



Meir Heath Academy



Online Safety Newsletter: December 2019

Online Chatting/Cyberbullying

What is your child saying online?

Children can communicate online through lots of different apps, social media and games (WhatsApp, Instagram, FIFA, Fortnite for example) so it's important to talk to your child about how they behave and communicate online. It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face to face with each other. Talk to your child about how they are speaking to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect, like they would if they were face-to-face. This is a useful article including tips on how to help your child be kind to others online:

<https://parentinfo.org/article/safer-internet-day-2019-how-to-help-your-child-be-kind-to-others-online>

Ensure that your child understands that if they receive unkind messages (or sees something that worries them) then they should not reply or engage in conversation with the person who sent them the message but they should instead tell an adult that they trust.

We always recommend regularly talking to your child about what they are doing online. We also recommend children only being online in supervised areas so you can monitor what they are doing online and who they are interacting with.

Further information

- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics/cyberbullying>

PlayStation Now

PlayStation Now is a game subscription service (charged monthly) that gives the subscriber access to more than 700 games either by streaming instantly to their PS4/ Windows PC or downloading direct to their PS4 console.

PlayStation Now is only available to account holders **who are aged 18 and over**. Once set up, Child account holders can then access age-appropriate content (using the Family Manager's Primary PS4 system). It is important that appropriate parental controls are set up as some of the games included within the subscription may not be age appropriate for your child, for example, Grand Theft Auto V has a PEGI rating of 18. More information about setting up family accounts is available here:

<https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/explore/playstation-network/family-accounts/>

Are you guilty of Sharenting?

'Sharenting' is when we post too much information about our children online, such as photos, funny moments or key milestones. This useful article discusses the top six things parents should be thinking about before they post, such as what information you include when you upload photographs (child's school, age or location). We tell our children to think before they post but maybe as parents, we need to too. Read the article here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/CDT1p7qHZxjrGLsw1xh7Pg/sharenting-six-things-parents-should-think-about-before-hitting-post-on-social-media>

Age ratings

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) has launched new digital age rating symbols designed for digital streaming platforms such as Netflix. More and more children are choosing what they watch, so talk to your child about the different ratings so they can make the right decision about what to watch.

More information available here: <https://bbfc.co.uk/about-bbfc/media-centre/don't-call-us-boring-generation-conscious-want-make-better-decisions-ever>

FIFA 20



FIFA 20 was released in September and with Christmas nearly here, we are sure it'll be on somebody's Christmas list! FIFA 20 has a PEGI rating of 3 which means PEGI rate the game as suitable for all ages. **HOWEVER**, the PEGI rating does not take into consideration the risk of in game chat and you should be also be aware of in game purchases.

In-game purchases

Players can buy FIFA Points to purchase packs (additional players). In game purchases can range from £0 to £71.99. As with any game that allows in-game/app purchases, ensure you have set up passwords and/or limits on any payment details stored. There have been reports of children spending a lot of money using their parent's payment details.

Chat

You should be aware that your child can chat to other players (with a headset) whilst playing this game and may be exposed to language or content that is unsuitable for them.

Play the game with your child, observe them whilst they are playing so you can monitor the sort of chat that they are listening to/contributing to. As always, show your child how to mute any abusive players and report any inappropriate behaviour and ensure that they know that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.



What is Stadia?

Google has launched a new platform called Stadia, it is a game streaming service, which means you can play video games on devices that you may already own such as a smart TV or PC using Chrome. Stadia works with existing game controllers/keyboards but they have also launched a new controller specific to Stadia. A Stadia Pro subscription costs £8.99 a month. You need to be aware that some of the games may not be age appropriate for your child; for example, Assassin's Creed Odyssey has a PEGI rating of 18 so it is important that you set up appropriate controls to ensure your child is accessing age appropriate content. As parents, you have access to additional controls and privacy settings that allows you to set which games your child can play and who they can play with. More information is available here: https://support.google.com/stadia/answer/9575790?hl=en&ref_topic=9495322