



# #SAF Online Safety

## 'Belonging, Being, Becoming'

Value of the month: HONESTY

Friday 10th February 2023



Dear all,

Let me introduce you to Mrs Lane. She is our Year 5 teacher and phase leader of years 4, 5 and 6. Mrs Lane also has the very important job of ensuring that computing is taught effectively across school.

Mrs Lane runs our ECadets and is our online safety Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### Online Safety

As a school, we regard online safety as a really high priority. In this modern everchanging world we live in children are faced with inappropriate and confusing content on a regular basis. As a school, we aim to educate the children to help them to protect themselves online and to make educated decisions about their actions. We always encourage our children to only access apps and social media content that is age appropriate but this is a battle we will always lose so our aim is to educate them to be safe and question everything. We ask them to share inappropriate content with adults so that they can be supported in dealing with it.

There are some websites that support us in helping children and I have copied them here:

[Distressing online content | NSPCC](#)

[CEOP Safety Centre](#)

[National Online Safety | Keeping Children Safe Online in Education](#)



### National Online Safety

Every Wednesday, National Online Safety send a 'Wake-Up Wednesday' message linked to how we can protect our children in this everchanging online media world! We share these on our Facebook page, so please make sure you check them out!



We will be promoting '**Safer Internet Day**'

in school on Tuesday 7th and 14th February and all classes will be focusing on this. Online safety is threaded through our curriculum and classes are constantly reinforcing how to be safe through PSHE and computing lessons but we also directly teach this every 4 weeks using Project Evolve.



# #SAF Online Safety

## Online Safety Newsletter February 2023

### How old is your child online?

Has your child (or you on their behalf) signed up to access social media/or a game online but have said that they are older than they are so they can have an account? For example, did your 8 year old join TikTok and put their age as 13 or did you create their account and put your own age? If so, please read some of the implications outlined below that you should think about.

If TikTok thinks your child is 13 when they join but they are in fact 8, then by the time your child reaches 13, the app will think they are 18. This puts your child at risk of viewing content that is not age appropriate and may mean your child will view adverts aimed at adults.

In addition, now the app thinks your child is an adult, they will have access to all functionalities (whereas some apps place restrictions on access to under 18s for example to direct messaging).

The following news article from Ofcom explains this in further detail as well as providing tips to help keep your child safe online:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2022/risks-of-children-using-false-ages-on-social-media>

### Age ratings

Parent Zone provide some advice on age ratings and why they matter in this blog:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/age-ratings>

### PUBG (PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds)

PUBG is available on multiple platforms and is rated 16+ by PEGI, therefore it is not suitable for persons below 16 years of age. PEGI state that this game has been rated PEGI 16 "due to frequent, moderate violence towards human characters and encouragement of drug use" (<https://pegi.info/>).



PUBG is an online multiplayer game, in which a group of players play against each other until they are the only remaining player. One hundred players are dropped on to an island and they need to search for items, such as backpacks, body armour and guns.

#### What do I need to be aware of?

Parents need to be aware that this can be an addictive game, in game purchases are available and due to the live chat, inappropriate or offensive language may be heard/seen.

If your child is playing this game, then make sure they know how to use the reporting and blocking facilities within the game and they know to speak to a trusted adult should they need to.

#### Further information

Bark provides further information on PUBG as well as how to apply settings: <https://www.bark.us/guides/gaming-pubg/>

### HiPal – Walkie Talkie



HiPal – Walkie Talkie is a social media app and rated 12+ on the App store and for 'Teens' on Google Play.

When first accessing HiPal, it asks you if you are under or over 12 years of age. The area available to under 12 year olds states that no stranger interaction can take place. Users with this account type invite friends by sharing a code/QR code. As with all messaging apps, there can be instances of cyberbullying, so it is important to monitor who your child is interacting with.

If a user selects that they are over 12 years of age, then there is the risk of communication from strangers. HiPal features a public square where you can message strangers as well as an explore tab where you can view people's images and videos from around the world. There is a risk of viewing content that is not suitable or inappropriate. There are reporting and blocking features within the app. You can find out more from Safer Schools NI here: <https://saferschoolsni.co.uk/hipal-walkie-talkie-and-wizz-social-apps/>

# #SAF Online Safety

## Fall Guys

Fall Guys is a free, online multiplayer game in which players team up to take on obstacle courses and puzzles to try and be the last player standing. Fall Guys is available on multiple platforms.

Whilst this game has a PEGI rating of 3 (suitable for all ages), you need to be aware that up to sixty people will be playing in one game at the same time and it does have the option of voice chat and in-game purchases. Voice chat is off by default and is not needed to play the game. An Epic Games account is required to play Fall Guys, which does include parental controls. You can find out more here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/epic-games-store-parental-controls-guide/>

## Instagram: new features

*You must be at least 13 years old to have an Instagram account.*

Instagram have introduced several new features, including 'Quiet mode,' how to hide content as well as additional tools to help your child.



### Quiet mode

This gives users the ability to put their account in quiet mode, so you do not receive notifications and if you receive a DM, the sender receives an auto reply. This mode will help provide less distraction whilst studying and at nighttime.

### Recommendations

You can now hide content in Explore that you do not wish to see/are not interested in. Instagram will use this information to avoid showing you that type of content in other areas where content is recommended as well.

### Hidden words

You can already hide comments and DMs containing specific words, but this feature has now been expanded to recommended posts. If you add a word, emoji or hashtag that you want to avoid to your hidden words (in privacy settings) then Instagram will try to no longer recommend content with those words in the caption/ hashtag.

### Updated Parental Supervision Tools

You can see your child's Instagram settings (if you have set up a supervised account), including their privacy and account settings and accounts your child has blocked. If your child updates a setting, then you will receive a notification to inform you.

### Find out more

You can read more about the new features here: <https://about.fb.com/news/2023/01/instagram-quiet-mode-manage-your-time-and-focus/>

Do you have Sky Broadband? Sky offer a set of free tools to all customers to help make the internet a safer place for your family, for example safe search. You can find out more about the settings available and how to set it up here:

<https://www.sky.com/help/articles/sky-broadband-shield-start>

## Spotify

There have been news reports claiming grooming has taken place on Spotify (source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-64262918>).

Spotify is a music streaming service. You should be over 18 years of age to agree to the terms, or if older than 13, obtain parent/guardian consent.

There is a Spotify Kids version, but it is only available as part of a Premium (paid for) Family plan.

Spotify have produced this Parental Guide to assist you with further information but if your child does use Spotify then it may be beneficial to have a chat about what they are viewing. [https://www.spotify.com/privacy/files/Parental\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.spotify.com/privacy/files/Parental_Guide.pdf)

You can find out more about Grooming and who to contact here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/>

## Is your child playing Gacha Life?

Gacha Life is rated as 9+ on the App Store and for 'Everyone' on the Google Play Store. Players can dress up characters and add props (including weapons) and create scenes with their characters as well as play games. The app does allow in-app purchases ranging from £1.70 to £17.99 and does include adverts. This article from Internet Matters provides further information and discusses in detail what you need to be aware of: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/what-is-gacha-life-what-parents-need-to-know/>

# #SAF Online Safety

**Qustodio** More time online exposes kids to more risks.

We know that every child faces different risks when it comes to their digital lives. **Qustodio** is an app which you can put on your child's technology to track, monitor and control what they are accessing and their screen time.

[Parental control and digital wellbeing software | Qustodio](#)

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

## 10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage ...

### ARCADE THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

### ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

### SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

### TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fail or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

### REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

### A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

### PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

### THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

### TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

### ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain; that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

### Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.

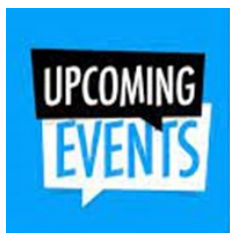


Source: <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/consult/condocs/children-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf>



# #SAF Upcoming Events

## 'Belonging, Being, Becoming'



Here is the list of things happening during the Spring Term. We have made some slight changes so please look closely.

### SPRING TERM

Monday 2nd January	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	PD Day
Wednesday 4th January	School resumes @ 8.30am
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> January	Chinese New Year
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Year 2 Class Assembly – Year 2 parents invited
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Number Day 2023
Monday 6th February	Children's Mental Health Week
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> February	Internet Safety Day
Thursday 15th February	Friends of School: Valentine's Disco
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> February	School breaks up for <b>HALF TERM @ 3pm</b>
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	Children return for Spring term 2
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Wear own clothes day in exchange for an Easter Egg
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Reception Class Assembly – Year R parents invited to attend
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Easter Bonnets can begin to come into school for the parade on the last day Easter egg raffle tickets are on sale.
Monday 13th March	Art Week in school—please send in a top for children to get messy!
10 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> March	British Science Week – Parent Science afternoons TBC
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Comic Relief – noses will be on sale from the week before
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Mother's Day breakfast in hall 8.30 – 9.30am
WC: 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Pupil Progress Consultations – 8.30am – 4.00pm (other times are available on request) Monday: Year 1, Tuesday: Year 6, Wednesday: Year 4, Thursday: Year 3 and Year 5, Friday: Year 2 and YR and N—may change
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Easter egg raffle draw / Easter bonnet parade
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	End of term @ <b>1pm</b>