

Amble First School

Online Safety Newsletter Spring 2024

We are always looking at ways to work in order to help safeguard our pupils and help educate them on the dangers that they may face in the wider world. The online world is constantly evolving with new and exciting opportunities, but there are also risks and dangers. For this reason, we have decided to create a termly online safety newsletter. We hope that by sharing a wide range of up-to-date information, you will be able to work with us in keeping children safe online.

We want to make this newsletter useful for our children and their families. Should you have any suggestions or information that you would like us to include in future editions, please let us know.



Coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre








saferinternetday.org.uk

Tuesday 6th February is Safer Internet Day. We hold half termly assemblies with the children to look at how to stay safe online. We look at how children can ensure that they are safe when they use the Internet and what they should do if they come across things that make them feel unhappy, scared or unsafe.

Age Limits on Apps & Games

We all want the best for children and it's important that they are protected from unsuitable online content and have a healthy balance between screen time and other activities.

It is also very important that parents and carers adhere to the age restrictions on Social Media apps and sites, here are some of the popular ones for quick reference:

 Facebook - 13 years	 Instagram - 13 years
 Tik - Tok - 13 years	 Snapchat - 13 years
 Twitter - 13 years	 What's App - 16 years
 Discord - 13 years	

There are other elements of social media use which may not be appropriate for young users.

It is always better to wait until the required age to join any social media service. These rules around age relate to privacy, but also are relevant to safety. Some services offer additional protection for users who are registered as under 18, and by supplying a fake age, young people can potentially lose some of this protection. Young people also risk being exposed to content which is intended for older users when they use sites that are not designed for people their age.

Games have an age limit too! These games may seem harmless enough but many of them have unsuitable content, including violence, swearing and drugs and alcohol. Seeing and hearing such inappropriate content could well affect a child's behaviour and wellbeing. Children have also been known to become addicted to such content.

For any Game or App where contact is made with others please remember that your child can be exposed to unsavoury messages and content - even from other children and privacy settings are essential, making sure your child isn't sharing more information than they intend to.

PEGI ratings – What do the labels mean?

PEGI 3 – suitable for all ages

PEGI 7 – suitable for young children

PEGI 12 – suitable for children 12 and over

PEG 16 – suitable for children 16 and over

PEGI 18 – Only suitable for adults

Some popular games include:



Roblox - No age restrictions but under 13 years have stricter settings, therefore, greater protection. Content is user-generated so children can be exposed to a range of material. Much of it is age-appropriate but children can be exposed to advertising to buy Robux which is an in-game currency. Children can be exposed to predatory behaviour of other people accessing the game.



Fortnite - With frequent scenes of mild violence, Fortnite is rated 12+ by PEGI. Violence is cartoonish, but some characters and scenes might disturb younger players which makes this game unsuitable for primary aged children.



Minecraft - 7years or 13 years and over depending on which version of the game children are playing. If a user is under 13 and they sign up with their correct age, certain game features cannot be accessed, for example, changing settings, making purchases, playing Minecraft Realms or chatting in scrolls.

Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto, Assassin's Creed and other games that are rated 18, are deemed unsuitable for anyone below this age due to:

- realistic violence
- explicit language
- fear
- alcohol, drugs
- sex
- discrimination
- gambling



If you would like more information on online safety and parental controls below are some useful links:

[Age ratings – what do they really mean?](#)

[Think U Know—Parents](#)

[NSPCC—Keeping children safe online](#)

[Common Sense Media—Parents need to know...](#)