



Christchurch Infant School

Addiscombe Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2AE

Telephone: (01202) 485851

E-mail: office@christchurchinf.dorset.sch.uk



Headteacher: Mr D Baxter
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Simpson

Friday 4th February 2022

Online Safety Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

The Internet

The Internet is now an integral part of children's lives, enabling them to undertake research for school projects, talk to their friends and access information from around the world. Increasing provision of the Internet in and out of schools brings with it the need to ensure that children are safe.



Internet development is constantly evolving into ever more innovative areas with many websites enabling amazing creativity and interaction between peers. Unfortunately, though, there are times when Internet use can have a negative effect on children. Schools and parents need to be aware of the potential dangers and take measures to ensure safe usage by all.

Siren Head

Siren Head is a frightening fictional character, first created in 2018 by Trevor Henderson. Siren Head is a 40-foot tall, humanoid monster, covered in mummified flesh, and with an air raid siren for a head. It communicates by emitting air raid siren noises, or an amalgamation of old radio broadcasts. Here is a link to a video that gives you an idea of what Siren Head is.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrkB1HVpz5k>

As Siren Head has received more attention, it is trending online. More people are talking about it and spreading the word. This is also an opportunity for people to cash in on its popularity. There are several games on Roblox that are visible from searching 'Siren Head'. Some will be horror games; however, others aren't related. Examples include a music rhythm game that used pictures of Siren Head.

Siren Head has spilled into other medium. For instance people have made Siren Head in Minecraft. As well as the increase in games, streamers will be both playing these games, and talking about the subject. It will be easy for young people to come across, even if they aren't looking.

This has happened with other trends, such as Squid Game, and going even further back, IT and MOMO and will continue to do so. When children and young



people are talking about these things, they may not always have seen the real thing, but have come across some other content based around it.

Gaming

Games offer a wide range of experiences to suit all tastes and abilities. Some of these focus on entertainment, but others also include educational, cultural, social and skills benefits.

By finding the right games for your family, you can discover experiences that take you to new worlds, encourage fresh creativity and get the whole family playing together. From educational benefits, to collaboration and teamwork skills there are a wide range of benefits that video games offer families.

The links below provide more information about selecting suitable games for your children and protecting them against unsuitable games.

Childnet Gaming Resources - <http://www.childnet.com/blog/gaming-resources-for-parents-and-careers>

Ask About Games - <http://www.askaboutgames.com/>

All of the modern games consoles and other gaming devices can now access the internet but also provide some controls so that parents can have some control over what can be accessed. The links below will provide information on how to use these controls.

X-BOX - <http://support.xbox.com/en-gb/pages/xbox-live/how-to/parental-control.aspx>

PlayStation 3

- <http://manuals.playstation.net/document/en/ps3/current/basicoperations/parentallock.html>

PlayStation 4 - <https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/get-help/help-library/my-account/parental-controls/parental-controls-on-playstation-4/>

Safer Internet Gaming Devices - <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-to-technology/gaming-devices>

In Game Chat

While playing games online is often great fun, it's important you understand why your children will chat online, what risks there are and what measures you can take to protect them while they're playing their favourite games. This video explains more:



https://youtu.be/_5-ij1jm9K8

Roblox

If you're the parent or carer of a school-age child, you've probably heard of Roblox. Launched in 2006, it's now one of the world's most popular video games, with more than 100 million monthly users, mostly between the ages of nine and 15.



But while it offers a dizzying amount of interactive entertainment for its target audience, it has been in the news more than once due to fears over its safety.

The types of gameplay on Roblox are just as limitless as the imagination of the creators themselves. Please be very aware of the types of games your child may be accessing within Roblox along with the open messaging facility that the public can access.

Please take a look at this useful guide which supports parents:

<https://corp.roblox.com/parents/>

Do you have a Smart TV?

As well as watching TV, children can be used to browsing the Internet, downloading and using apps such as YouTube, accessing video on-demand services such as BBC iPlayer and use streaming services such as Netflix. Be aware that some streaming services allow content to be rented or purchased for a fee.



Research found that children were twice as likely to watch TV programmes on video-on-demand than live TV (Ofcom, 2021).

Like any piece of technology, Smart TVs have both benefits and risks. Many of the risks depend on how the TV is being used and the apps that are installed. For example, if it is being used for watching online videos, this could introduce a risk of inappropriate content.

There are some key concerns people have about children using Smart TVs in particular:

- Accessing inappropriate content
- Spending too much money
- Excessive screen time.

This guide helps parents understand more:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers/smart-tvs>

How do we teach online safety at School?

At school we take several steps to ensure that children are kept safe while using the Internet and electronic communication.

- We use targeted filtering to prevent access to websites that are not suitable or may be dangerous.
- Internet access is supervised and we monitor the websites that are accessed.



- We use a controlled email system where we monitor the children's emails and we limit the addresses that children can communicate with. These steps are taken to protect the children from unsuitable emails and identify possible cyber bullying.
- Children are also taught how to use the technology safely so that they can keep themselves safe. We teach the children about online safety as part of our computing curriculum and the Purple Mash resources support the learning.

What to do when you see online abuse or inappropriate content

It may be that you, or your child, come across something upsetting or concerning online. It is important that you feel confident about what to do if you do see something inappropriate online, or if your child tells you they've seen something.

If you're worried about something a child or young person may have experienced online, you can contact the NSPCC helpline for free support and advice. Call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or contact them online. If your child needs more support, they can contact Childline on 0800 1111.

Do have a look at KidTube and Kiddle as safer alternatives to YouTube and Google.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter about the importance of online safety. Please see our website for further information and useful guides for parents:

<https://www.christchurchinf.dorset.sch.uk/online-safety>

Kindest regards

Mr Baxter