

Binley Woods Primary School

Online Safety Newsletter — October 2024

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Is Roblox safe for children?

On Google Daily Tech Check this morning (25.10.24) it was announced that Roblox will be making some much needed changes...

Roblox says it's instituting some new safety features for children accounts next month after a shocking report claimed the platform was filled with child and sexual exploitation.

Roblox sent an email out to the parents of children with accounts explaining the changes. First up, parents can link up their accounts with a child's, which they can then use to view their kid's usage and their friends, along with update parental controls.

Roblox is currently a gaming platform where players can create and publish their own games. The platform can be a great educational tool to help teach children new skills like coding. However, there are also some risks. Roblox allows players to build and publish their own games. This means that other users could build games that contain adult or inappropriate themes that your child might see.

• Sign up with the correct age

Make sure your child creates an account using the correct age. On Roblox, certain safety settings and parental controls are enabled by default for children under 13. However, you should still review the settings to ensure they've been set up correctly.

• Build a list of age-appropriate games

Not all games on Roblox will be appropriate for your child. The platform has a setting that lets parents and carers limit what their child can play by allowing them to build lists of age-appropriate games. You can also switch off in-app spending or set them monthly limits.

• Explore communication settings

You can manage who your child can speak to by disabling chat completely or limiting it to friends only. You can also switch off their inbox to stop them receiving direct messages. Check out this link for further information:

This week, all classes have completed an online safety assembly in their classrooms. They have looked at various online safety scenarios and discussed what they would do in certain situations.

The children have now all signed our online safety agreements, these agreements are taken seriously and the children understand that they must use all online devices appropriately when at school.

All teachers have now delivered the specific online safety unit of work through the Purple Mash platform, where they have learnt lots of online safety strategies and messages. This curriculum builds knowledge year on year. It was clear in our online safety assembly this week, that the children have all been listening well in these sessions.

Our school Online Safety motto is:

If it's not kind, don't say it...don't share it...don't send it!

Positive vibes only!

We also have a 'screen off' strategy, if the children see something online that makes them feel uncomfortable or gives them their early warning signs, they know to turn the **'screen off and tell an adult'**

After feedback from the Online Safety Crew, it seems that there are a few areas in each class (mostly KS2) that need further support at home. There was a large percentage of children who are accessing apps that may contain **inappropriate content**, such as: **Roblox, You Tube and Netflix**. Please check out the content of this newsletter to ensure your child is not accessing these apps and have the correct parental controls in place on their online devices.

The advice given from our online safety advisories, have given the message for the past 2 years that children should not be accessing Roblox, due to it not being a secure platform and users being able to hack into other users games with naked real human characters.

Secondly, for any consoles (new and old), it is important to set up appropriate controls such as restricting spending limits and again managing who they can communicate with.

Follow the links below to find out how to set up Parental Controls for each device:



Xbox:

<https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/community/for-everyone/responsible-gaming>

PS5:

<https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/>



Nintendo Switch:

<https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1183145.html>

Tablets/Smart phones

As well as setting up parental controls on the device itself, remember to check any apps your child would like on their device. Is it suitable for their age?

Review all settings and privacy options for each app.

For the devices themselves use the available settings to prevent purchases, restrict content viewed and adjust privacy settings.

Follow the links below to find out more:

iPhones/iPads: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

Google Play: <https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738>



Why Age 13+?

Language ●●●●●
Plenty of crude commentary. Curse words, ... >

Sex, Romance & Nudity ●●●●●
Because there's such a wide variety of cont ... >

Products & Purchases ●●●●●
Various ads appear on every page, embedd ... >

Drinking, Drugs & Smoking ●●●●●
References to numerous substances in sorr ... >

Violence & Scariness ●●●●●
Violent content exists (including some anir ... >

Explicit Porn. Can't trust "restricted" setting

Explicit content. I've only allowed my kids access when co-viewing because I've tested YT out myself over the years and found a long list of explicit porn when I did a simple search. I'm the only person who can access YT in my house, but the "restricted" setting always changes back to "not restricted" automatically. I've tried contacting YT, but to no resolve. YT has also allowed other recommended videos posted by nefarious users who are trying to lead viewers to other dangerous places. Even if one could trust the parental control to remain locked, there is just no way to be 100% sure your kids don't see something objectionable, so best to co-view until kids are high school age. Shame on Common Sense for listing YT.

A once great platform for creativity, turned greedy corporate giant

1) Constant bombardment of random ads and No One bothers to check what they advertise. Porn ads on a cartoon video? sure why not. 2) Thousands of youtube channels who repeatedly beg their young audience to go buy something. 3) The website would rather promote music videos and political propaganda from official networks rather than wholesome creative videos. 4) And the worst recent change so far... Censorship of video rating. Want to know if the video you are watching is legitimate or good? Maybe it's a scam, maybe it's propaganda, maybe it entices violence and hate speech. Well too bad, you have no choice but to watch the video since YouTube disabled user rating via the Dislike button. 5) If you're a creator on the website you have to constantly deal with false copyright claims, bad algorithm and Police Bots that will falsely flag your videos.



Inappropriate content

With such a vast range of content available, some parents might be concerned that their children could stumble across content they shouldn't be watching. Fortunately, Netflix gives parents the opportunity to customise what content they want their children to have access to. Each title on the UK version of Netflix has been rated by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) using its regular rating system – U, PG, 12, 15 and 18 – to determine what audience it is suitable for. You can customise which of these ratings you want each individual profile to have access to; perfect for if you have children of different ages. <https://www.commonssensemedia.org/website-reviews/youtube>

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 schooling 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, and 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.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: www.help.netflix.com www.about.netflix.com www.ofcom.gov.uk

www.nationalonlinesafety.com [@natonlinesafety](https://twitter.com/natonlinesafety) [/NationalOnlineSafety](https://www.facebook.com/NationalOnlineSafety) [@nationalonlinesafety](https://www.instagram.com/nationalonlinesafety)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 10.11.2021

To set up a Netflix profile for each member of your family, follow these steps:

- Go to [Manage Profiles](#) and select **Add Profile**.
- Type the name of the family member the profile is for. To use the Netflix Kids experience, select **Kids**.
- Select **Continue**, and the new profile will show up on your account.

If you want to switch an existing profile on your account to the Netflix Kids experience, follow these steps:

- Go to [Manage Profiles](#) and click on the profile.
- Under Maturity Settings, click **Edit**, and enter your account password when prompted.
- **Check the box** to display the Netflix Kids experience, then click **Save**.

Now that your kids have their own Netflix profiles, you can begin to customize their viewing experiences by restricting content according to its maturity rating. **Note: These settings are only available from a web browser.**

A rating is a letter and/or number that describes a specific title's age appropriateness — for example, "PG-13" and "R" in the United States. Note that different countries use different ratings systems; for a guide to ratings in your country, [click here](#).

Netflix sets ratings by the frequency and impact of mature content in a movie or series, such as the amount of violence, sex, adult language, nudity or substance use that may be present. By setting rating restrictions, you can make your child's Netflix profile automatically filter out titles above a certain rating. Here's how to do it:

- Go to [Manage Profiles](#) and click on your child's profile.
- Under Maturity Settings, click **Edit**, and enter your account password when prompted.
- Choose the maximum rating that you'd like to appear on your child's profile.



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 and kindness, like they would if they were face-to-face. Dr Linda Papadopoulos (Internet Matters Ambassador) provides tips on how you can help your child to be kind online in this YouTube video such as teaching them how to be inclusive and think about how they would like to be treated online themselves: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BqKi3J7g6Q&t=9s>

Ensure that your child understands that if they receive unkind messages (or see something that worries them) then they should not reply, delete or engage in conversation with them, but that they should tell a trusted adult. You can use the tools within an app to report any offensive or hurtful content as well as block people so they cannot contact you again in the future.

Unicef have a comprehensive area on their website, which talks about what Cyberbullying is and how to stop it: <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>

Childline also have a lot of information about Cyberbullying, including advice to those that might be bullying: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/>



CEOP: Updated 4-7s website and guide This updated website from CEOP Education is designed for children to visit with their parents/carers. The children answer a series of questions as they work towards collecting badges. You can find out more here:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/resources/4-7s-website/>



Screen time advice We're often asked how long children should spend on their devices each day. Childnet have created a blog discussing why it is difficult to specify a limit and what you should consider. You can read it here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/new-screen-time-guidance-advises-parents-to-consider-not-using-phones-at-dinner-and-bedtime/>

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/screen-time-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/parents-and-carers>



Whilst we wait for the Online Safety Bill to be passed, which will hopefully improve Online Safety, there are certain laws already established to help protect us online. For example, in the UK we have the Malicious Communications Act 1988 that states it is an offence

to send a communication that conveys an indecent or grossly offensive message or a threat. We also have the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which covers threatening behaviour or harassment online. Report Harmful Content have curated a list of laws that are relevant to online behaviour here:

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/when-should-you-go-to-the-police/>

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

For further information about online safety at Binley Woods Primary School, please visit our Online Safety page on our webpage

Personalised Digital Toolkit

Answer some simple questions and get age specific advice and recommendations:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/digital-family-toolkit/>