Dedham Church of England Primary School

Knowsley City Learning Centres

Online Safety Newsletter

December 2020

Twitch

Twitch is a live video game website. Users can search for a game and then watch the game being played live (or via playback) by another user. You should be 13+ to access Twitch, although according to their Terms of Service, users between the ages of 13 and 18 may use Twitch **under the supervision of a parent or guardian**.

As you can search for any game, your child might end up watching games that are not age appropriate, for example Call of Duty (18+). Twitch also streams live which means it is difficult to censor the chat so they may also hear unsuitable language.

Privacy Settings

Set up appropriate privacy settings for your child, including switching off messages from users your child does not follow. You can learn more here: https://help.twitch.tv/s/article/twitch-account-settings#securityandprivacy

Chat

Twitch gives users the opportunity to interact with others through the chat facilities. Whilst Twitch set out what their standards are, language can be mature plus they could potentially be chatting with people they don't know.

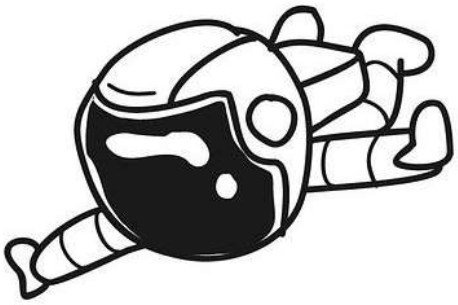
Block users

Ensure your child knows how to block or report users and content when using this service. More information can be found here: https://help.twitch.tv/s/article/how-to-file-a-user-report

More support/information

- https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/twitch/

Among Us!



What is Among Us?

Among Us is free to download and is rated 9+ by the App Store due to infrequent/mild horror/fear themes and infrequent/mild cartoon or fantasy violence. You play with 4 – 10 players whose task is to prep their spaceship by completing a series of tasks. However, one of the crew is an imposter who is trying to sabotage the game and kill the other crew members.

What do I need to be aware of?

In-app purchases - In app purchase are available priced from £1.99 - £2.99.

Play privately – games can either be played publicly or privately. To just play with people you know, set it to "private" and share the room code with them (this is the safer option).

Chat facility - If your child is playing a 'public' game (or even in a private room with people they don't know) then due to the chat facility, they may meet and chat with people which always creates an element of risk.

Inappropriate behaviour - If someone is being rude, then only the host can ban that player from the room so you are reliant on the host.



Parental Controls

There is the ability to censor chat to filter bad words out (although there may be words that get through the filter)

Further information

You can read more about Among Us here:

- https://www.commonsensemedia.org/game-reviews/among-us
- https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/is-among-us-multiplayer-game-safe-for-children/

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into.
Current as of the date released 1.12.20.

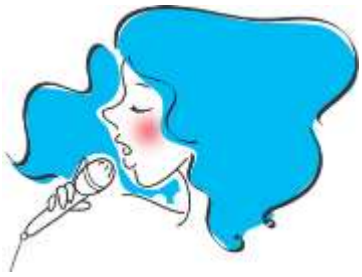
TikTok

Direct messaging

What is TikTok?

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok.

Users can watch musical clips, record 60 second clips (it includes lots of lip synching and dancing), edit them and add special effects.



Is your child using TikTok?

TikTok have created their top 10 Tips for you, which provides a really useful overview of settings to make TikTok a safer environment: https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/tiktoks-top-10-tips-for-parents

Privacy settings

Find out about TikTok's privacy settings and choose the most appropriate for your child. It is safer for an account to be set to private (therefore only people your child chooses to accept can follow them) although you would still need to talk to your child about only accepting requests from people they know in real life. You can also set whether or not people can comment on their content.

Reporting

As with any app/website your child is using to interact with others, ensure that they know how to delete, report or block another user as well as know how to report any inappropriate content that they come across:

- https://support.tiktok.com/sv/privacy-safety/block-accounts-sv
- (https://support.tiktok.com/en/privacy-safety/report-inappropriate-content-default

Direct messaging/commenting

TikTok has a direct messaging element so users can chat to each other **(TikTok now automatically disables Direct Messages for registered accounts under the age of 16)** as well as the ability to comment on each other's content. There is a risk on TikTok that cyberbullying can occur, or a user can receive unwanted attention from a stranger. TikTok have produced this list of available settings to reduce the risk of this happening https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/anti-bully?lang=en. It is important that your child understands that if they come across anything that they don't like or makes them feel uncomfortable then they should speak to you or another trusted adult.

Family safety mode

TikTok have created Family Pairing to help you keep your child safe whilst using TikTok. Family Pairing allows parents to link their own TikTok account to their child's account.

Further information

https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/anti-bully

Sharing videos and images

Net Aware have produced the following article to help those who may be worried about their child sharing videos and images online through apps like TikTok and Snapchat.

https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/should-i-be-worried-about-my-child-sharing-videos-and-images-online2/

WhatsApp: disappearing messages

WhatsApp have introduced disappearing messages. If enabled, a user can send a message that will disappear after seven days. WhatsApp advise users to only use disappearing messages with trusted individuals because of the risks of sending disappearing messages. For example, users are still able to take a screenshot of a disappearing message before it disappears and then share with others.

You can find out more information here: https://faq.whatsapp.com/general/chats/about-disappearing-messages

Monitoring Apps

Would you like to monitor what your child is doing online? The best app to use will be dependent on what devices your child is using but this helpful article from Internet Matters reviews the top monitoring apps for you:

https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/monitoring-apps-parents-guide/