



# Online Safety Newsletter March/April 2025

## Sherwood Junior School Online Safety Newsletter

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## Safer Internet Day



Safer Internet Day 2025 was a fantastic success in our school, thanks to the enthusiasm and responsible attitude of our children. Throughout the day, children engaged in meaningful discussions, interactive activities, and thought-provoking lessons about staying safe online, paying particular attention to online scams and phishing. Their willingness to learn, share ideas, and support one another in developing positive digital habits was truly inspiring. We are incredibly proud of how sensibly and maturely they approached this important topic. A huge thank you to all the children and staff for their participation, thoughtful contributions, and commitment to making the internet a safer place for everyone!

## Online Scams



### What Are Online Scams?

Online scams are deceptive schemes or frauds conducted over the internet to trick people into giving away their personal information, money, or access to sensitive accounts. Scammers often use social engineering tactics, fake websites, emails, or messages to appear trustworthy and manipulate their victims.

### Common Types of Online Scams:

1. **Phishing:** Fake emails or messages that impersonate legitimate organizations to steal personal or financial information.
2. **Tech Support Scams:** Fraudsters pretend to be tech support representatives and convince victims to pay for unnecessary services or give remote access to their devices.
3. **Online Shopping Scams:** Fake websites or sellers offer non-existent products or services to steal money or personal details.
4. **Romance Scams:** Scammers build fake online relationships to exploit emotional bonds and request money or gifts.
5. **Lottery/Prize Scams:** Victims are told they've won a prize or lottery and asked to pay a fee or share personal information to claim it.
6. **Investment Scams:** False promises of high returns on investments, often involving cryptocurrencies or fake stocks.
7. **Social Media Scams:** Fraudulent messages or posts on social platforms that aim to steal information or distribute malware.
8. **Impersonation Scams:** Scammers pose as someone you know, such as a friend, family member, or colleague, asking for money or sensitive details.

### How to Protect Yourself:

- **Be Skeptical:** Question unexpected messages or offers, especially those that sound too good to be true.
- **Verify Sources:** Double-check the sender's identity and use official websites or phone numbers to confirm.
- **Avoid Clicking on Suspicious Links:** Hover over links to check the URL and only click if it's from a trusted source.
- **Use Strong Passwords:** Use unique, complex passwords and enable two-factor authentication wherever possible.
- **Stay Updated:** Keep your software, antivirus, and operating system up to date to avoid vulnerabilities.
- **Report Scams:** Inform authorities or relevant organizations about suspicious activities.

ParentZone have put together a very simple but really useful webpage guide for parents - you can find the guide [HERE](#).

## Squid Games



### Online Safety Alert: Squid Game Season 2 & Related Content


Season 2 of *Squid Game* is now available on Netflix and has been rated **15** by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). To understand why it received this rating, visit the BBFC website: [BBFC Squid Game Rating](#).


Due to its popularity, *Squid Game* content is widely shared across platforms like **YouTube, TikTok, and Roblox**, meaning your child may encounter clips, memes, or even fan-made games without watching the show itself.


### How Can You Help Keep Your Child Safe?




 **Bullying & Inappropriate Chats** – Hurtful messages or unsafe conversations.


 **Stranger Contact** – Unwanted messages from people they don't know.


 **Sharing Personal Information** – Including private details and images.

 **Sextortion** – A form of extortion where someone threatens to share private or explicit images.

#### How to Reduce the Risks:

 **Use Age-Appropriate Apps & Games** – Check ratings and set up parental controls.

 **Have Open Conversations** – Talk about online risks so your child understands what to watch out for.

 **Monitor Device Usage** – Depending on their age, consider keeping devices in shared family spaces.

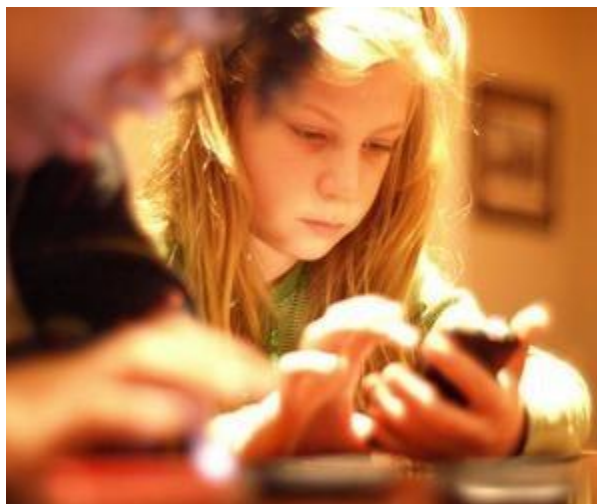
#### Further Resources:

 [CEOP: Online Contact & Staying Safe](#)

 [BrightCanary: What to Do If Your Child Sends Inappropriate Texts](#)

By staying informed and having open discussions, we can help our children **navigate the online world safely and responsibly.**

## Should children have mobile phones?



**Should Children Have Mobile Phones?**

The **Children's Society** explores this important question in their recent blog, "*Should Children Have Mobile Phones?*" The article examines key concerns, including the link between **excessive screen time and mental health issues**, as well as the potential benefits of **child-friendly phones** over smartphones.

To read the full article, visit: [Children's Society Blog](#).

## Using social media appropriately

Social media platforms like **Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat** allow us to connect with friends, share experiences, and access information. However, they also come with risks, especially for young users. Teaching children how to use these platforms responsibly is essential for their **online safety and well-being**.

### Key Risks to Be Aware Of:

**Privacy Concerns** – Personal information can be easily shared or accessed by strangers.

**Inappropriate Content** – Exposure to harmful or misleading content.

**Cyberbullying** – Negative interactions, including harmful messages or comments.

**Stranger Danger** – Unwanted contact from people they don't know.

**Scams & Fake Accounts** – Phishing attempts, fraudulent links, and impersonation.

### How to Use Facebook & Social Media Safely:

✅ **Privacy Settings:** Regularly review and adjust privacy settings on Facebook and other platforms. Encourage children to set their profiles to **private** and limit who can see their posts.

✅ **Friend Requests:** Only accept friend requests from people they **know and trust** in real life. Strangers may not always be who they claim to be.

✅ **Think Before Posting:** Teach children to **pause before they post**. Remind them that **once something is online, it's permanent**, even if deleted later.

✅ **Avoid Sharing Personal Details:** Encourage children not to share their full name, school, phone number, or location publicly.

✅ **Recognize & Report Harmful Content:** Ensure children know how to **block, report, and mute** anyone who is sending harmful messages or sharing inappropriate content.

✅ **Screen Time Balance:** Help children set **healthy screen time limits** and encourage offline activities to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

✔ **Talk Openly About Social Media:** Regularly check in with your child about their online experiences. Create a **safe space** for them to discuss any concerns or uncomfortable situations they encounter.

#### Useful Resources for Parents:

📌 [Facebook Safety Centre](#) – Learn more about managing privacy and reporting issues.

📌 [Internet Matters - Social Media Advice](#) – A guide to keeping children safe on different platforms.

📌 [NSPCC Online Safety](#) – Tips on staying safe online and protecting children from risks.

By setting **clear boundaries, encouraging open conversations, using safety tools, and being positive role models**, we can help children enjoy social media **in a safe and positive way**.

## PEGI Ratings and gaming



During Safer Internet Day, some of the children were talking about the games they play at home. They were also talking about the age ratings of these games. Here is a reminder of what PEGI ratings are and what the ratings of some of the most played games are.

The Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) system is a widely recognised framework that helps consumers, especially parents, make informed decisions about video game content. Established in 2003, PEGI provides age ratings and content descriptors to indicate the suitability of a game for different age groups.

#### Understanding PEGI Ratings:

PEGI ratings are divided into five age categories:

- **PEGI 3:** Suitable for all age groups. Games in this category should not contain any sounds or images that might frighten young children. Very mild forms of violence in a comical context are acceptable.
- **PEGI 7:** Includes content that may be slightly frightening for younger children. Very mild forms of violence are permitted.
- **PEGI 12:** Features more graphic violence towards fantasy characters and non-realistic violence towards human-like characters. May include mild bad language and sexual innuendo.
- **PEGI 16:** Depicts realistic violence or sexual activity. The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs may be present, along with more extreme bad language.
- **PEGI 18:** Reserved for games with gross violence, motiveless killing, or violence towards defenceless characters. Explicit sexual activity and the glamorization of illegal drug use may also be present.

In addition to age ratings, PEGI provides content descriptors indicating specific types of content, such as violence, bad language, fear, gambling, sex, drugs, discrimination, and in-game purchases.

### **Why Are PEGI Ratings Important?**

PEGI ratings play a crucial role in safeguarding children from exposure to inappropriate content. By adhering to these guidelines, parents can ensure that the games their children play are suitable for their developmental stage. The ratings also promote responsible gaming habits and help prevent exposure to themes that may be harmful or disturbing to younger audiences.

### **PEGI Ratings of Popular Video Games:**

Here are the PEGI ratings for some of the most played video games:

- **Fortnite:** PEGI 12
- **Minecraft:** PEGI 7
- **FIFA 25:** PEGI 3
- **Call of Duty: Modern Warfare III:** PEGI 18
- **Grand Theft Auto V:** PEGI 18
- **League of Legends:** PEGI 12
- **Rocket League:** PEGI 3

- **The Sims 2 Anniversary Collection:** PEGI 12
- **Roblox:** PEGI 7+

By paying attention to PEGI ratings and content descriptors, parents and guardians can make informed choices, ensuring a safe and enjoyable gaming experience for their children.

## Game Safe

### For Parents - Game Safe Guide

With the school holidays just around the corner, some children will be looking forward to spending longer online, with their friends, playing online games. There always has to be a balance, but gaming can be a really positive activity for lots of reasons. But as we all know there are lots of risks and issues.

Internet Matters has a brilliant guide for parents which goes into lots of detail in relation to balancing gaming with other activities, setting up consoles correctly, connecting with others and much more.

The full guide can be found [HERE](#).



## Contact Us



If you have any questions regarding online safety, please speak to your child's class teacher or Mrs Burton.

Visit us on the web at [www.sherwood.notts.sch.uk](http://www.sherwood.notts.sch.uk)

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