

# West Acton Primary School Newsletter



Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Each morning Monday to Thursday, we opened up early to have breakfast for Year 6 before they started their SATs tests. The children came in very happy and relaxed about their tests. They really enjoyed the time talking with their friends before school started. Thank you to pupils, staff and parents for all their work this week.

We are getting ready to start our celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee next week and we will have different dancing workshops happening throughout the week for all pupils. Thank you to everyone who has already sent in fabric for our special art project – this is the final call please. If you have any extra material that you would like to donate for this please do give it to me on the gate or send to the office.

Please make sure you are reading with your child each day and completing the CGP books that we provide.

On Monday, we are completing our final big survey Active Travel about the number of pupils walking, cycling or scooting to school –please do make this effort. We have combined this with International Family day and are looking forward to see the children actively coming to school in clothes from around the world. (Mulberry class will do this Tuesday due to their trip).

Have a lovely week end, Miss Kondo

PTA Meeting - Thank you to everyone who attended the PTA meeting this morning.

There is another opportunity to join in online.

## **Online PTA Meeting**

To help accommodate those who are unable to make meetings during school hours, [the PTA](#) (formally Friends of West Acton Primary School) are holding an online meeting next week.

**Date & time:** Thursday May 19th, 20:00-21:00

**Where:** [This Teams meeting](#)

The main agenda item will be preparation for our Summer Picnic, which we hope to run towards the end of next half term. We will also look further ahead to our annual [firework display](#).

If you are interested in volunteering with us, or joining the committee, do come along.

Thanks,

Diana, Rasha, and Peter (Friends of West Acton Primary School Committee)

**Ofsted**  
Outstanding  
Provider

# CONSTRUCTION WEEK **1/2 TERM CAMP** 30th May - 1st June 2022 6th June - 7th June

**Little**  
Runners

OFSTED REGISTERED: RP550057  
Children need to bring a  
**NUT FREE** packed lunch  
Access via Hereford Road gate

*Book online  
now!*

**Cooking**

**Craft**

School Nursery  
-y6 Welcome

**FEES:**  
Full Day  
8am-6pm  
£42.50  
School Day  
8.45am-3.15pm  
£32.50  
Short Day  
10am-3pm  
£25.00

**Lego racing**  
**Stem challenges**  
**Team Building**  
**Motor Cars**  
**Origami Rockets**  
**DEN wars**

**Sports**

[WWW.LRUNNERS.CO.UK](http://WWW.LRUNNERS.CO.UK)




@ Little  
Ealing  
Primary  
School  
W5 4EA

On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April, Year 6 finished our participation in the national Literacy Trust's Young Poet project by taking part in an online poetry festival. Acsah, Alisha, Haifa, Hamza and Olamide joined some professional poets and pupils from other schools in London in performing their poems. This was a fantastic opportunity for them to showcase their creativity and they conveyed their inspiration from our Museum of London and Tower Bridge trips brilliantly in their performances. They spoke with clarity and passion and were praised for their individual styles. Look out for their poems in the next Young Poets Anthology!



## PE KIT Reminder

We have continued to allow pupils to wear their PE kit to school on the day of PE instead of changing here. The majority of pupils are coming to school in the correct uniform. Please see below for a reminder of the expectation. Thank you.

<b>Reception, Years 1 to 6 <u>PE KIT</u></b> <b>Plain white t shirt</b> 	Available from all stores: e.g. Tesco, Asda, Primark, M &S
<b>Reception, Years 1 to 6 <u>PE KIT</u></b> <b>Black shorts or track suit bottoms (not leggings)</b> 	Available from all stores: e.g. Tesco, Asda, Primark, M &S
<b>Reception, Years 1 to 6 <u>PE KIT</u></b> <b>Plimsolls or trainers</b> 	Available from all stores: e.g. Tesco, Asda, Primark, M &S

## SUMMER TERM DATES



Summer Term 2022	
Start of Term for pupils	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2022 PUPILS RETURN TO SCHOOL
SCHOOL CLOSED	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2022 May Day Bank holiday Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2022 Holiday in Lieu of Queen's Jubilee
SCHOOL CLOSED HALF TERM	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2022 to Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2022
SCHOOL CLOSED	INSET DAY for staff training – Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2022
End of Term	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2022- SCHOOL CLOSES at 1.30pm
SCHOOL CLOSED	INSET DAY for staff training – Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2022
SCHOOL CLOSED Summer Holiday	Occasional Days - Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> , Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2022

We are delighted to be able to have our class assemblies again.

We hope that parents/carers of the performing class can join us at 9.00am in the Jubilee Hall.

We will confirm on a week by week basis.

#### Summer Term

Class	Date
Sycamore	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> May
Pine	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> May
Rowan	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> May
Holly	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> May
Ivy	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> June
Olive	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> June
Fir	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> June
Banyan	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> July

*This morning, Pine class shared their learning from Science. After much hard work and collaboration, taught the audience about different animals and their habitats.*

*Thank you Pine class, we learnt a lot from you!*

## **This week's top tip from Mrs Ahmad- West Acton School Therapist**

I am here at West Acton on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays this year.

For Mental Health Awareness week 2022, the focus has been on loneliness and its impact on our mental health.

Let's think about loneliness.....

Anyone can experience loneliness. However the way you experience loneliness may be different to somebody else. Some people can feel alone and not feel lonely and others can be surrounded by people and feel lonely.

Know that you are in control. You can use the power within yourself to make positive changes in your life. You can do this by relaxing or reflecting or doing something that makes you happy.

Everybody feels lonely sometimes and it's important that in these moments we try to reach out to others. Think about you and child's school community, your own community, joining a group based on a hobby, religion, spirituality, or an interest, can help to meet others –having people that share our interests can help us to combat our loneliness.

Know that you and your child are cared for and that there are friends, family (or your created family), support services out there – reach out and let them in.

*We all need someone to speak to sometimes. If you would like to speak to Emma for a confidential and non-judgemental chat about you, your child or any other worries, please call/email the school office and ask for a call back from Emma. She is here on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.*

House points for this week are –

Chiswick	895
Osterley	1033
Pitzhanger	1170
Syon	1108



# United Nations

## International Day of Families 15 May

On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May it is the UN's International Day of Families and the theme this year is **Families and Urbanisation**.

Urbanisation is one of the most important megatrends shaping our world and the life and wellbeing of families worldwide. Urbanisation is the increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities. This year's theme, "Families and Urbanisation", aims to raise awareness on the importance of sustainable, family-friendly urban policies.

As you know at West Acton, we are committed to promoting and raising awareness of sustainable travel to our school and saw 10% increase in active travel during our recent campaign. We have had very successful, and enjoyable, theme days to raise awareness.

Therefore on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May we are encouraging you all once again to walk, scoot or cycle to school this time in clothes from a different country of your choice. We have families from near and far and we would love to see our children in clothes/costumes from their family heritage or a country they have visited or would like to visit.



WEEK COMMENCING: 18TH APRIL, 9TH MAY, 6TH & 27TH JUNE, 18TH JULY, 29TH AUGUST, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 10TH OCTOBER					
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK 1	Goan Vegetable Curry with Rice	Vegetarian Casserole with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Vegetable Chow Mein	Chicken & Tomato Piri-Piri with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Jacket Potatoes with Salmon or Tuna Mince
	Macaroni Cheese	Lentils & Garlic Chicken Pasty with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Lentils & Chicken Pasty with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Roast Chicken with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Margherita Pizza with Chunky Chips
	Fresh Bread & Sweetcorn	Peas & Fresh Cauliflower	Green Beans & Butternut Squash	Carrots & Savoy Cabbage	Baked Beans & Sweetcorn
	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Chocolate Sprinkles with Chocolate Sauce	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt
WEEK COMMENCING: 25TH APRIL, 16TH MAY, 13TH JUNE, 4TH JULY, 5TH & 26TH SEPTEMBER, 17TH OCTOBER					
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK 2	Chicken & Tomato Pasty	Chicken & Green Pasty with Roasted Potatoes	Vegetable Biryani	Shepherd's Pie with Gravy	Vegetarian Lasagne with Pesto Sauce
	Yupia Mince with Rice	Chicken Korma with Rice	Lentil Meatballs with Spagetti & a Tomato Sauce	Piri Piri Chicken with Lemon Rice	Pork Fingers with Chunky Chips
	Cauliflower & Green Beans	Carrots & Peas	Fresh Bread & Butternut Squash	Sweetcorn & Carrots	Baked Beans & Peas
	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Tofu Pesto Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt
WEEK COMMENCING: 2ND & 23RD MAY, 20TH JUNE, 11TH JULY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 3RD OCTOBER					
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK 3	Jacket Potatoes with Cheese & Baked Beans & Tuna Mince	Mince & Vegetable Strips with Noodles	Spinach & Lentil Dahl with Rice	Roasted Vegetable & Lentil Loaf with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Cauliflower & Broccoli Bake with Chunky Chips
	Sweetcorn Pizza with Potato Wedges	Chicken Tikka Mince with Rice & Naan Bread	Lentil Lasagne with Garlic Bread	Roast Chicken with Roasted Potatoes & Gravy	Breaded Fish with Chunky Chips
	Peas & Roasted Butternut Squash	Fresh Cauliflower & Green Beans	Steamed & Sweetcorn	Carrots & Savoy Cabbage	Baked Beans and Peas
	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Only Apple Crumble with Oatmeal	Fresh Fruit or Yogurt



**West Acton Primary School Weekly Values Rewards**

<b>Wc 2.5.2022</b>	<b>Courage</b>	<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Collaboration</b>
<b>Acorn</b>	Derek	Leen	Tsukiha
<b>Banyan</b>	Ayman	Majid	Yu
<b>Fir</b>	Menrot	Zenjiro	Nao
<b>Olive</b>	Asma	Aaliyah	Eamon
<b>Ash</b>	Eloise	Taha	Eyad & Omar
<b>Guava</b>	Lena	Jay	Mila
<b>Katsura</b>	Abigail	Mohamed	Idris
<b>Chestnut</b>	Komachi	Anaya MW	Kheelan
<b>Damson</b>	Qais	Rose	Alexander
<b>Juniper</b>	Philip	Emaan	Batoul
<b>Holly</b>	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc
<b>Ivy</b>	Amaan	Abed	Jan
<b>Rowan</b>	Jayden	Myra	Shia
<b>Mulberry</b>	Callie	Avyaan	Mustafa
<b>Pine</b>	Adam	Khadijah	Jaida
<b>Sycamore</b>	Moska	Tatsuya	Asiya
<b>Elder</b>	Alonso	Emiho	Max
<b>Quince</b>	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc
<b>Willow</b>	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc
<b>Lime</b>	Yusuke	Sam	Aya & Joaquim
<b>Tamarind</b>	Nanami	Renna	Mohammad A
<b>Zaytouna</b>	Viktor	Remi	Rina
<b>Woodlands</b>	Jozef	Saad	Adam

West Acton Primary School Weekly Attendance & Punctuality				
W/E:		13th May 2022		
Attendance	96.20%		Punctuality	152
School Target:	96.30%		Class Targets:	0
Class	Attendance	Attendance Winner	Class	No.Lates
		EYFS		
Acorn	94.00%	FIR	Acorn	6
Reception			Reception	
Olive	94.70%	Punctuality Winner	Olive	5
Banyan	94.30%	FIR	Banyan	14
Fir	95.70%		Fir	1
Key Stage 1		Year 1, 2, 3 & ELM	Key Stage 1	
Katsura	99.30%	Attendance Winner:	Katsura	5
Ash	92.30%	KATSURA	Ash	10
Guava	93.30%		Guava	8
Damson	97.90%	Punctuality Winner	Damson	5
Chestnut	95.40%	KATSURA, ASH	Chestnut	10
Juniper	96.90%	ROWAN	Juniper	15
Key Stage 2			Key Stage 2	
Holly	93.50%		Holly	7
Rowan	97.30%	Year 4, 5, 6 & BIRCH	Rowan	5
Ivy	97.40%	Attendance Winner:	Ivy	6
Mulberry	97.90%	LIME	Mulberry	6
Pine	96.90%		Pine	9
Sycamore	97.20%	Punctuality Winner	Sycamore	11
Willow	97.50%	TAMARIND &	Willow	10
Elder	97.70%	ZAYTOUNA	Elder	7
Quince	96.40%		Quince	8
Lime	98.00%		Lime	1
Tamarind	99.70%		Tamarind	0
Zaytouna	99.60%		Zaytouna	0
Woodlands			Woodlands	
Elm	97.50%		Elm	2
Birch	81.70%		Birch	1





The effect of absence on progress					
A whole year has 365 days; a school year has 190 days. That leaves 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping and other appointments.					
No Absence	10 days absence	12 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence	38 days absence
190 days of education	180 days of education	178 days of education	171 days of education	161 days of education	152 days of education
100%	95%	94%	90%	85%	80.00%
Very Good		Worrying		Serious Concern	





## What Parents & Carers Need to Know About

**16+**  
in UK & EU;  
12+ rest of  
world.

# WHATSAPP

WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, and making voice and video calls. The app offers end-to-end encryption, meaning messages can only be read by the sender and the recipient(s). Not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 reportedly caused millions of users to leave the app. But the new policy was widely misinterpreted: it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.

### 'Prize' Scams

WhatsApp users occasionally receive messages from unauthorised third parties or fraudsters pretending to offer prizes – encouraging recipients to click a link to win. A common scam involves a warning that someone's WhatsApp subscription has run out: aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details. Other scams include instructions to forward a message to earn a gift or reward.

### Enabling Fake News

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India, some outbreaks of mob violence were reported to have been sparked by false allegations shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Connections with Strangers

To start a WhatsApp chat, you need the mobile number of the person you want to message (they also need to have the app). WhatsApp can also access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts use WhatsApp. If your child has given their mobile number to somebody they don't know, that person could then use it to get in touch via WhatsApp.

### Disappearing Messages

By enabling 'Disappearing Messages', users can set messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Users are also able to send photos and videos that disappear after the recipient has viewed them. This media can't be saved or forwarded, making monitoring what children are talking about problematic. Equally, if your child is sent an inappropriate message, it makes it difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot, saving the media as a photo.

### 'Only Admins' and Cyberbullying

Group chats and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

### Live Location Sharing

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." Indeed, it is a useful method for a child to let loved ones know they are safe. But if your child is in a chat with people they don't know, it means they will be exposing their location to them, too.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### Report Potential Scams

Advise your child not to engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they will be given the option to report that number as spam. They can also report a contact or a group as spam by tapping on the contact or group name to open their profile and scrolling down to 'report spam'.

### Create a Safe Profile

Even though someone would need your child's phone number to add them as a contact, as an extra precaution it's worth altering your young one's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody.' Choosing one of the latter two ensures their profile is protected.

### Use Location Features Sparingly

If your child needs to use 'live location' to show you or their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives 'live location' options of 15 minutes, one hour or eight hours. However, your child can manually choose to stop sharing their position at any time.

### Fact-Check Messages

You can now fact-check messages that have been forwarded at least five times in WhatsApp, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was accurate or not. It's a good way to encourage young people to question things they see online.

### Explain about Blocking

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – they would also need to be deleted from the device's address book. The option to block someone is on their contact info screen.

### Leave a Group

If your child is part of a group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they no longer want to be part of, show them how to use the group's settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.

### Delete Accidental Messages

If your child has posted a message in the wrong chat or sent a message that they immediately regret, they can delete it. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone.' WhatsApp allows seven minutes to delete a message after it's sent – but it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.

### Meet Our Expert

Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



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Online  
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**#WakeUpWednesday**

SOURCE: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/260015/a-number-of-monthly-active-whatsapp-users/>, <https://statista.com/statistics/1020000/whatsapp-is-the-most-popular-global-messaging-app/>, <https://www.whatsapp.com/long-in>, <https://www.kidsnclicks.org/wh/whatsapp-privacy-policy>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/whatsapp-updates-what-happens-if-you-block-a-contact-11944202>



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# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about HORROR GAMES

Horror video games come in a such a variety that the genre can hard to define. The overlapping element is that these games are designed to scare or unsettle the player through gameplay, atmosphere, story, music, setting and 'jump scares'. The most common sub-genres are survival horror, action horror, psychological horror, jump-scare horror and reverse horror. These games originate from a range of developers, including smaller indie studios which release download-only titles (that is, they aren't physically sold in shops) and therefore aren't subject to age ratings.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### ADULT THEMES

Horror games are typically made with adults in mind, which means by definition that they often feature adult themes. Outlast, for instance, is a popular horror game series including material such as nudity and extreme sadistic violence. Other games, like Five Nights at Freddy's and its sequels, have a back-story that doesn't actually appear on screen but still hints at explicit adult themes.

### Violent Content

Not all horror games contain graphic violence (titles like Five Nights at Freddy's and Phasmophobia prefer a spookier, suspenseful aesthetic) but many do portray extreme brutality very realistically. Until Dawn and the hugely popular Resident Evil and Outlast franchises, for instance, feature incredibly graphic violence. The safest course of action is to thoroughly research a game in advance.

### Online Interaction

Some horror games are played cooperatively with others online. Phasmophobia is one of the most popular titles in this category, and while it doesn't feature an excessive amount of gore, it does place a strong emphasis on online interaction – often with strangers. Dead by Daylight is another game in which frequent and prolonged online communication with other players is an advantage.

### Psychological Horror

Rather than simply loading on the blood and gore, psychological horror games try to scare the player through subtle mental and emotional means. For this reason, this type of game (notable examples include Alien: Isolation, The Medium and the Amnesia series) can have a longer-lasting effect on players: some occasionally 'break the fourth wall' – interacting directly with the player as if they were real.

### Long-Term Fear Factor

Horror games are designed to be scary; most players accept this fact in advance. They can, however, include content which leaves an unwanted lasting impression. By focusing on our fears and concerns to elicit an emotional reaction, horror games can be triggering in unexpected ways for some players. It's difficult to predict when – and how – a game might have long-term effects on an individual's mental wellbeing.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### Beware of Jump Scares

Jump scares in video games are often no worse than they are in movies. If a young person doesn't cope well with being suddenly startled by something in a film or on TV, they probably won't be able to handle horror games featuring jump scares. Some games (such as Five Nights at Freddy's) are built entirely around this technique and aren't suitable for younger children or those who are easily frightened.

### Research the Game

It's best to look into a horror game thoroughly if your child expresses an interest in playing it. Many indie horror titles are download only and therefore aren't required to come with an age rating – so you'll need to do some background reading and judge the game's content for yourself. Check out the game's web pages, read any wikis about it (including fan ones) and watch videos of the gameplay.

### Encourage Breaks

It's easy to lose track of time when gaming, and horror games are no exception. A short break every hour or so is important to rest the eyes and relieve the posture – especially if dramatic situations in the game have both up tension and stress. For horror gamers, breaks also give the added benefit of feeling more relaxed afterwards, which can mean a scarier gaming session when they resume.

### If in Doubt, Swap it Out

If your child finds a horror game to play, but after doing some research you decide it doesn't look like the right one for them, swap it out! There are a lot of horror titles to choose from, and some will be more appropriate than others. Work together with your child to find a suitable game for them. Remember, horror games don't have to be gore-spattered and graphic to be enjoyably scary!

### Stay Receptive

Maintaining good communication with your child is vital for safe gaming. If they see something in a horror game that disturbs them in ways they didn't expect, then they should feel comfortable opening up to you about it. Try not to simply laugh it off or make light of it, and always make time to listen. It's a useful reminder that they can talk to you about any type of problem they have in the future.

## Meet Our Expert

Clare Dodson (aka, Unwell!) 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 Unwell! Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



National  
Online  
Safety

#WakeUpWednesday



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to popular songs or soundbites (often for comic purposes), enhanced with filters, effects and text. Designed with young people in mind, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity in 2019 and has featured near the top of download charts ever since. It now has around a billion users worldwide.

## AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Most videos appearing on a child's feed are light-hearted and amusing. However, some clips have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, themes of suicide and self-harm, or young teens acting in a sexually suggestive way. The sheer volume of uploads is impossible to moderate entirely – and since TikTok Jump's introduction in mid-2021, users can view third-party content outside the app.

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CENSORED

## EXPLICIT SONGS

TikTok primarily revolves around videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to music. Inevitably, some featured songs will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the app's young user-base, there is a risk that children may view older users' videos and then be inclined to imitate any explicit language or suggestive actions.

W&H\*

## TIKTOK FAME

The app has created its own celebrities: Charli D'Amelio and Lil Nas X, for example, were catapulted to fame by exposure on TikTok – leading to many more teens attempting to go viral and become 'TikTok famous'. While most aspiring stars hoping to be 'the next big thing' will find it difficult, setbacks may in turn prompt them to go to even more drastic lengths to get noticed.



## HAZARDOUS VISIBILITY

Connecting with others is simple on TikTok – including commenting on and reacting to users' videos, following their profile and downloading their content. The majority of these interactions are harmless, but – because of its abundance of teen users – TikTok has experienced problems with predators contacting young people.

## ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social media, TikTok is designed to be addictive. It can be hugely entertaining – but that also makes it hard to put down. As well as the punchy nature of the short video format, the app's ability to keep users intrigued about what's coming next mean it's easy for a 5-minute visit to turn into a 45-minute stay.

## IN-APP SPENDING

There's an in-app option to purchase 'TikTok coins', which are then converted into digital rewards for sending to content creators that a user likes. Prices range from 99p to an eye-watering £99 bundle. TikTok is also connected with Shopify, which allows users to buy products through the app.



## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE CONTENT

Assuming your child is above TikTok's age limit, talk to them about what they've viewed on the app. Ask their opinion on what's appropriate and what isn't. Explain why they shouldn't give out personal details or upload videos which reveal information like their school or home address. In the long run, teaching them to think critically about what they see on TikTok could help them to become social-media savvy.

### MAINTAIN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The default setting for all under 16s' accounts to 'private'. Keeping it that way is the safest solution: it means only users who your child approves can watch their videos. The 'Stitch' (which lets users splice clips from other people's videos into their own) and 'Duet' (where you build on another user's content by recording your own video alongside their original) features are now only available to over 16s. This might clash with your child's ambitions of social media stardom, but it will fortify their account against predators.

### LEARN ABOUT REPORTING AND BLOCKING

With the correct privacy settings applied, TikTok is a relatively safe space. However, in case something does slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report inappropriate content and get them to come to you about anything upsetting that they've seen. TikTok allows users to report anyone breaching its guidelines, while you can also block individual users through their profile.

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

'Family Pairing' lets parents and carers link their own TikTok account to their child's. Through your mobile, you can control your child's safety settings remotely – including limiting screen time, managing their ability to exchange messages (and with whom) and blocking a lot of age-inappropriate content. TikTok's Safety Centre also provides resources for parents and carers to support online safety among families. These resources can be found on their website.

### USE RESTRICTED MODE

In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' section, you can filter out inappropriate content (specific content creators or hashtags, for instance) using 'Restricted Mode'. This can then be locked with a PIN. You should note, though, that the algorithm moderating content isn't totally dependable – so it's wise to stay aware of what your child is watching.

### MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child to manage their time on it in the 'Digital Wellbeing' section. Under 'Screen Time Management', you can limit the daily permitted time on the app (in increments ranging from 40 minutes to two hours). This preference can also be locked behind a PIN. That way, your child can get their regular dose of TikTok without wasting the whole day.



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# NETFLIX

Netflix is a subscription-based streaming service that allows users to watch TV shows and movies on any internet-enabled device that supports the software, such as smart TVs, phones and tablets. The pandemic saw a surge in children consuming on-demand content as many families relaxed their screen-time rules. Netflix's diverse range of programming caters for all age groups – so it's important for parents to recognise the potential risks of children using the service and the measures to help their child enjoy a safe streaming experience.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Netflix produces and curates an extensive catalogue of content that can provide hours of entertainment. If they share the same user account as an adult, this can potentially lead to children accidentally viewing all manner of inappropriate content, including nudity, profanity and extreme violence. This can happen easily on shared accounts, as Netflix cannot establish who's watching.

## BINGE-WATCHING

Netflix allows users to view shows and movies quickly and easily without adverts or interruptions, making excessive screen time a concern. Binge-watching has become more common during the pandemic, due to Netflix's regularly updated content and algorithms which recommend content very similar to what's previously been enjoyed. Marathon viewing sessions can lead to children staying up too late, affecting their mood and concentration the next day.

## SCREEN ADDICTION

From TVs and phones to consoles and tablets, Netflix is available on almost any device with an internet connection – making it extremely difficult to manage children's screen time. The service is now adding games to its mobile app, tempting users to spend even more time on the platform. Screen addiction can distract children from important activities like schoolwork and socialising, and can impact their health by reducing their exercise and sleep.

## HACKING ATTEMPTS

With millions of users worldwide, Netflix is often targeted by hackers who try to steal usernames and passwords to gain access to people's accounts. If successful, they can then steal payment details or try to sell stolen personal data on the dark web, providing other criminals with a profitable opportunity. Netflix also doesn't provide two-factor authentication, making the hackers' task that little bit easier.

## CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

Netflix's Teleparty feature became popular during lockdown periods as it allows users from different households (friends and relatives, for example) to synchronise when they watch content. It requires an access link to be sent to the people you wish to invite: the link, however, can also be distributed to people you don't know. A text chat feature enables interaction with the other users in real-time: this represents a risk to children if a stranger gains access to the Teleparty.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### KEEP ACCOUNTS SECURE

Netflix doesn't use two-factor authentication, so a strong password is vital. Your child's Netflix password should be unique (not one they've used elsewhere) and a minimum of eight characters with a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Emphasise not to share their login details with anyone and remind them to always log out after using the app – so their account remains inaccessible, even if their device is lost or stolen.

### SET UP PROFILE PINS

Netflix account holders can lock profiles using a four-digit PIN. Doing this can prevent your child from accessing the wrong account and viewing content that isn't appropriate for their age. Try setting a PIN for each account on your Netflix app – ideally avoiding numbers that would be easily guessed, such as dates of birth. Remember not to share these PINs with anyone, including family.

### CHECK MATURITY RATING

Netflix warns about content that includes violence, sex, profanity and nudity. These warnings form part of the show or movie's 'maturity rating'. Users can restrict age ratings to avoid children viewing age-inappropriate content. On their profile, open the Profile and Parental Control settings and choose the maturity level for the shows and movies you want to allow.



### SWITCH OFF AUTO-PLAY

When a show or movie concludes, Netflix's algorithms select content with similar themes that it thinks your child will enjoy next. This new content starts automatically after a 10-second countdown. Disabling this auto-play feature reduces the possibility of your child being shown something inappropriate and provides a natural break to help prevent them becoming too immersed in Netflix.

### CREATE A KIDS' PROFILE

Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile means your child can only access content which is suitable for children aged up to 12 years. All other content is automatically blocked. This rating can be further restricted via the child's profile settings. Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile will help to prevent your child from viewing age-inappropriate content.



### CHECK VIEWING HABITS

Netflix has tools which enable parents and carers to monitor what their child has been watching. Selecting 'Viewing Activity' in each profile's account settings displays a list of what content has been viewed (and when). This can reassure parents that their child is watching age-appropriate content and can open avenues for discussing your child's favourite shows and movies, and why they like them.





# SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing app which also allows users to chat with friends via text or audio. Users can share images and videos with specific friends, or through a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) visible to their entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose during the pandemic, with many young people utilising it to connect with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivaling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.

## CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects on the app with people they know, they may still receive friend requests from strangers. Snapchat's links with apps such as Wink and Hoop have increased this possibility. Accepting a request means that children are then disclosing personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features. This could allow predators to gain their trust for sinister purposes.

## EXCESSIVE USE

There are many features that are attractive to users and keep them excited about the app. Snap streaks encourage users to send snaps daily. Spotlight Challenges give users the chance to obtain money and online fame, and the Spotlight feature's scroll of videos makes it easy for children to spend hours watching content.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat are not suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's Discover function lets users swipe through snippets of news stories and trending articles that often include adult content. There is currently no way to turn off this feature.

## SEXTING

Sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse. While these pictures do disappear – and the sender is notified if it has been screenshot first – users have found alternative methods to save images, such as taking pictures with a separate device.

## DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE

Snapchat's filters and lenses are a popular way for users to enhance their 'selfie game'. Although many are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' filters on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Comparing themselves unfavourably against other Snapchat users could threaten a child's confidence or sense of self-worth.

## VISIBLE LOCATION

My Places lets users check in and search for popular spots nearby – such as restaurants, parks or shopping centres – and recommend them to their friends. The potential issue with a young person consistently checking into locations on Snapchat is that it allows other users in their friends list (even people they have only ever met online) to see where they currently are and where they regularly go.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add function helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this feature could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).

### CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

Talk to your child about what is and isn't wise to share on Snapchat (e.g. don't post explicit images or videos, or display identifiable details like their school uniform). Remind them that once something is online, the creator loses control over where it might end up – and who with. Additionally, Snapchat's 'Spotlight' feature has a #challenge like TikTok's: it's vital that your child understands the potentially harmful consequences of taking part in these challenges.

### CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

Snapchat has recently announced that it is rolling out a new safety feature: users will receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

### KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Your child can send Snaps directly to friends, but Stories are visible to everyone they have added, unless they change the settings. If they use SnapMaps, their location is visible unless 'Ghost Mode' is enabled (again via settings). It's prudent to emphasise the importance of not adding people they don't know in real life. This is particularly important with the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchatters to see the places your child regularly visits and checks in: strangers, bullies and groomers could use this information to engage in conversation and arrange to meet in person.

### TALK ABOUT SEXTING

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it is important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sending, receiving or sharing explicit images, as well as the possible emotional impact. Emphasise that your child should never feel pressured into sexting – and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.

### BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and choose report or block. There are options to state why they are reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



# What Parents Need to Know about SQUID GAME

AGE RESTRICTION  
**15+**  
Suitable only for 15 years and over.

With themes of horror and violence, it's important for parents and carers to understand the potential risks posed to young audiences by the nine-episode Netflix-exclusive TV show, *Squid Game*. The series, rated 15+, is about a world where contestants who are deeply in debt play children's games in order to win cash prizes. The losers, however, are violently killed. The show's popularity has meant it has spread in various guises across online platforms, with a heightened risk of children and young people potentially viewing unsuitable content. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers understand exactly what *Squid Game* is all about.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some might argue that *Squid Game* contains content that might not even be suitable for older teens, let alone young children. Characters are brutally tortured and killed through stabbings or getting shot as a result of rules developed and enforced by a masked game master. The show also features sexual content and threats of sexual violence, as well as a strong theme of gambling that runs throughout the whole show.

## APPEAL TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Whilst the content is very much adult-themed, some features of the show seem to appeal to young children at face-value. The name "*Squid Game*" may be interpreted as a programme aimed at children rather than adults. The content itself, such as the bright and childish aesthetics, may also appeal to young children, particularly as there's a focus on playground games to go with it.

## SIMILAR CONTENT SUGGESTIONS

When using social media and streaming sites, content is recommended based on what the user has consumed i.e. what they have watched or searched for. Therefore, there is a greater chance of your child being exposed to similar violent or horror-themed content on social media after watching a show like *Squid Game*.

## VIRAL SPIN-OFFS

As well as Netflix, *Squid Game* has grown in notoriety and prevalence on other platforms, like TikTok and YouTube, with clips of the show going viral. On YouTube Kids, a number of successful channels have taken advantage of the *Squid Game* trend, creating content such as "How to Draw *Squid Game* Characters" videos. Its popularity has also led to the creation of app games that put the player in the role of a contestant who is killed if they lose a game.

## SCENE RE-ENACTMENTS

*Squid Game*'s pervasive presence on social media has encouraged many content creators to re-enact scenes from the show, which has led to reports of children wanting to also imitate those scenes displayed on social media at home and in school. Much of this content stems from the "Red Light, Green Light" game from the first episode, where contestants attempt to make it past a giant animatronic girl before she shoots them.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Netflix has easily accessible built-in parental controls that allow you to set up a profile for your child with a specific age rating, block them from watching certain shows and even lock their account so it can't be accessed by anyone else. Netflix also allows you to access your child's viewing history to make sure they're not watching anything inappropriate for their age.

### CHECK AGE RATINGS

Age ratings on TV shows and films are a way to gauge what is suitable for audiences of different ages. If you are unsure about the content your child is watching, check the age rating to see if the TV show or film is deemed suitable for their age group. If not, try watching the show yourself or talking to other parents who have seen it before to get a better understanding of why it's been rated a certain way.

### MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

*Squid Game* has become a social media craze and it's possible your child will see some content related to the show on various platforms. Therefore, it's important to be aware of which websites your child has visited on their smartphone, tablet or laptop, and to also keep an eye out for which accounts they are following on social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok.

### HAVE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Making sure your child is comfortable telling you about what they see online can go a long way to ensuring you are kept in the loop about their online use. Showing an interest in what your child is doing online gives you the opportunity to discuss what is and is not appropriate for their age group, and how they might recognise their own feelings towards content they see.

### MONITOR BEHAVIOUR

Due to the viral nature of the show, even if your child has not seen *Squid Game*, it's important to keep an eye on their behaviour. There have been reports from schools of children "playing *Squid Game*" in the playground and acting aggressively towards the losers as a way to replicate the consequences of losing in the TV show. Viewing content that makes your child feel uncomfortable could also cause them to feel distressed or distracted, so it's important you can easily spot the signs.

### WATCH THE SHOW

If you're trying to figure out whether you should let your child watch *Squid Game*, it might be a good idea to watch the show yourself first. Doing so will allow you to get a better understanding of the show's content and themes, as well as help you decide if this is something you'd feel comfortable with your child being exposed to.





# What parents need to know about INSTAGRAM

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**  
Accounts over the age of 13 can create an account

Instagram is a hugely popular social networking app with over 1 billion users worldwide. The app, which is accessible on iOS and Android devices, allows users to upload images and videos to their feed, create interactive stories, exchange private messages or search, explore and follow other accounts they like. Images and videos can be transformed with an array of filters to edit the shot before sharing and anyone with an account can see others' online 'galleries' if their account is not private. To make posts easier to find, users can include searchable hashtags and captions to their uploads. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers understand exactly what Instagram is about.

## HOOKED ON SCROLLING

Many social media platforms, Instagram included, have been designed in a way to keep us engaged on them for as long as possible. Behavioural economists, for example, call this the 'Hook Model' and the Instagram feed is a great example of this. Children and adults may find themselves scrolling to try and get a dopamine release. Scrolling may become addictive and it can be difficult to stop until children find that 'something' they are looking for, quickly losing track of time as they get deeper into their Instagram feed.

## SLIDING INTO DMS

Direct messages (or DMs) on Instagram allow users to share posts, images, videos, voice messages and calls between each other privately (or in a private group). Even if your child's account is set to private, anybody has the option to message them and send them content. If the person is not on your child's friends list, the message will still be sent to their inbox but the user has to accept their request to see the message.

## INFLUENCER CULTURE

Influencers are sometimes paid thousands of pounds to promote a product, service, app and much more on social media. When celebrities or influencers post such an advert, they should add a disclaimer somewhere in the post which states that they have been paid for it. Commonly, this is well-hidden in the hashtags or in the comments of their post, making it unclear that their photos/videos are actually an advert. This can be very misleading to young people who may be influenced into buying/using something promoted by somebody they admire, creating a false sense of reality and potentially affecting their mental health and wellbeing.

## IMPACT ON WELLBEING

In a report by the RSPH, Instagram was ranked the worst for young people's mental health. Using filters on photos on Instagram can set unrealistic expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Children may strive for more 'likes' by using realistically edited photos. Judging themselves against other users on the app might threaten their confidence or self-worth. In early 2019, Instagram banned images of self-harm and suicide, following the suicide of 14-year-old Molly Russell, who had reportedly been looking at such material on the platform. They also extended the ban to include drawings, cartoons and memes.

## LIVE STREAMING TO STRANGERS

Live streaming on Instagram allows users to connect with friends and followers in real-time and comment on videos during broadcast. If your child's account is private, only their approved followers can see their story. It's important to note they may have accepted a friend request from someone they don't know, which means they could be live streaming to strangers. Children also risk sharing content they later regret, which could be re-shared online for years to come. Public accounts allow anybody to view, so we suggest your child blocks followers they don't know. In early 2019, data gathered by the NSPCC found that sex offenders were grooming children on Instagram more than on any other online platform.

## IN-APP PAYMENTS

Instagram allows payments for products directly through the app. It operates under the same rules as Facebook Payments, which state that if you are under the age of 18, you can only use this feature with the involvement of a parent or guardian.

## EXPOSING LOCATION

Public locations can be added to a user's photos/videos and also to their stories. While this may seem like a good idea at the time, it can expose the location of your child. This is particularly more of a risk if it is on their story, as it is real time. A photo which includes landmarks in the area, their school uniform, street name, house and even tagging in the location of the photo uploaded to Instagram can expose the child's location, making it easy to locate them. If their account is public, anyone can access their account and see their location.

## HJACKED HASHTAGS

Hashtags are an integral part of how Instagram works, but they can come with risks. One person may use a seemingly innocent hashtag with one particular thing in mind, and before you know it hundreds of people could be using the same hashtag for something inappropriate or dangerous that your child shouldn't be exposed to.

## IGTV

Instagram TV (IGTV) works similar to YouTube. Users can watch videos from favourite accounts on the platform or create their own channel and post their own videos. It's important to note anyone can create an Instagram TV channel and doesn't have to be friends with a person to follow an account and watch their videos. In 2018, Instagram apologised and removed some of its TV content which featured sexually suggestive imagery of children. As the feature may encourage spending more time using the app, it's important to set time limits to avoid children's sleep or education being disturbed.

@MENTION

## Top Tips for Parents & Carers

### RESTRICT DIRECT MESSAGES

If your child receives a message from somebody they do not know, encourage them not to accept their message request and 'block' this person; this is the only way to stop them messaging your child again. Children can also tap and hold the individual message request directly to Instagram as well as reporting the account itself.

### LOOK OUT FOR #ADS

In 2019, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority launched an investigation into celebrities who were posting adverts on social media and not declaring that they were paid for. Influencers must clearly state that they have been paid for their posts, for example using a hashtag like #ad or #sponsored. Teach your child to look out for the signs of a paid post/advertisement and discuss with them that not everything they see from celebrities is their personal choice and opinion.

### MANAGE NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS

If your child is receiving unwanted or negative comments, they can block that account so that they can't interact with them. This stops them seeing and commenting on their posts, stories and live broadcasts. In addition, your child can instantly delete unwanted comments from their posts, turn them off completely and control who can tag and mention them in comments, captions or stories, from everyone, only people they follow, or no one at all.

### MANAGE DIGITAL WELLBEING

Instagram now has an in-built activity dashboard that allows users to monitor and control how much time they spend on the app. Users can add a 'daily reminder' to set a limit on how much time they want to spend on Instagram, prompting them to consider if it's been too long. In addition, once users have caught up with all the previous posts since they last logged on, they'll receive a 'You've completely caught up' message. Both features can help you have a conversation with your child about how much time they are spending on the app and to set healthy time limits.

### PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your child may unknowingly give away personal information on their profile or in their live streams. Talk to them about what their personal information is and make sure that they do not disclose anything, including their location, to anyone during a livestream, comment, direct message or any other tool for communication on the platform, even to their friends.

### USE A PRIVATE ACCOUNT

By default, any image or video your child uploads to Instagram is visible to anyone. A private account means that you have to approve a request if somebody wants to follow you and only people you approve will see your posts and videos. Children should also use a secure password and enable a two-factor authentication to add an extra layer of security to their account.

### FILTER INAPPROPRIATE COMMENTS

Instagram has an 'anti-bullying' filter, which hides comments relating to a person's appearance or character, as well as threats to a person's wellbeing or health. The filter will also alert Instagram to repeated problems so that they can take action against the user if necessary. This is an automatic filter, which should always be enabled. Children can also report abusive behaviour or inappropriate/offensive material directly to Instagram from the app. This includes posts, comments and accounts.

### TURN OFF SHARING

Even though this feature will not stop people from taking screenshots, it will stop others being able to directly share photos and videos from a story as a message to another user. This feature can be turned off in the settings. We also recommend turning off the feature which automatically shares photos and videos from a story to a Facebook account.

### REMOVE PAYMENT METHODS

If you are happy for your child to have a card associated with their Instagram account, we suggest adding a PIN which needs to be entered before making a payment; this will also help prevent unauthorised purchases. This can be added in the payment settings tab.

**DON'T FORGET TO BE VIGILANT & TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR ONLINE ACTIVITIES!**

## Meet our expert

Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience of working in the social media space and is the founder of Kids N Clicks, a web resource helping parents and children thrive in a digital world.



## \*NEW FOR 2020\* INSTAGRAM REELS

Instagram Reels is the latest update from Instagram that gives users the ability to record and edit 15-second multi-clip videos with audio, effects, and new creative tools. It is the closest answer to TikTok and can be accessed via the Reels feature. Reels can be shared with friends and family, however, if your child has a public account, it could be shared wider via 'Explore' and viewed by millions of strangers online.



National Online Safety  
#WakeUpWednesday





With over 14 million daily users, Discord is one of the most popular communication tools for gamers. It allows you to create or join what are known as 'servers', where different users can talk in groups via text message or voice call. There is also the option to send direct messages and make video calls.

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**



## What parents need to know about **DISCORD**



### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Your child can access almost any chat server on Discord. This means they can easily be exposed to content and conversations that are inappropriate, upsetting or potentially harmful.



### SEXUAL IMAGERY

Despite there being guidelines in place to prevent it, users are able to circulate adult content. This can include sexualised images, pornographic videos and provocative discussions. It's important to stay alert and know the risks that your child could be exposed to.



### RISK OF CYBERBULLYING

Interactions on the platform are largely unregulated. This means other users can easily say and show things to your child that might be offensive and upsetting. The competitive nature of gaming can lead users to make abusive and harmful remarks about your child.



### HIDDEN CHARGES

Though the basic platform is free, your child will be encouraged to sign up to premium subscriptions, which give extra perks, such as animated emojis and free games. The two options are known as 'Nitro Classic' (which costs \$4.99 a month) and Nitro (which costs \$9.99 a month). Prices are only converted to pound sterling during the payment process.



### RISK OF CYBERCRIME

Cybercriminal groups have been linked to the platform due to reports of hackers sharing stolen data. It's also possible that your child may be encouraged to share the data of their friends, either through peer pressure, or 'for fun', without realising the consequences.



### STRANGER DANGER

To create an account, you only need to display a username and profile image. This makes it easy for someone to hide his or her real identity. Predators from anywhere in the world can join a chat server, message your child and quickly leave to avoid detection. Forbes reports groomers have been targeting children susceptible to online coercion on the platform.



**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

## Top Tips to Protect Your Child



### 1 BEWARE OF WHAT'S SHARED

Whatever your child says or shares on the platform can be seen, heard and shared with a much larger audience. Be careful to make sure your child understands this and does not say or share anything that could be deemed offensive, harmful or put themselves or others at risk.

You can find Discord's own guide for parents here: <https://blog.discordapp.com/parents-guide-to-discord-c77d91793e9c>



### 2 IMPROVE SECURITY SETTINGS

To help protect your child, make sure they set strong passwords. You should consider using the 'two-factor authentication' function for extra protection. It's also important to remind your child to never to share their personal information, or the details of another user.



### 3 CHECK THEIR FRIEND LIST

You can restrict who is able to make 'friend requests' to your child in the 'Friends' tab. It's a good idea to deselect the default option that allows anyone to connect. Of course, you should also talk to your child about why it's a risk to allow strangers to connect with them through such platforms.



### 4 REPORT & BLOCK SUSPICIOUS USERS

Make sure your child knows how to report and block abusive or suspicious users. If you do find your child suffering repeated abuse, contact the platform directly using the email: [abuse@discordapp.com](mailto:abuse@discordapp.com). It's a good idea to teach your child how to screenshot any negative interactions too.



### 5 BEWARE OF NSFW CONTENT

Public forums on the platform are a potential venue for inappropriate content that you should be wary of. There is a Discord mascot known as 'Wumpus', which is supposed to represent anyone under 18. Anyone who posts content unsuitable for under-18s, should mark it NSFW (Not Suitable For Wumpus).



### 6 SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS

It's important you actively teach your child to treat other users with respect and behave online the same way as they would offline.

Take the time to read through Discord's Community Guidelines with your child. Find them at: [www.discordapp.com/guidelines](http://www.discordapp.com/guidelines)





Everything You Need to Know about...

# 'Finstas'

While we are seeing social media platforms introduce features that focus on curating content for your 'close friend' groups, another trend is seeing a resurgence in popularity with children and young people in the UK.

A 'finsta' (a slang term that combines 'fake' and 'Insta', a popular shortened title for 'Instagram') may be the new choice of account for younger generations.

## What is a Finsta?

Surely a finsta is a fake Instagram account? Not exactly. A finsta is not the same thing as a fake account (which often engages in scam-like behaviour). Instead, a 'finsta' refers to a secondary account where a user's identity and profile are typically hidden, with access only available to a chosen group of friends or followers.

It can be on any platform, including TikTok and Facebook, but Instagram seems to be the most popular choice. These accounts often use pseudonyms to avoid using real names.

### Why would a young person create a finsta?

#### Authenticity

allows them to be 'real' with their close friends.

#### Connection

with the social media content they want to see.

#### Anonymity

means not worrying about their public image.

#### Freedom

to post without anxiety over reception or 'like count'.

#### Privacy

to explore 'niche' interests separately from 'real' account.

My-Finsta-Account



32 likes

According to the 2020/21 #Qofcom report, two-thirds of 8-11-year-olds in the UK had multiple accounts or profiles, with almost half of them running an account just for their family to see.

### Top Tips for Parents and Carers

Remind the young person in your care that nothing they post online is truly private and to think before posting. There are multiple ways their posts could be misconstrued or misused by others.

Go through the process of protecting the images they post. Discussing things like copyright and reporting will help empower the young person in your care to make smart choices and to know there is help available if they need it.

Reinforce the importance of protecting personal information. Remind your young person not to share any personal details with anyone they do not know in real life, even if they feel comfortable.

Have an open, non-judgemental conversation about finstas (and other secondary accounts). If they have one, ask about the type of content they are posting and what they feel is the benefit of having different accounts.

Support their decision to have private accounts, but ask if you can check in with them around the material they are posting and the people they are interacting with. Remember - boundaries are important to create an environment of trust and comfort.

## Risks

### My-Finsta-Account What are the Risks?

**Unexpected behaviour** - Anonymity might encourage young people to engage in unlikely behaviour, such as posting sexually explicit content, pursuing dangerous political ideals, or bullying.

**Missed help** - Worrisome posts hidden from public view may not be addressed by the appropriate help, especially if it involves self-harm or other destructive behaviours.

**Unwanted exposure** - Others with access to the account may take screenshots of posts and send them to others, or reveal the identity of the account owner.

**Harmful opinions** - Extremist behaviour or insensitive language in 'opinion pieces' may expose young people to others with harmful intentions and could implicate them in illegal activity.

**Social interaction** - A young person may be approached by other users with malicious intentions. This could leave them vulnerable to sexual manipulation, grooming, bullying, and exploitation.

Online Safety Shareable by

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## What You Need to Know about...

# BeReal.

Age Rating  
13+

The way children and young people use social media is changing. They want to engage with posts from their friends instead of 'suggested posts' or adverts for content they don't care about. As social media begins to turn away from filters and 'Instagrammable moments', one app in particular has seen a recent surge in popularity with children and young people

## What is BeReal?

BeReal is a free social media app that asks users to take a quick snapshot of an 'authentic moment' during their day to share with their followers.

There are no filters or opportunities to stage the 'perfect photo' – what you see is what you get. It is formatted to make the user show their 'real self'.

This app was developed in France in 2020, but has seen a recent jump in popularity with **3.5 million downloads** since January 2022 and a **315% increase** in monthly active users.

'Realmojis' are selfie versions of emojis a.k.a. YOU get to be the emoji!

## How does it work?

-  **BeReal only lets users post once a day.** It notifies users of a two-minute 'posting window' via push notification. If they miss the window, they are marked as late.
-  **No profiles, no followers, no likes, no messaging.** Users and their 'friends' can only post comments, emojis, and 'realmojis' on the unfiltered posts that day before it is archived.
-  **Focuses on the 'real' you.** Users cannot use filters or other photo editing tools and must take a live photo using the app.
-  **A 'discovery' page is used instead of a search page.** This is a feed that lets users see others BeReal posts from all around the world.

## Areas of Concern

-  **Notification dependent** so a young person could become easily distracted during inappropriate times of the day (e.g. while in school or during family dinner).
-  **Persuasive design** uses negative reinforcement if the app isn't used (limited viewing, labelling late posts) so it persuades users to prioritise it in their day.
-  **Perception anxiety** means a young person may begin to experience anxiety over what their friends will think of them on the app.
-  **Time constraints** like school, jobs, driving, and events mean a young person may not be able to access their phone in order to post.
-  **Possible oversharing** could happen in an attempt to be as 'real' as possible and not seem 'fake'.

## Risks

-  **Sense of urgency** could mean a young person posts something they wouldn't normally post.
-  **Personal information** could be compromised in the 'candid' photos (like location, school, or extracurriculars).
-  **Harmful interactions** like bullying, exploitation, manipulation, peer abuse, and/or inappropriate behaviour could happen in the comments or with 'realmojis'.
-  **Safety settings** are lacking – there are no privacy features, no parental controls, and no blocking abilities on this platform. Just reporting!
-  **The discovery page** encourages interaction between complete strangers and could lead to communication on other apps with messaging functions (like Instagram or WhatsApp).

## Top Tips for Parents and Carers

- ☒ **Discuss responsible sharing** – nothing too personal should go online.
- ☒ **Walkthrough image ownership together** – their image has worth!
- ☒ **Be an identity reminder** – an app does not define the type of person they are.
- ☒ **Talk about authenticity** – the difference between 'real' and 'too much information'.
- ☒ **Identify their Trusted Adults** – ask who they can trust if they are worried!
- ☒ **Protect their personal information** – how can they stay safe online?

### FOMO WARNING

Any attempt to delete or skip a post results in the user not being able to see other posts

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