

Meir Heath Academy

Online Safety Newsletter: September 2019

Fortnite (Rated PEGI 12)

Fortnite is still very popular with lots of young people. **It is rated PEGI 12 for frequent mild violence which means it is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age.** It is important to bear in mind that when rating games, PEGI do not take into consideration the chat features of a game which Fortnite does include.

What do you need to be aware of?

Chat functionality:

Fortnite contains voice and text chat which can contain inappropriate language. You can turn the voice chat off but **not the text chat**. To turn voice chat off, go to Settings, Audio and switch to off. As always, show your child how to report players for any inappropriate behaviour (they can use the in-game feedback tool in the main menu, more information can be found here: <https://epicgames.helpshift.com/a/fortnite/>) and ensure that they know that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.

In app purchases:

All users can purchase V-Bucks directly through the game. This currency can be used to purchase items in the Fortnite store so make sure you don't store your credit card details.

We always recommend playing the game with your child so you can see what they are playing and monitor the sort of chat that they are listening to/contributing to.

For further information about Fortnite, Parentzone have produced this great article:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/fortnite-everything-you-need-know-about-online-game>



Games to play as a family

It is important to take an active role in your child's online life and playing games online with them is a great way to do this whilst demonstrating to your child good gaming habits. Internet Matters have compiled this list of games that you could play together based on your child's age.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-gaming-advice/amazing-video-games-guide-for-families/>

In app purchases

Lots of apps/games are free to download/access but then contain in app purchases.

To prevent purchasing on your child's iPhone or iPad follow these instructions:

<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT204396>

To prevent purchasing through Google Play follow these instructions:

<https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1626831>

PEGI ratings explained

If you see this rating on a game then it means the game contains bad language. This descriptor can be found on games with a PEGI 12 (mild swearing), PEGI 16 (e.g. sexual expletives or blasphemy) or PEGI 18 rating (e.g. sexual expletives or blasphemy).



Sky Broadband Buddy

Do you use Sky Broadband? If so, this app allows you to manage each screen in your home. The app allows you to create different filters i.e. PG, 13 or 18 so they don't see something that they shouldn't. It allows you to set Time Limits, schedule Off Time as well as view what each member has been doing online. Further information is available here:

<https://www.sky.com/help/diagnostics/sky-broadband-buddy/sky-broadband-buddy>

Harry Potter Wizards Unite (Rated PEGI 7)

The creators behind Pokémon Go have released a new game set in the world of Harry Potter. Similar to Pokémon Go, in that the app uses your real location to place you on a map and you need to walk around your local area looking out for magical items on your phone and casting spells to free items or send characters back to their magical world.

This game is free to play but in app purchases to buy coins range from 99p - £99!

The app does warn you to stay alert at all times and to stay aware of your surroundings. Due to the nature of this game, it can be easy to forget where you are going so please remind children to pay attention to their surroundings, particularly when crossing roads.

There are 3 ways to sign in to this app, using a Facebook account, Google account or under 16's will need an adult to create their profile through a Niantic parents account.

You will need to create a code name, this is public so ensure that your child does not include any personal information.

Further information is available here:
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/parents-guide-harry-potter-wizards-unite>



Using Google Play store

Does your child use the Google Play store? If so, have you set up appropriate parental controls? Parental controls allow you to restrict content based on your child's maturity level so you can set up parental controls for e.g. apps, games and TV shows to prevent your child from downloading items that are above the rating that you set. Further information is available here:

<https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738?hl=en-GB>