



Online Safety

Welcome to the February edition of our Online Safety Newsletter. As part of our Tech Thursday worship, we have been exploring how the things we share online, the posts that we like, share and comment upon shape how other people view us now and in the future - this is our online reputation. We have also looked at the type of information that is ok to share online and how we should never share any information through which someone could identify us personally.

In this edition, there is some helpful advice and guidance about parental controls, age limits, games and apps. Don't forget that there is also a wealth of information guides about online safety on our web site: [Frimley Church of England School - Online Safety](#) so please check it out!

If there is any content in this newsletter that you'd like to discuss further or require any more support with, please contact either myself Ailsa Reehal, Computing Lead, or Rachel Farage, Designated Online Safety Safeguarding Lead.

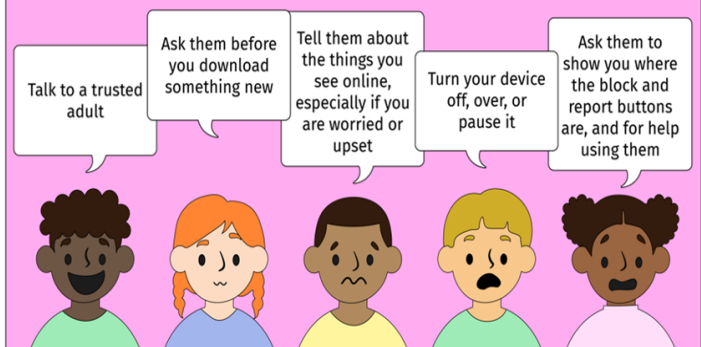


We celebrated Safer Internet Day this year by wearing something **yellow** to school. This year's theme was all about 'navigating change, making a difference and managing influence online'. As part of our worship, we looked at how devices such as computers, phones and watches look very different now to how they did a few years ago. We then spoke about some of the smaller more subtle changes that happen more frequently online and to our devices such as device setting changes, game changes, pop ups on screens and character changes. Sometimes seeing these changes can be a bit unsettling and make us feel a range of emotions.

Knowing what to do when these things happen is really important.



How can you stay safe even when things change online?



BRECK FOUNDATION

Parental Controls Consoles



All consoles offer parental controls such as limiting the time spent on the device or restricting who your child can communicate with. Find out the specific settings below:



PlayStation

Set up your account as a family manager and create a separate child account so you can tailor their activities. Find out more here:

[Safety for parents \(UK\) \(playstation.com\)](#)

Xbox



You can download an app to manage your child's gaming Experience. Find out more here:

[Xbox family settings: peace of mind for parents | Xbox](#)



Nintendo Switch

Nintendo also offer a free app to monitor what and how your children are playing. Find out more here:

[Nintendo Switch Parental Controls | Hardware | Nintendo](#)

Mobiles/ Tablets

You can set up parental controls and restrictions on most mobile devices, which can limit what your child can access.

Additionally, make sure appropriate settings are applied on the apps your child is using.

Apple

[Use parental controls on your child's iPhone, iPad and iPod touch – Apple Support \(UK\)](#)

Android Devices

[Family Link from Google - Family Safety & Parental Control Tools \(families.google\)](#)

Further Information

[Set up devices for children - Internet Matters](#)

Snapshot: new controls

What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a social media app used for messaging and sharing photos and videos.

You must be 13+ to sign up. Users can send messages (snaps) to others that are only seen for a set time e.g., 10 seconds and users can also upload snaps to stories, which disappear after 24 hours.



You can find out more about Snapchat here:

parents.snapchat.com

Family Centre: new features

Snapchat are expanding the features available to you in their Family Centre, allowing parents to view:

- story settings: you will be able to see who your child is sharing their story with e.g. all their friends or a smaller group.
- contact settings: see who your child can be contacted by (by people they have added as a friend or their phone contacts).
- if your child is sharing their location with friends on the Snap Map.

In addition, you will be able to restrict the use of Snapchat's 'My AI.' You can find out more here:

[Expanding Our In-App Parental Tools \(snap.com\)](#)

More information

The NSPCC provide further information about Snapchat, the risks involved with using Snapchat and tips to help keep your child safe if they are using Snapchat.

[Is Snapchat safe for my child? | NSPCC](#)

At what age can my child start using social networks?

Internet Matters have produced this fantastic resource highlighting the minimum age limits for a variety of social media platforms as well as outlining the risks of being underage on social media.

You can find out more here:

[What age can my child start social networking? - Internet Matters](#)

Ofcom have produced a helpful article about the risks your child faces using false ages on social media.

[How old is your child online? The risks of children using false ages on social media - Ofcom](#)



YouTube Shorts

You should be over 13 to post videos on YouTube. YouTube Shorts are short videos which are similar in format to videos you find on TikTok or Instagram Reels. 'Shorts' are available to watch on the YouTube homepage or on the Shorts tab in the app. As they are quick to watch, they can be addictive and lead to excessive screen time. If your child is watching these videos, ensure they know that there is a report button.

The INEQE Safeguarding Group discuss this feature in more detail here:

[YouTube Shorts: Everything You Need to Know - Ineqe Safeguarding Group](#)

World Events

There are a lot of distressing events happening around the world, which your child may see online. Childnet have published an article discussing how you can support your child when they see something worrying or upsetting online. The article also directs you to other organisations that you can contact if you require further help and support:

[Navigating violent online content from global events | Childnet](#)

YouTube Content Warning

The INEQE Safeguarding Group have published a report warning about the YouTube cartoon series called Jeffy. Due to the content being animated, viewers may believe that it is suitable for children to watch when in fact the content is inappropriate. You can find out more here:

[Safeguarding Update: Jeffy - Ineqe Safeguarding Group](#)

YouTube

YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13 (however, children of all ages may use the Service and YouTube Kids if enabled by a parent/legal guardian).

What if my child is under the age of 13?

If your child is under the age of 13 then your child should use either YouTube Kids or a Supervised Account. Which option you choose, will depend on your child's age and your requirements.

- **YouTube Kids** – this is a separate app that includes a smaller selection of videos based on the age you select:

- Preschool (ages four and under)
- Younger (ages 5–8)
- Older (ages 9–12)

- **Supervised accounts** – this is a parent-managed version of YouTube. You can select one of the following options, again depending on your child's age and your requirements:

- **Explore** - Generally for viewers aged 9+.
- **Explore more** - Generally for viewers aged 13+
- **Most of YouTube** - This setting includes almost everything on YouTube except for videos marked as 18+ and other videos that may not be appropriate for viewers using supervised experiences.

Google have created a table to show the differences between YouTube Kids and a Supervised account to help in your decision:

[Understand your choices as a family - YouTube Help \(google.com\)](#)

Posting videos

You should be over 13 to post videos. If your child does post videos on YouTube, ensure they understand what information they should keep private and what to do if they receive negative comments. Talk to them about the different settings available -

1. Public: anyone can view the video.
 2. Private: video can only be viewed by users that you select.
 3. Unlisted: only people who have the link to the video can view it.
- YouTube have produced these safety tips for teens when posting content:

[Stay safe as a teen on YouTube - YouTube Help \(google.com\)](#)

How can I make YouTube safer?

- **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.

- **Restricted mode** - is an additional setting (when logged in via a Google account) to restrict the availability of mature content.

- Ensure your child knows how to **report inappropriate content/comments**.

Find out more here:

[Report inappropriate videos, channels and other content on YouTube - Computer - YouTube Help \(google.com\)](#)

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

FORTNITE

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First released in 2017, Fortnite has become one of the most popular games in the world. It currently has around 350 million registered players. Developed by Epic Games, it began life exclusively as a 'battle royale' contest, where up to 100 online player characters would fight – with weaponry including rifles, handguns and rocket launchers – to be the last one standing. Today, it features multiple modes which each offer something different (although some modes, such as 'Save the World', are only available on certain platforms).

IN-APP PURCHASES

Not all of Fortnite is free. Save the World mode, for example, can become quite costly. An in-game currency called V-Bucks is used to buy items such as cosmetics, which are not a necessity to play the game. It can feel like buying them is essential, however – even for adult players. Making sure no payment methods are linked to the game's store is a good idea when children are playing Fortnite.

REPEAT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Fortnite now offers a monthly repeat subscription which costs £9.99 (or equivalent). This package offers different non-essential benefits every month – including fancy cosmetics, rare weapons, V-Bucks and special bonuses. Signing up, therefore, can be tempting for dedicated players. However, subscriptions cannot be paid for with V-Bucks earned in the game, only with real-world money.

COMPETITIVE COMMUNITY

Fortnite isn't purely a competitive experience (some modes prioritise cooperation), but the rivalry aspect remains central. Battle Royale is an especially ruthless mode, where the last player or squad left standing wins. Games can become heated, and players' desire to win can often cause excessively aggressive or "toxic" behaviour towards others – via the game's audio chat, for instance.

POSSIBILITY OF SCAMS

Popular games like Fortnite are often targeted by unscrupulous individuals trying to trick or exploit genuine fans. In Fortnite, scammers have been known to offer children free V-Bucks or vast amounts of V-Bucks in exchange for rare items – often asking the player to click a particular link. These scammers are seeking access to your child's account, personal information and payment details.

USER-CONTROLLED CONTENT

Some elements of online video games can't be rated for age appropriateness because the developer doesn't have control over them. In Fortnite, for instance, things like voice or text chat, usernames, trades and other player-generated content may not always be suitable for children. It also means that the makers aren't liable for anything a stranger might say to young Fortnite players online.

Advice for Parents & Carers

STAY AWARE OF SPENDING

Free-to-play games (that is, ones without up-front costs) can still be big financial drains. In Fortnite, for example, the Battle Pass – a set of rewards to improve players' experience in the game – can be either earned through playing or bought with real money (with additional incentives for the latter). With supervision however, this can be a great lesson in money management for children.

TALK ABOUT TALKING

Communication is key in the squad-based Fortnite modes, and children will quickly realise that talking with team-mates online helps to increase their win rate. It's a good idea, therefore, to chat with your child first about speaking to strangers online, trading, scammers and other potential risks. Remind them that they can always come to you for help if they run into problems online.

ENCOURAGE BREAKS

Gaming sessions can reach marathon lengths, especially when your child is on a winning streak and doesn't want to stop. Sitting in the same position for hours, of course, isn't healthy but it's an easy habit to form. Encouraging young ones to break regularly for drinks and so on will help them stay hydrated, rest their eyes and release some of the tension from competitive gameplay.

DISCUSS OTHER APPS

Games like Fortnite can lead on to third-party apps (Discord, for example) where players can join a voice, text or – in some cases – video chat about the game. Certain add-ons also let children talk with other players from their local area, which clearly presents a potential risk. When discussing Fortnite with your child, you might also want to ask them about other apps they use while playing.

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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Sources: <https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/fortnite-ow-subscription> <https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/fortnite-cs/battle-royale-cs3/how-to-get-more-vbucks-in-battle-royale-cs324> <https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/fortnite-cs/battle-royale-cs3/what-is-the-battle-pass-how-can-i-earn-more-c201> <https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/parents-controls>



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National Online Safety is Now Part of The National College



Frimley Church of England Junior School is a member of The National College – a multi-award-winning online training provider for staff and parents.

What does this mean for you?

As part of our school membership, The National College provides dedicated training and resources for parents and carers – particularly, around online safety and keeping children safe online.

Online safety advice on any topic

Of course, staff will continue to teach children about the risks online. But with the internet so readily accessible, the most effective approach to online safety needs everyone involved, including parents and carers.

That's why you've now got access to ***hundreds of courses, explainer videos and online safety guides*** to support your awareness of the online world. Topics range from understanding apps like TikTok and Instagram to recognising the signs of online harm and what you can do to help.

Sign up is easy

If you haven't already done so, please sign up to the platform. Signing up is simple. Just follow <https://nationalcollege.com/enrol/frimley-cofe-junior-school> and complete your details. Once you're set up, you'll be able to choose 'Parent/Carer' as your user type and get instant access to all training and resources.

Download the app for free

Another fantastic benefit of The National College is its National Online Safety app, which you can download for free. It gives you access to all their parent and carer resources on the go, whenever you want.

You can download the National Online Safety app using the links below:

[App store](#)
[Google Play](#)

The National College has a brilliant support team if you have any questions. Their [help centre](#) provides a comprehensive bank of answers to most FAQs, but if you still can't find the answer you're looking for, you can always get in [contact](#) with them. I hope you'll sign-up and make the most of their resources.

