21st January 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: Online safety advice to parents

We are seeing an increased number of children attending school with fatigue due to excessive evening screen time and lack of sleep. The effects of this being extremely detrimental to their learning, social progression and mental wellbeing.

Additionally, disclosures of children being exposed to inappropriate material online due to lack of restrictions and conflict with peers whilst using online social media platforms is increasing.

If like myself, you do not have the technical 'know how' to place restrictions, understand platforms your child is using and how to monitor them I have listed below some useful documents to assist you in making your child's time online safe and appropriate.

Yours sincerely

R Newsome

MRS R NEWSOME
Safeguarding Lead.

Your child's screen time

Know the risks, and what you can do to help keep your child safe.

What's the problem?

Spending time online and on devices can be a positive thing, especially for educational use.

However, high levels of screen time can put your child at greater risk of:

- Being bullied online
- Abuse and grooming (when someone builds a relationship with a child to exploit or abuse them)
- Seeing inappropriate content
- Not getting enough sleep and exercise
- Disruption to learning and studying
- Negative effects on mental wellbeing

While it may be tempting to ban devices altogether, this also has some risks, as it can:

- Cause children to keep any screen time a secret, making it more difficult for them to seek help with bullying, harmful content or potential grooming
- Make children more prone to grooming, as abusers could offer them a 'secret' device
- Slow technology skill development. Technology is part of everyday life, and teaching children how to benefit from it can help prepare them for the future and develop online safety skills
- Block access to resources that could be beneficial, such as educational apps or websites

4 steps you can take to protect your child

1) Set parental controls on devices

Use parental controls to restrict access to in-app purchases and explicit or age-rated content, and, on some devices, how long your child can spend on the device or certain apps.

You'll likely need to set a password for parental controls. Make sure it's different from the password used to access the device, and that your child doesn't know it.

Parental controls can be different for each device. See below for instructions for some popular devices.

2) Agree rules on screen time

There are mixed views on 'safe' screen time, but you could agree some limits to stop screen time interfering with your child's sleep or family activities:

- Make a plan together, and stick to it. You could set media-free times and zones, like during meals or in bedrooms
- Try to avoid screens an hour before bedtime

Model the behaviour you want to see – this may mean no screen time for you at the times agreed with your child. Children are more likely to learn from example

Try to minimise snacking during screen time

Turn not using screens into a game, using apps like Forest, where not using devices is rewarded (https://www.forestapp.cc/)

3) Talk to your child about staying safe online

Discuss the restrictions and why they're needed. Teach them:

> That anyone can pretend to be a child online

> That if they talk to people they don't know, not to give away personal information – like what street they live on or where they go to school – or to share their location with them. To say no if they are asked for images or videos of themselves, and to stop talking to the other person if they are asked for these things

> To set their profiles to private, to limit what others can see

> To be 'share aware' – think carefully about what they share and with whom. Once it's out there, they have no control over what the other person does with it. Remember, it's illegal to take, share or possess sexual images of under-18s, full stop

> If they see something that upsets them, or someone bullies them, to tell an adult they trust. Bullying and upsetting content is not their fault.

If you don't feel confident starting a conversation with your child about what they're doing online, take a look at this advice from the NSPCC: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/

4) Encourage off-screen activities

Help your child get physically active for the recommended 60 minutes a day:

> See www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities for free ideas for activities and games

> Consider local sports or activity clubs. Your local authority or council should have details on youth clubs and activity groups near you. Find your local authority here: https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council

> Try an app that's designed to get children active – see examples at: www.internetmatters.org/resources/apps-guide/apps-to-help-kids-get-active/

How to set parental controls

Microsoft devices (Windows computers and Xbox)

> Getting started with Microsoft Family Safety: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/account-billing/getting-started-with-microsoft-family-safety-b6280c9d-38d7-82ff-0e4f-a6cb7e659344

> Family-friendly gaming for everyone, Xbox: https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/family-hub

iPads and iPhones

> Use parental controls on your child's iPhone or iPad: https://support.apple.com/en-gb/105121

Android phones

> Manage devices, apps and screen time: https://support.google.com/families/topic/7336331

> Get started with Family Link: https://support.google.com/families/answer/7101025?hl=en

Fire Tablet

> Set up parental controls on your Fire Tablet: https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=GG2LBLF5V2T8XUX8

PlayStation

> How to set up family accounts on PSN: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/playstation-family-account-set-up/

> How to set up parental controls on PlayStation consoles: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/

Nintendo Switch

> Nintendo Switch parental controls: https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1183145.html

> Nintendo Switch support pages: https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Search/Search-299117.html?f=147397-3958-143-42

> How to set Nintendo eShop restrictions: https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Set-Nintendo-eShop-Restrictions-1406403.html

Sources used in this guide

This guide was produced by **The Key Safeguarding**: https://safeguarding.thekeysupport.com/

> Physical activity guidelines for children and young people, NHS
> *https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/*

> Covid-19: Lockdown measures and children's screen time, House of Lords library, UK Parliament
> *https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/covid-19-lockdown-measures-and-childrens-screen-time/*

> Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, GOV.UK – Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and UK Council for Internet Safety
> *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people*

> Screen time: impacts on education and wellbeing – report summary, UK Parliament
> *https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5804/cmselect/cmeduc/118/summary.html*

PARENT FACTSHEET – DEC 2024

Keep your child safe on Snapchat

Snapchat is an app for sending photos and videos (known as 'Snaps'), and text messages. The 'Stories' feature lets users share photos or videos with all their contacts at once.

Snaps disappear after being opened, usually within seconds. Stories disappear after 24 hours. Images and messages aren't automatically saved on phones.

The **minimum age** to use Snapchat is **13**, but it's easy to sign up if you're younger.

What's the problem?

> There's a risk of seeing sexual content, and of bullying

> Your child's location could be shared with their contacts, which could put them in danger if they have strangers as 'friends' on the app. The 'Snap Map' feature allows users to see each other's locations, and doesn't inform users if someone else searches for their location

> There's a risk of children being 'groomed' by strangers into sharing pictures and information about themselves. Gangs also use this and similar apps to groom and recruit children

> ‘My AI’ is an AI chat feature available to all users which has a risk of exposing children to harmful content. (You can disable My AI through the Family Centre, covered below)

5 steps to help your child use Snapchat safely

1. Tell your child to only add real friends

Anyone could pretend to be a child or teenager online, so encourage your child not to talk to people they don't know in real life. Encourage them not to share information such as what school they go to or where they live with anyone they don't know offline.

2. Use privacy settings

By default, only 'friends' your child has added on Snapchat can contact them directly and see their story or location. Check they have the default settings, or select extra privacy:

> Tap the person icon in the top-left of Snapchat, then the cog in the top-right

> Scroll down to the 'Privacy Control' section and tap the relevant options

> Under 'See My Location', select either 'Ghost Map' to turn location sharing off completely, or select the friends they can share their location with

> Turn off 'See Me in Quick Add' so your child's profile doesn't show to people they don't know

3. Add your child in Family Centre

> Under 'Privacy Controls' access Snapchat's Family Centre and add your child.

> You can: request live location updates, limit access to My AI, see who your child is talking to, see what group chats your child is in, set limits on the content they can see and report additional concerns to Snapchat.

> Talk to your child before using these features about what they are and why they may be needed. Reassure them that you won't be able to see their messages, just who they are to.

4. Talk to your child about image sharing and being careful about what they share

Videos and images disappear in Snapchat, but someone can still take a screenshot or recording and then share them – outside of the original sender's control. Remind your child to think carefully about the images they share, and who they share them with. Before they share anything, tell them to ask themselves: "Would I be happy for other people to see this?"

In particular, make sure your child knows the risks of **taking, sharing, or viewing naked, semi-nude or sexually explicit pictures of themselves or another child**, either voluntarily or if asked to by someone else. This is known as 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' or 'sexting' and is illegal, even when the person doing it is a child. It can also be distressing for a child to have their image shared more widely, or to see an inappropriate image that someone else has shared.

5. Make sure your child knows how to use reporting and blocking functions

> To **report** a Snap, story or post on the Snap Map, press and hold on it, and tap 'Report Snap'

> To **remove** or **block** a friend, tap the speech bubble to enter the 'Chat' screen, then tap and hold on the person's name. Tap 'Manage Friendship', then choose 'Remove Friend' or 'Block'

What can I do about online bullying?

> Encourage your child to talk to you if someone says something upsetting or hurtful to them

> Look for signs they may be being bullied, like being afraid or reluctant to go to school, feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, or losing sleep

> Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences

There are also a few ways you can save images and messages as evidence:

> Use another device to, quickly, take a photo of the image or message (this is the only way you can save the image without other people knowing)

> Tap on the message, quickly, to save it (other people will know, from the grey background)

> Take a screenshot, quickly (the person who shared it will get a notification)

> Change your child's settings to save messages for 24 hours – in the 'Chats' screen, tap and hold a friend's name, tap 'Chat and notification settings' and toggle 'Keep Snaps in chat'

What can I do if I think my child is being targeted by a gang?

Share your concerns with our school immediately. You can also contact the NSPCC for advice – call 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Be alert to changes in your child – such as having new unexplained possessions, changing friendship groups, behaviour and mood changes, or unexplained injuries.

Sources used for this factsheet

> Sharing nudes and semi-nudes, NSPCC
> *https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/*

> Snapchat Support, Snapchat | Snapchat Family Centre overview
> *https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb | https://parents.snapchat.com/parental-controls?lang=en-GB*

> Snapchat most-used app for grooming, says NSPCC, BBC News
> *https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cze3p1j710ko*

This factsheet was produced by The Key Safeguarding: **thekeysupport.com/safeguarding**

PARENT FACTSHEET – DECEMBER 2024

Keep your child safe on Roblox

What potential risks are there?

Roblox can be a fun way for children to be creative and work together, but there are some potential risks you should be aware of.

> **Inappropriate content**: Roblox's user-generated content isn't rigorously age-rated like other platforms

> **Contact**: strangers might try to talk to your child. This could be harmless, but some adults use platforms like Roblox to make contact with children to build relationships with them and later cause them harm

> **Bullying and griefing**: 'griefing' is where someone intentionally ruins the game for others

> **In-game purchases**: the game is free to play, but users can buy upgrades using the game's currency known as 'Robux'

What is it?

An online game-creating platform where you can create and publish games (Roblox calls these 'experiences') and play other users' games.

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8 steps to keep your child safe

1. Create your own Roblox account and link it to your child's account

> Go to the Roblox website and select 'Sign up', then follow the steps to make your account

> Login to your **child's account** on the Roblox website, then select 'Settings'

  o On computers: select the 'gear' icon in the top-right corner

- On mobiles: select 'more' (bottom right), then the 'gear' icon
- Select 'Parental controls', and then select 'Add parent'
- Follow the on-screen steps to verify your age (you'll need some kind of ID or a credit card)
- Select 'Agree' to link your account to your child's account

2. Filter content by using Roblox's content maturity restrictions

To do this, go to 'Settings' then:
- Select 'Parental controls'
- Select 'Settings you manage'
- Adjust the slider to select the maturity level you think is appropriate for your child. You can find a full description in Roblox's [parental controls overview](#).

3. Set controls on interactions

Change settings to control who can chat to your child or send them messages.

To do this, go to 'Settings' (as above), then:
- Select 'Parental controls'
- Select 'Settings you manage'
- Select 'Communication'
- Select 'Experience Chat'
- Select whether you want your child to be able to communicate with others in the following ways:
  - Experience chat – your child can speak to anyone else in the same 'experience' (game) as them using text chat
  - Experience direct chat – your child can send and receive direct, private messages from other users in the same 'experience' as them

4. Tell your child to be careful about talking to people they don't know

Anyone can pretend to be a child online, so they should be careful about what they share and who they accept 'Friend Requests' from.

Roblox will automatically stop children under 13 sharing personal information, but it would be possible to make contact on Roblox and then move the conversation to another platform.

5. Set monthly spend restrictions to limit spending

Go to 'Settings' (as above), then:
- Select 'Parental controls'
- Select 'Settings you manage'
- Select 'Spending restrictions'
- Set a monthly spending limit:
  - The limit will reset each month and not roll over
  - You can also set notifications for your child's spending – see the [parental controls overview](#) for more details

6. Make sure your child knows how to report and block users

Roblox explains how to do this:

https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/203312410-How-to-Report-Rule-Violations

https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/203314270-How-to-Block-Another-User

7. Talk regularly with your child about what they're doing online

Make it more of an ongoing conversation – that way, they're more likely to tell you if something goes wrong or upsets them.

See tips from the NSPCC on talking to your child about online safety: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/

8. Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences

If it involves other children in our school, we can follow our anti-bullying procedures. And even if it doesn't, knowing about it will help us to look out for your child.

Keep your child safe on Minecraft

What is it?

A game where children explore an online world. They can use 'building blocks' to customise the world and create new parts to it.

What potential risks should I be aware of?

Minecraft can be a good way for children to be creative and try out new things, but there are some risks you should be aware of too.

> **Inappropriate content**: Minecraft has a PEGI rating of 7, but there may be violent content, or content that might not be age-appropriate for your child. Users can generate their own content – for example, when the TV show 'Squid Game' (rated 15) was popular, some users recreated it in Minecraft, meaning other users could see its violent contents without watching the show

> **Contact:** strangers might try to talk to your child using in-game chat functions. This could be harmless, but some adults could use platforms like Minecraft to contact children, build relationships with them and later cause them harm. Your child might also download Discord (which has its own age rating) to voice and video chat with others while playing

> **Bullying and griefing**: other children (or adults) could use chat functions to exclude, bully, or intentionally ruin the game in multiplayer mode for others (known as 'griefing')

> **In-game purchases**: children can use 'Minecoins' to make purchases in the game. These are bought through the app store on the user's device

Key terms children might use when talking about Minecraft include 'realms' (an online server players can use through paying a subscription), and 'whispers' (a private chat function).

6 steps to keep your child safe

1. Limit in-game communication and content for your child (e.g. to friends only)

Xbox

First, set up a family group under your Microsoft account: https://help.minecraft.net/hc/en-us/articles/4408968616077-How-to-Manage-Parental-Consent-Family-Settings-and-Realms-Multiplayer-Access-for-a-Child-Account

Scroll down to 'manage a member's online safety and privacy settings' here, and follow the instructions: https://support.xbox.com/en-US/help/family-online-safety/online-safety/manage-online-safety-and-privacy-settings-xbox-one

PlayStation (PS)

First, set up accounts for your family members – make sure adults have either 'family manager' or 'parent/guardian' status, and create a 'child' account for your child: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/get-help/help-library/my-account/parental-controls/family-management/

Then, restrict chat and messaging features:

❯ **PS4 and PS5**: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/#restrict

Nintendo

First, set up a family group and create a 'child' account: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Add-Members-to-a-Family-Group-1406409.html

Restrict communications through the Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app, or through the console: https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Set-Up-or-Adjust-Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1494771.html

2. Tell your child to be careful about talking to people they don't know

Anyone can pretend to be a child online, so they should be careful about what they share. Tell them not to share personal information like their phone number or what school they go to.

3. Make sure your child knows how to mute or block players

❯ **Xbox**: https://support.xbox.com/en-GB/help/friends-social-activity/friends-groups/block-or-mute-other-player

❯ **PlayStation**: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/block-players-psn/

❯ **Nintendo**: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Block-Users-You-Have-Played-With-Online-1661030.html

4. Set spending limits or require approval for purchases

❯ **Xbox**: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/account-billing/spending-limits-in-family-safety-f30d6801-165d-9f86-3fe7-063245c0449b

❯ **PS4 and PS5 (scroll to your child's model)**: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/#limit

❯ **Nintendo**: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Set-Nintendo-eShop-Restrictions-1406403.html

5. Talk regularly with your child about what they're doing online

Make this an ongoing conversation – this means they're more likely to talk to you if something goes wrong or upsets them. See tips from the NSPCC on talking to your child about online safety: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/

6. Know where to go for help

Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences. If it involves other children in our school, we can follow our anti-bullying procedures. And even if it doesn't, knowing about it will help us to look out for your child.

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Keep your child safe on YouTube

What's the problem?

› Videos that look like they're child-friendly can include violent or disturbing content, and it's difficult for YouTube to catch all of these videos before children see them

› Inappropriate videos may be suggested videos, or appear in search results

› Adults may use YouTube to contact children and 'groom' them into sharing explicit pictures or videos of themselves

› Children might see videos with extremist content

› Children can share personal information, e.g. the street they live on or their school, which could put them in danger

Create your own account to monitor your child's activity

1. Create an account

On the **website**:

› Select 'Sign in' in the top right

› Select 'Create account'

› Follow the on-screen instructions

In the **iPhone** and **iPad app**:

› Select the profile picture icon in the bottom right

› Select 'Sign in', then 'Add account'

› Follow the on-screen instructions

In the Android app:

› Select the profile picture icon in the bottom right

› Select 'Sign in', then 'Add account', then 'Create account'

› Follow the on-screen instructions

2. Sign into the 'Family Centre' to manage your child's YouTube account

On the **website**:

> Select your profile picture in the top right

> Select 'Settings'

> Scroll to 'Family Centre', then 'manage children's profiles and features for teens.

In the **iPhone** and **iPad app**:

> Select your profile picture in the bottom/top right

> Select 'Settings'

> Select 'Family Centre'

In the Android app:

> Select your profile picture in the bottom right

> Select 'Settings'

> Select 'Family Centre'

From here, you can [link an older child's profile to your own](#). For children under 12 years old, you should [create a YouTube Kids account](#) instead.

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5 more steps to take

1. Turn on 'Restricted Mode' to help hide videos that may have inappropriate content

On the **website**:

> Select the icon in the top-right corner that represents your YouTube account

> At the bottom, select 'Restricted Mode'

> In the top-right box that appears, select 'Activate restricted mode' to turn on

In the **iPhone** and **iPad app**:

> In the top right on iPad, bottom right on iPhone, select your profile picture

> Select 'Settings' > 'General'

> Turn 'Restricted Mode' on or off

In the **Android app**:

> In the top right, select your profile picture

> Select 'Settings' > 'General'

> Turn 'Restricted Mode' on or off

2. Keep autoplay turned off and manage recommendations

Autoplay is turned off by default for users aged 13 to 17.

To check autoplay is off, check the 'Autoplay' toggle in a video page and make sure it's toggled to off. Depending on your device, this may show in the top right of the screen, or below the video.

You can also use the 'Don't recommend channel' option to remove channels from your recommendations. To do this:

> Select the 3 dots next to a video's title

> Select 'Don't recommend channel'

3. Tell your child not to share any personal information in videos or comments

This is anything that could identify them or give away their location, like the name of the street they live on, their school name or their school uniform.

4. Check for comments on videos your child uploads

YouTube disables comments on videos of children, but videos can be missed – so do still regularly check for comments made on any videos your child shares.

Look out for comments asking for more specific videos or personal information.

5. Flag inappropriate videos and comments to YouTube

Use the 'flagging feature' to prompt YouTube staff to check content and decide whether to block or restrict it in line with its community guidelines:

> On the page with the video, select the 3 dots ('more') icon next to a video or comment

> Select 'Report' (this is a flag icon in Android and iPhone and iPad apps)

> Select the reason for flagging, and provide any extra details you think will help YouTube staff

Keep your child safe on Instagram

What's the problem?

There have been many media stories about bullying on Instagram, and about children seeing harmful content about weight loss, self-harm and suicide

Children can feel pressurised to look a certain way – they might feel like they should look like other users who share weight-loss content

Primary-aged children are coming across violent material on social networking apps like Instagram, according to research from Ofcom

Instagram is used for online 'grooming' – gangs use it to recruit children, and strangers can use it to contact your child and ask them for naked pictures, or to send photos to your child

News stories have highlighted how it's also used for 'sextortion', often targeted at children – the child is tricked into sharing an intimate image, which the abuser then threatens to share if the child doesn't pay or perform some other favour

The **minimum age** to have an account is **13**. Instagram has added features to make it harder to lie about your age, but it's still possible.

7 ways to help your child use Instagram safely

1. Check that your child is on a 'teen' account

This new feature is still being rolled out, so your child may not yet have a 'teen' account.

When they do:

Children under 16 will automatically be switched to a 'private' account (more on these below)

Children under 18:

  o Won't be able to receive messages from, or be 'tagged' or 'mentioned' by, anyone they don't 'follow'

  o Will see less 'sensitive content' (though this feature might not always work, according to news reports)

If your child is under 16 and wants to change their 'teen' safety settings, they'll need to add you to their account as a parent or guardian, and you'll be able to decide which features to change.

Older children can change these settings themselves, unless their account is supervised by a parent or guardian (read more about supervision in number 6 below).

2. Set their profile to 'private' to limit what strangers can see

'Teen' accounts and any Instagram account created by a child under 16 since July 2021 will automatically be set to 'private', but older accounts will have been set to 'public' by default.

Encourage your child to keep their profile 'private' so that only people who they approve will be able to 'follow' them and see content they share, including 'stories' and 'reels'.

Anyone can send your child a message directly, though (unless they have a 'teen' account). Tell them to only approve 'Follow requests' or view 'Message requests' from people they know and trust in real life.

To set an account to 'private', go to 'Settings and activity' (tap the person icon in the bottom-right of the app home screen, then tap the 3 lines in the top-right), then go to 'Account privacy' and turn on 'Private account'.

3. Restrict harmful comments and interactions on your child's posts

Open 'Settings', scroll down to 'How others can interact with you', and then 'Comments'. Here, your child can:

   Block specific people from interacting with their posts (under 'Block comments from')

   Decide who can comment on their 'Stories'

Also under 'How others can interact with you', under 'Hidden words', you/your child can:

   Automatically hide comments that might be offensive (under 'Hide Comments') – 'teen' accounts will already do this

   Hide other comments and messages they don't want to see by creating a custom list of words, phrases and emojis (under 'Manage custom words and phrases')

4. Make sure your child knows about restricting, blocking and reporting

Restricting is a feature designed to protect children against bullying.

If your child restricts someone, that user won't be able to see when your child is online or if they've read their messages. Other people won't see the restricted person's comments on your child's posts, and your child won't be notified about comments or messages from them. Your child can choose to view the user's comments and approve or delete them.

To **restrict** someone:

   Swipe to the left (iPhone) or tap and hold (Android) on a comment they've left on your child's post, tap the exclamation mark, and then 'Restrict'; or

   Go to the user's profile, tap the 3 dots in the top-right, then choose 'Restrict'

Young people are often reluctant to block others, so reassure your child that **blocking and reporting is anonymous**.

   To **block** an account, tap the 3 dots at the top-right of the user's profile, then choose 'Block'

   To **report a photo in a feed**, tap the 3 dots icon at the top of the post, then tap 'Report'

   To **report a comment**, swipe left over the comment (iPhone), or tap and hold on the comment (Android). Tap the exclamation mark, tap 'Report this comment' and follow the instructions

   To **report an abusive photo, video or message that your child has received directly**, open the conversation, tap and hold the abusive message, then tap 'Report'. Choose a reason for reporting the message, then tap 'Submit report'

   To **report a profile**, tap the 3 dots in the top-right of the user's profile, then tap 'Report'. Follow the on-screen instructions and choose a reason for reporting the profile

5. Remind your child to be careful about what they share and with who

It's easy for others to screenshot messages or images and share them outside of the original poster's control. So remind your child to think carefully about what they share. Before they share anything, tell your child to ask themselves: "would I be happy for other people to see this?"

In particular, make sure your child knows that taking, sharing or viewing naked or sexually explicit pictures of themselves or another child (anyone under 18) is illegal. They should ignore any pressure from others to share nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves.

6. Consider setting up supervision

Instagram allows parents or guardians to supervise their child from their own account. You can set this up by going to 'Settings' on your or your child's account, then selecting 'Family Centre'.

You and your child must both consent to using supervision before you can access any of the features.

Once you've enabled supervision, you can:

See who your child follows, and who follows them

Monitor how much time your child is spending on Instagram

Receive notifications if your child reports a post or an account

7. Tell the school about any bullying or grooming concerns you have

It isn't always easy to spot signs of cyberbullying. Be alert to the following signs:

Changes in your child's behaviour

Your child is upset especially after using the internet

They are unwilling to talk about their online activities

You notice that many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses show up on their device

Your child doesn't want to go to school or meet up with their friends

They avoid formerly enjoyable social situations

Your child has difficulty sleeping and low self-esteem

Signs children may be being targeted by a gang, or groomed for other reasons, can include:

Having new and unexplained possessions

Changes in friendship groups, behaviour and/or mood

Unexplained injuries

Sources

> Instagram boosts privacy and parental control on teen accounts, Meta releases 'sextortion' data after mum's criticism, BBC News

> 'It can happen to any child': parents of sextortion victim send out warning, Meta documents show 100,000 children sexually harassed daily on its platforms, The Guardian

> Instagram Help Centre, Instagram Teen Accounts, Instagram

> Meta Family Centre, Meta

> Encountering violent online content starts at primary school, Ofcom

> Content about suicide, self-harm and eating disorders to be hidden from kids on Instagram and Facebook, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and X failing to remove dangerous suicide and self-harm content – study, Sky News

This factsheet was produced by The Key Safeguarding: thekeysupport.com/safeguarding

Keep your child safe on Fortnite

> Fortnite is an online video game made by Epic Games, where players play together in different ways. Some modes involve shooting and competition, but others are more relaxed and non-violent. Fortnite includes player-made content

> Although (in some modes) players shoot each other using a range of lethal weapons, the brightly coloured and cartoon-style graphics, as well as the lack of bloodshed, mean Fortnite doesn't feel too gory or graphic

> Fortnite has a [PEGI](#) age recommendation of **12 and above** (some modes do have lower recommended age ratings, like LEGO Fortnite and Rocket Racing). However, you don't have to provide your age when creating an account, so younger children can do this easily

> Fortnite **is free to download** on PC/Mac, Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch and Android devices (you currently can't download it on Apple devices in the UK)

What are the concerns?

You may have seen news reports or heard concerns raised about:

> **Communication between players:** they can talk to each other via messaging or a headset and microphone. Children could speak to strangers or be at risk of cyber-bullying

> **In-app purchases:** children can build up large bills on their parents' accounts by buying cosmetic items, like outfits and weapons for their character (known as 'skins')

> **Player-made experiences:** these are activities and games made by other users, called 'islands'. Epic Games moderates these, but they aren't made by the people who make Fortnite itself

> **Inappropriate content**

  o Players can wear skins of characters from pop culture that might not be age-appropriate for them, such as horror movie characters

  o Music in Fortnite can include songs already censored for explicit content (like swear words), but that may still be inappropriate for your child

> **The game's addictive nature:** some children might have a hard time putting the game down, especially if they're on a winning streak or having fun with their friends

3 steps to take to keep your child safe

1. Use the parental controls on your gaming device

> Most devices allow you to **set time limits** on game play, **set age limits** for content, and **restrict in-app purchases.** Go to the website below for links to instructions on your child's device – it covers Fortnite, as well as devices like Nintendo Switch, PlayStation and Xbox:

- [Ask About Games](#) – *https://www.askaboutgames.com/get-started/setup-parental-controls/*

> Fortnite has its own parental controls, allowing you to set age limits for content and time limits

2. Turn off the voice chat feature

Speak to your child to make sure they understand how to use this feature safely. Encourage them to follow the steps below if they meet someone who is offensive or inappropriate in the game.

To **disable the in-game voice chat function**:

> Select the profile icon (the circular picture of your child's character in the top-right), then the 'cog' icon to get to the settings

> Select the 'audio' tab (represented by a speaker icon)

> Tap the arrows next to 'voice chat' until it says 'off'

To **'mute' individual players**:

> Pause the game

> Select the player you wish to mute, select 'more options' and then select the mute button (a loudspeaker icon)

3. Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate behaviour

To **report** players or player-made experiences that make your child feel uncomfortable:

> Select the profile icon, then the 3 horizontal lines icon

> Select 'Reporting'

> Select 'Report a bug, player, or island'

> For reporting **players**, select the player you'd like to report, then the reason for reporting them

> For reporting **islands**, select the island you'd like to report, then the reason for reporting it

> On the 'Submit' tab, select 'Accept' to send the report

> Select 'Send report'

What else can I do?

> Download and play the game to help you understand it

> Look at the parental controls page on Epic Games' website

> Talk to your child about what they're doing online, and make sure they know they can talk to you about anything that has upset them. See more guidance from the NSPCC about talking to your child about online safety

> Check your bank statements and gaming system account balance regularly for in-app purchases you're not happy with, and to make sure your child isn't getting around any passwords you've set up

PARENT/CARER FACTSHEET

Keep your child safe on WhatsApp

What are the risks?

Bullying, particularly in group chats

Seeing content of a sexual nature, or showing violence and hatred

Settings that allow messages to disappear after 24 hours or 7 days. This could make it harder to track bullying, and your child might share things they wouldn't otherwise because they know it will disappear

Sharing their live location, particularly with people they don't know in person

Spam or hoax messages

Being exposed to strangers through group chats

Group chats encouraging self-harm

WhatsApp says the **minimum age** to use it is **16**, but younger children can still use it easily.

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6 steps to help your child use WhatsApp safely

1. Keep their personal information and location private

By default, WhatsApp shows profile photos, status and when you last used it to all users.

Encourage your child to only share this information with their contacts, and be careful about who they talk to on the app, as anyone could pretend to be a child online.

To check and change these settings:

On an **iPhone**, open settings in WhatsApp (the cog icon), then Privacy. Tap the setting you want to change, then choose who it should be visible to

On **Android**, tap the 3 dots in the top-right of the home screen, then > Settings > Privacy. Tap the setting you want to change, then choose who it should be visible to

WhatsApp also has a feature that you can use to share your 'live location' with others. Tell your child to keep this turned off, or to only share their location with people they trust.

To check this:

On an **iPhone**, go to phone Settings (the cog icon) > WhatsApp > Location, and tap to change if you need to

On **Android**, go to privacy settings as above, then scroll down to 'Live location', and tap to change if you need to

2. Remind your child to be careful about what they share

It's easy to forward messages, photos and videos to others on WhatsApp. Even if your child sets a message to automatically disappear, or deletes it after sharing it, the person they send it to could still screenshot it, forward it to someone else, or save it.

So, before they share anything, tell them to ask themselves: "Would I want others to see what I'm about to send?"

3. Remind your child they can leave group chats

If they see something they're not comfortable with in a group chat, or are in a chat with someone they don't know and are uncomfortable with, they should leave the group. To do this:

On an **iPhone**, go into the group chat, tap the group subject, then > Exit group > Exit group

On **Android**, go into the group chat, tap the group subject, then > Exit group > Exit

4. Make sure your child knows how to report and block people

When they first receive a message from an unknown number, they'll have the option to report it.

If someone in your child's contacts is upsetting them or making them uncomfortable, they can report or block them at any point (WhatsApp won't tell the user they've been blocked/reported).

To do this:

On an **iPhone**, open settings in WhatsApp, go to Privacy > Blocked > Add New… then find the contact they want to block, and tap the contact

On **Android**, tap the 3 dots icon, then Settings, then tap Privacy > Blocked contacts, tap the icon in the top right showing a person and a plus sign, search for the contact they want to block, then tap the contact to block them

To report issues like offensive or abusive content or spam:

On an **iPhone**, open the chat with the user you want to report, tap the contact then then tap Report Contact > Report And Block

On **Android**, open the chat with the user you want to report, then tap the 3 dots icon, then > More > Report

5. Encourage your child to watch out for spam and hoax messages

These can appear to come from contacts, as well as people they don't know. Tell your child to watch out for messages that:

Ask them to tap on a link, or specifically to click on a link to activate a new feature

Ask them to share personal information like bank account details, date of birth or passwords

Ask them to forward the message

Say they have to pay to use WhatsApp

Have spelling or grammar errors

6. Tell our school about any bullying they experience

Look for signs they your child may be being bullied, like being afraid or reluctant to go to school, feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, or losing sleep.

Sources

> Bullying and cyberbullying, NSPCC
  https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/

> Help Centre, WhatsApp
  https://faq.whatsapp.com/?locale=en_UK

> Nine-year-olds added to malicious WhatsApp groups, BBC News
  https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy0l4z8n1p9o