamer Handle'.

Xbox and PlayStation assign random usernames and we advise that you keep them.

When the children in your care use a random username, they are less likely to be identifiable online.

If the gamer(s) in your care wants to personalise their username, make sure they avoid using any personal information, such as first or second names, football teams, or school names.

4 Know when to take a break from gaming



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Many of the top games this Christmas such as Fortnite are created to engage their players. One of our online safety experts refers to this as the **Pringle Effect** - i.e. once you pop you just can't stop.

Many of the most popular games are designed to form strong gaming habits. Game designers use persuasive design tools that work to

Encourage the gamers in your care to take a break or use our resources to set a time limit.

5 Make sure the child in your care knows where to go for help with gaming

Gaming is fun and can have real benefits for children and young people. But it's not without risks, as highlighted above.

Gamers may interact with strangers via online games, where they might be exposed to age-inappropriate content, or experience bullying and harassment.

X

Make sure the gamer(s) in your care knows where to go for help if they need it. This can be you or any other trusted adult. It's important that they have someone to talk to if they have any interaction which makes them feel uncomfortable while playing games.

To help the children and young people in your care have a safe and fun gaming experience, visit ineqe.com



Password 101

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Online Safety Shareable by SAFER SCHOOLS

Children and young people may not understand the value of their personal information once they begin to interact with others in the online world. This could make them more vulnerable to scams, hackers, and malware attacks. It's important to remind those in your care that passwords are the gatekeepers to our private data.

They make sure these details remain secure and keep them from getting into the wrong hands as long as they are used properly.

DOs

- * **Think unique.** Create a different password for every account – longer is stronger!
- * **Change your passwords regularly.** Once every season is good practice.
- * **Disable help.** Delete any stored password extensions on your devices.
- * **Be creative.** Use a mixture of numbers, symbols, and Cap1t@l Le#ErS.
- * **Secure them.** Install a verified password manager app to your devices.

DON'Ts

- * **Reuse.** This makes it easier for hackers to get into multiple accounts.
- * **Click 'yes'.** If a website or app offers to 'Remember your Password', say no.
- * **Be personal.** No password should use birthdays, pet names, or other personal details.
- * **Write it down.** If you are able to find it easily, so can someone else.
- * **Share it.** No one else should know your password – unless it's your parent or carer!

Password Checker

Worried about not being able to remember a long string of numbers and symbols? It's important to choose random words that are easy for you to remember and harder for others to guess, alongside a mixture of numbers and symbols.

This can be anything from your favourite food to your best friend's favourite city!

PizzaBlueM@ngo35	Strong
Alex123456	Weak
ChocolatEPinkComputer19	Strong
password	Weak

Facts

- 90% of Internet users worry about their online information getting hacked.
- 51% of people use the same password for work and personal accounts.
- The password '123456' is used by nearly 23 million account holders.
- 'Eva' and 'Alex' are the most commonly used names in passwords.
- The average password contains eight characters or less.

It would take a computer about 19 septillion years to crack your password

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STREAKS, MEETS, AND SNAPS

YOUR HOW-TO GUIDE TO SNAPCHAT FEATURES

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SNAPCHAT is a social media platform used to share customisable photos, messages, and short-form videos referred to as 'Snaps' which can disappear after 24 hours. But this app isn't only for turning your messages into ghosts. It has a multitude of features that keep it fresh and current with young people today.

SNAP MAP

- Shows real time location on an interactive map.
- Includes street, town/city, and building names.
- Options for 'meet up' and 'live location sharing' with friends.



CAUTION: This feature is 'on' by default. You will need to activate 'Ghost Mode' to stop your location from appearing on the map.

FILTERS

- A moving image 'overlayed' onto pictures and videos.
- Can range from colour changing to face/setting altering.
- A popular way for users to express themselves.



STORIES

- Personalised images or videos on your profile.
- Can be seen by select friends, all friends, or wider public.
- Posts will last for 24 hours before disappearing forever.



NEVER FORGET
If you want to stop a snap or story from disappearing, it can be archived in 'Memories' to be timestamped and reshared.

DID YOU KNOW...

Snapchat is the original disappearing messages app! It's been around since 2011.



DISCOVER

- A live news feed featuring Snapchat's chosen publishers.
- Wall Street Journal, ESPN, and others are included.
- Influencers and brands are also featured.



SNAPSTREAKS

- Achieved when two users send messages daily for 3 or more days.
- Once reached, a flame emoji appears next to the friend's username.
- The number of days will appear as well to show how long the streak is.



SPOTLIGHT

- Short form videos used for viral video content.
- Users can like, reply, and share with friends on Snapchat.
- Videos cannot be downloaded or shared to other platforms.



THE PUBLIC EYE

Snapchat accounts must be 'public' to create Spotlight videos. This feature can be viewed and accessed by all users.

ALL ABOUT SNAPCHAT+

Snapchat launched a premium option for its platform called 'Snapchat+' in June 2022 across the world. Described as having 'exclusive, experimental and pre-release features', this paid version costs £3.99 per month and includes:

- 'Ghost Trails' - see up to 24 hours of a friend's shared location history.
- 'Story Rewatch Indicator' - view which users have rewatched a story.
- 'Friend Solar System' - use planetary order to highlight friendships.



RISKS, RISKS, AND MORE RISKS

- AGE VERIFICATION** - there is currently no effective process to verify user age.
- STRANGER DANGER** - 'friending' users is easy and opens up direct contact.
- SCREENTIME OVERLOAD** - trends like 'Snapstreaks' could encourage bad habits.
- CYBERBULLYING** - disappearing messages may give bullies extra ammo online.
- EXPLICIT INTERACTIONS** - users may feel more comfortable 'sexting' others.
- PRESSURE** - users might experience pressure to send nude imagery to others.



'DISAPPEARING' DANGER

Just because images and videos 'disappear' within 24 hours doesn't mean that other users can't save them. Even though Snapchat tells you when another user screenshots your message, it does not consider secondary devices or video capturing software being used to record photos or videos.



TOP TIPS

- TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIP CULTURE.**
Remind young people that they should only ever share personal details with trusted friends who they know in-person.
- TURN ON PRIVACY SETTINGS.**
Explain the importance of protecting their privacy on apps where others may have access to their profile and their real-time location.
- DISCUSS WHAT NOT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS.**
By talking through the false security of 'disappearing' messages, you can help them feel more confident saying 'no.'
- REMINDE THEM WHO THEY CAN TALK TO.**
Check that your young person knows who their trusted adults are and that they can turn to them if something happens.

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YOUR SUMMER GUIDE TO POPULAR GAMES

<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">3</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Rocket League</h3> <p>A videogame that bridges the gap between car racing, sport matches, and gladiator fights. Put simply, it's rocket-powered cars playing an intense game of football. Rocket League has a reputation for being a toxic environment for gamers with reports of offensive and inappropriate language filling text chats.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">3</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Fifa</h3> <p>A football simulation video game where gamers can choose to play as their favourite real-life footballers in their favourite real-life teams. FIFA is readily played by adults of all ages, meaning it would not be uncommon for a young person to interact with someone older.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">7</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Minecraft</h3> <p>An adventure game which allows players to explore and create worlds using building blocks to customise their worlds. Children and young people may experience addiction to the game due to its engaging nature.</p>
<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">7</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Roblox</h3> <p>An online gaming and game creation platform. Users can play and create games for others to play. It also includes social features such as friend requests and chats where players can design an avatar and speak to others while they play. Roblox has previously faced criticism following harmful sexualised content being prevalent on the platform.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">7</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Among Us</h3> <p>An online multiplayer game which revolves around players attempting to figure out who is a friend and who is an enemy. Crewmates try to complete tasks while the imposter aims to sabotage the mission and kill them without being found out. Risk of talking to strangers through the chat feature however there is a chat-censor feature which can be turned on to prevent this.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">12</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Poppy Playtime</h3> <p>A horror game that involves an investigation of a mystery in an abandoned toy factory. You solve puzzles to survive the "vengeful toys" left behind including 'Huggy Wuggy'. Horror games containing frightening content can cause added anxiety and stress to young people, intrusive thoughts and new fears.</p>
<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">12</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Fortnite</h3> <p>An online multiplayer "shooter style" game meaning players battle it out against opponents with multiple weapon styles. It allows players to create and personalise their own game components. Persuasive design features of the game can keep children hooked, encouraging them to spend in-game currency and add to their screen time.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">12</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Overwatch</h3> <p>A team-based game starring a cast of powerful heroes. Players can travel the world and build teams together. Overwatch has been included in eSports competitions and has scenes of blood, tobacco use and violence.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">12</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">League of Legends</h3> <p>A team-based strategy game where two teams of five champions face off to destroy the other's base. Children may be exposed to bad language, hate speech, insults, and sexual language.</p>
<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">16</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Apex Legends</h3> <p>A free-to-play shooter type game with the objective of being the last team standing by collecting loot and fighting enemy squads. It includes some violence and players may talk to others through voice and text chat.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">16</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Elden Ring</h3> <p>An action role-playing game in a world of different characters. You can explore the world, grow in strength and fight or ally those you meet. It features strong violence involving both human and fantasy characters, which can be deemed age-inappropriate for younger players.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">18</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Grand Theft Auto</h3> <p>An action-adventure game in which players complete missions to progress through the story. Children will be subjected to profanity, violence, sex, crime and other mature themes.</p>
<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">18</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Call of Duty</h3> <p>A series of first person shooter games including 'Modern Warfare', 'Black Ops', 'Vanguard' and 'Warzone'. Involves live user interaction – squads can be made up of friends or players from all over the world.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">18+</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Horizon Worlds</h3> <p>A virtual social space which consists of a catalogue of virtual experiences through the Metaverse. There have been several reported incidents of users experiencing sexual harassment while using the platform.</p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; color: white;">18+</div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Avakin Life</h3> <p>A virtual 3D gaming world where users create their own character by choosing outfits and interacting with others at different in-game locations. Users can easily access children and young people online via private and public chats.</p>

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YOUR SUMMER GUIDE TO POPULAR PLATFORMS

AN ONLINE SAFETY SHAREABLE

 Messenger An instant messaging app developed by Meta, popular for group chats, sharing images and videos. This app is also popular for playing games with friends. Can allow young people to connect with strangers, receive message requests from strangers and video call. 16+	 Yubo A live-streaming platform designed to help users "meet new people" from all around the world. There have been multiple reports of young people being harassed into sending sexualised or nude images and videos. 17+	 WhatsApp A popular messaging platform which allows group chats, video and audio calls. WhatsApp users have been subject to scams and malware spreading through the platform. 16+
 Reddit A platform which allows interactions through communities and discussion forums based on particular interests. There are no age verification systems for NSFW channels and can be easily bypassed to view inappropriate content. (NSFW forums are 18+) 13+	 Kik A mobile messaging app which allows one-to-one chatting, group chats and anonymous chats. Since Kik allows chatting with random strangers, it leaves children open to exploitation and grooming. Once messages are deleted, they cannot be retrieved. 16+	 Telegram A cross-platform messaging app which allows communication between individuals, small and large groups of up to 200,000 people. The ability to connect with others in the area may lead to young people to disclose locations and personal details that could lead to grooming or harassment in-person. 16+
 Discord An instant messaging social platform, in which people enter 'servers' so they are part of a group - commonly used for gaming communities. Some servers are NSFW (Not safe for work - often meaning inappropriate/adult content) and may have content age-inappropriate for younger users. 13+	 Snapchat A popular image sharing and messaging app that lets users exchange pictures and videos (snaps), with photo effects and filters, which disappear after a period of time. The 'disappearing snap' feature of Snapchat can lure young people into a false sense of security, and they may send images they would not normally send. 13+	 Instagram An image and video sharing app. Users can share content that followers can interact with by viewing, liking and commenting. Instagram may push a narrative of a 'perfect world' to young people, and they may feel pressured to post perfect, polished images of themselves. 13+
 YouTube A popular video sharing and social media platform. Videos can be commented on, liked and shared. Cyberbullying can occur through YouTube comments and age-inappropriate content may slip through moderation strategies deployed. 18+	 TikTok A free video sharing app which allows users to capture short video clips, share them and watch other user's videos or live streams. Age-inappropriate content which can be accessed through public feeds, especially any live streams. This may be unsuitable for young people and can be the origin of bullying trends. 13+	 BeReal A once-a-day photo sharing app - Users are given a 2-minute window to share a photo of themselves and their surroundings to their friends. If young people accept contacts they don't know, it is easy to build up a picture of routines in daily life, for example, school uniforms, bus stops and regular locations. 13+
 Twitch Twitch is a live streaming video platform which allows creators to broadcast and users to watch content, usually about games, including esports. Twitch streams are often live and are therefore difficult to moderate. 13+	 NETFLIX NOW Disney+ Streaming services which often involve paid subscriptions which offer a variety of TV shows, movies, gaming streams and more. Netflix shows such as 'Squid Game' and '13 Reasons Why' went viral and attracted the attention of young people, despite not being appropriate for under 18s. Parental controls which restrict access to age-inappropriate content e.g. profile PIN codes. 13+ 16+ 18+	 Vault Apps (Decoys) Apps which allow users to secretly hide photos, videos and files behind the premise of another app, for example a calculator which can only be accessed through a numeric pin code. Can become dangerous 'stash' of youth produced sexual imagery. 17+

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Messaging and Community Platforms

Image and Video Sharing Platforms

Streaming Platforms

Vault Apps



What is MINECRAFT

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www.pag.info

Did you know...
Minecraft has 141 million active players across the whole world!

Have you ever imagined what it would be like to create your own world? Minecraft is a multi-platform game that can be played online or offline. This adventure game allows players to explore and create worlds using building blocks (alongside their imagination!) to customise and interact. It is extremely popular with children and young people all over the world.

The Basic Building Blocks

- Break** - Players break existing blocks to build and explore Minecraft environments and worlds.
- Build** - Anything that a player can imagine can be created with in-game resources and items.
- Repeat** - With no end goal or finish line, Minecraft is a game players can return to again and again.

Pro's

- Fosters creativity and imagination in play!
- Teaches teamwork and planning with others.
- Stimulates critical thinking and problem solving.
- Easy to use and customise gameplay modes.

Con's

- Children and young people may experience addiction to the game.
- Creates opportunities for in-game bullying and 'attacks'.
- Suggests spending 'Minecoins' on premium items and materials.
- Uses online chat that allows interaction with strangers.

Five Playing Modes

- Survival** - Players collect resources and build structures while surviving 'mobs' in their own world.
- Adventure** - Players travel to the worlds and places created by other Minecraft players (multiplayer).
- Creative** - Players are given the freedom to play without the danger of mob attacks in their own world. We recommend this mode for primary school aged children. As their skills develop, they can try more advanced game modes.
- Hardcore** - Players participate in the survival mode but with an enhanced level of difficulty. They cannot respawn if they die, unlike the other modes where they have limitless lives. *This is only available for the Java edition.*
- Spectator** - Players can fly around and observe worlds without interacting with it. *This is only available for the Java edition.*

Keep your Minecraft safe by...

- Asking questions about the game. We recommend you set up an account with your child and help them explore.
- Turning off 'mobs' by going to creative mode if children are prone to being scared of those sort of experiences.
- Creating healthy screen time habits, since Minecraft has an addictive nature.
- Learning together how to report and block unwanted users, configuring **safety settings** and privacy settings on different **devices and consoles**.
- Talking with them about safe online gaming practices. Explain why age ratings are important and discuss the dangers of interacting with strangers online.
- Making sure they know not to share personal information such as their date of birth or location.

Minecraft Buzzwords

- Biomes** - Different terrains of the world (e.g., jungle, desert, etc.)
- Creeper** - In-game characters that damage worlds by exploding.
- Spelunking** - When players explore in-game caves to mine resources.
- Steve** - The basic male default skin in the game before customisation.
- Mobs** - Short for 'mobile entity', creatures that attack other characters.
- Zombie** - In-game characters that come out at night and attack players by touching them.

AGE INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT WARNING

Parents and carers should be aware that the multiplayer mode can expose children and young people to content and language which may be inappropriate for their age, including 'bloody' battles and other mature themes.

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