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Headteacher: Mrs Lindsey Chivers

Dear Parents,

This week, on the 11th February, was 'Internet Safety Day'. This a day where, nationally, we highlight internet safety although this is covered termly as part of our computing curriculum. Following our learning over the day and conversations with children in class, we felt it necessary to share the following information about PEGI ratings and content descriptors. Please read these and share them with your child.

In the UK all computer games (and 'computer games' or 'video games' is a term which includes games played on computers and consoles such as the Xbox, Playstation or Nintendo Switch as well as tablets and phones) have an age rating. These are commonly known as the PEGI ratings (Pan European Game Information).

Game ratings help parents decide whether a game is suitable for their children to play. Computer games can feature a wide range of content, including violence, horror, sex and drugs. It's important for parents to have a trusted source of information about whether they should let their children play a particular game. The PEGI ratings are written by the Games Rating Authority who use input from experts in child development and child protection to come to their final rating. These ratings can change from time to time based upon concerns and comments from experts, parents and young people.

Attached is some information about what each PEGI rating means, PEGI content descriptors and games that we know children at Prior Heath currently have access to. It is important that parents carefully consider the impact that playing games with a higher PEGI rating than the child's age could have on their wellbeing. Please check the PEGI rating before buying or downloading a game for your child.

Please go to www.pegi.info to search for the age ratings of games, or google "PEGI rating"

Kind regards,

Mrs Haygarth

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leader (DDSL)

PEGI ratings



PEGI 3

The content of games with a PEGI 3 rating is considered suitable for all age groups. The game should not contain any sounds or pictures that are likely to frighten young children. A very mild form of violence (in a comical context or a childlike setting) is acceptable. No bad language should be heard.



PEGI 7

Game content with scenes or sounds that can possibly be frightening to younger children should fall in this category. Very mild forms of violence (implied, non-detailed, or non-realistic violence) are acceptable for a game with a PEGI 7 rating.



PEGI 12

Video games that show violence of a slightly more graphic nature towards fantasy characters or non-realistic violence towards human-like characters would fall in this age category. Sexual innuendo or sexual posturing can be present, while any bad language in this category must be mild. **Games with this rating or higher are inappropriate for infant school aged children.**



PEGI !

In addition to the numerical PEGI ratings, you will also see the "Parental Guidance Recommended" rating for some non-game apps.

This serves as a warning that these apps can offer a broad variety of user generated or curated content. Typically, this applies to products such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. Because the content is generated by users around the world, it is not possible to accurately age-rate rate all of the content and young people may find inappropriate user-made content.



PEGI 16

This rating is applied once the depiction of violence (or sexual activity) reaches a stage that looks the same as would be expected in real life. The use of bad language in games with a PEGI 16 rating can be more extreme, while the use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs can also be present.



PEGI 18

The adult classification is applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes a depiction of gross violence, apparently motiveless killing, or violence towards defenceless characters. The glamorisation of the use of illegal drugs and of the simulation of gambling, and explicit sexual activity also falls into this age category.

PEGI content descriptors

Alongside the PEGI ratings there are often PEGI content descriptors. Here is what they mean.



The game contains depictions of violence. In games rated PEGI 7 this can only be non-realistic or non-detailed violence. Games rated PEGI 12 can include violence in a fantasy environment or non-realistic violence towards human-like characters, whereas games rated PEGI 16 or 18 have increasingly more realistic-looking violence.



The game contains bad language. This descriptor can be found on games with a PEGI 12 (mild swearing), PEGI 16 (e.g. sexual expletives or blasphemy) or PEGI 18 rating (e.g. sexual expletives or blasphemy).



This descriptor may appear as 'Fear' on games with a PEGI 7 if it contains pictures or sounds that may be frightening or scary to young children, or as 'Horror' on higher-rated games that contain moderate (PEGI 12) or intense and sustained (PEGI 16) horror sequences or disturbing images (not necessarily including violent content).



The game offers players the option to purchase digital goods or services with real-world currency. Such purchases include additional content (bonus levels, outfits, surprise items, music), but also upgrades (e.g. to disable ads), subscriptions to updates, virtual coins and other forms of in-game currency.



This content descriptor can accompany a PEGI 12 rating if the game includes sexual posturing or innuendo, a PEGI 16 rating if there is erotic nudity or sexual intercourse without visible genitals or a PEGI 18 rating if there is explicit sexual activity in the game. Depictions of nudity in a non-sexual context do not require a specific age rating, and this descriptor would not be necessary.



The game contains elements that encourage or teach gambling. These simulations of gambling refer to games of chance that are normally carried out in casinos or gambling halls. Some older titles can be found with PEGI 12 or PEGI 16, but PEGI changed the criteria for this classification in 2020, which made that new games with this sort of content are always PEGI 18.



The game refers to or depicts the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco. Games with this content descriptor are always PEGI 16 or PEGI 18.



The game contains depictions of ethnic, religious, nationalistic or other stereotypes likely to encourage hatred. This content is always restricted to a PEGI 18 rating (and likely to infringe national criminal laws).

Below is some information about 3 of the games which are mentioned more frequently by children in our school, which we have concerns about. Playing computer games can be a fun, often exciting and sometimes social activity for children but please ensure you check the PEGI rating of the games and adhere to the age restrictions.



Fortnite



In Fortnite, players work together to survive in an open-world environment, by battling other characters who are controlled either by the game itself or by other players.

The single-player or co-operative (played with friends) mode, called '**Save the World**', involves fighting off zombie-like creatures.

Fortnite's most popular mode is its standalone free-to-play multiplayer platform, '**Battle Royale**'. Up to 100 players enter an online game, competing individually or as part of squads of up to four, to be the last player standing within a battle arena that gets continuously smaller.

There is also a '**Creative Mode**', in which players create their own buildings and play mini-games.

Because Fortnite contains different variations, each has it's own PEGI rating.

Fortnite: **Save The World**



Fortnite: **Battle Royal**



Fortnite: **Creative Mode**



Roblox



Roblox is an app that allows users to play a wide variety of games, create games, and chat with others online. It combines gaming and social media and users can make in-app purchases. Games on Roblox are officially called "experiences" and can fall into a variety of genres. Roblox users can talk to each other and create and play each others games.

Because the content on Roblox is created by users and people can communicate with each other, it has been given a Parental Guidance rating — every 'experience' (game) is different, so parents must assess for themselves the suitability for their children.



Minecraft



Minecraft is a game where players place blocks and go on adventures. The blocks can be used to craft anything from simple items like containers or weapons, to building structures like houses, castles, and cities. It is similar to an computer generated world of lego bricks that allow the user to create anything they can think of.

Gameplay in Minecraft is split into two different modes: 'survival mode' and 'creative mode'. In survival mode players must use and create equipment and buildings from a limited supply of resources to help them survive the environment and monsters. Creative mode offers a more open-ended experience, where players do not have to worry about health or being attacked by enemies. In creative mode, players can fly and have access to an unlimited amount of in-game resources.