

## Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form

# Online Safety Newsletter: November 2018



## Fortnite: Battle Royale (PEGI rating: 12+)

Fortnite is a multi-player online game where up to 100 players are dropped on an island and then fight each other until they're the only person left.

Fortnite is immensely popular at the moment and whilst it isn't as aggressive as other popular games, parents should be aware that Battle Royale does include an online chat feature (audio and on-screen text). **The chat facility means that players can be exposed to offensive language or mature content from strangers.** We strongly recommend that the chat facility is switched off or children are supervised whilst playing.

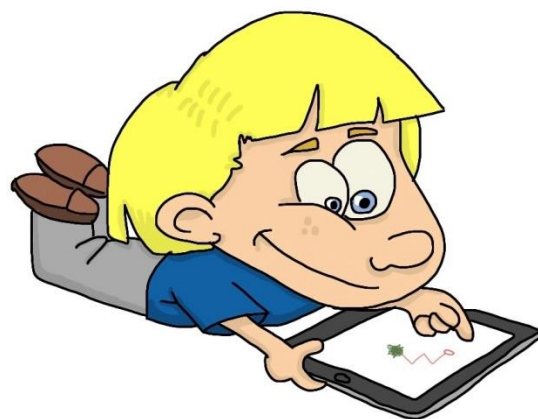
### In game purchases

Battle Royale is free to play but players can purchase additional packs to access additional items for example weapons. The game does ask players to make additional in-game purchases whilst playing, though these are not required to play the game.

### Advice from the UK Safer Internet Centre

(Source: <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/parents-guide-fortnite-battle-royale>)

- **Have an open and honest conversation with your child**  
Talking to your child about their life online, what do they love to do online? Asking your child about how they play Fortnite and what they like about it is a great way to start a conversation.
- **Play with them**  
It may seem daunting, but one of the best things that you can do is to engage with the gaming environment and begin to understand what makes Fortnite so attractive to young people, as well as giving yourself an idea of the reporting tools available within the game.
- **Know how to make a report**  
On Fortnite you can report players who are behaving inappropriately by using the in-game feedback tool located in the game Main Menu, you can also make a report by emailing the creators of Fortnite.



## Online Safety Survey findings

40,000 pupils (aged 7 – 16 from 480 schools) took part in this year's *LGfL DigiSafe pupil online-safety survey* about their online lives which concluded in a new report, 'Hopes & Streams'. The results found that an impressive 73% of children trust their parents on online safety but only half of parents talk about online safety with them more than once a year. Worryingly, **2 in 5 pupils have never told anyone about the worst thing that has happened to them online.**

It's important to talk about our children's online life with them on a regular basis. Go online with them and look at apps together, look at the many positives of being online but if there is anything that you see that you are uncomfortable with them doing online then explain to them why. If your child is on social media then show them how to use the privacy settings, reporting functions and how to block people. Also, make sure your child understands that if they ever have any concerns online they can talk to you about them.

The report also found that **nearly 1 in 3 pupils find it difficult to stop using their devices** to have a break probably due to the addictive and immersive nature of some games and social media. This is why it is important to set rules that are agreed by all the family in order to balance screen time with other activities as well as set device free times (e.g. meal times). Ensure your children are:

- seeing friends in 'real life' and spending time with family
- no devices 1 hour before bedtime
- going to sleep at a suitable time (and devices should not be kept in their bedroom)
- getting outside/physical activity
- keeping up with school work/homework



You can read the full report here: <https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/hopesandstreams>



### GroupMe

This is a group messaging app developed by Skype. Parents should be aware that this app includes GIFs (animated images) that may not be suitable for younger teenagers. For a full review of this app, visit Common Sense Media:

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews/groupme>

## Games currently being played...

### H1Z1

**This game has been rated 16+ by PEGI:** *This game has been rated PEGI 16 due to frequent moderate violence towards human characters and encouragement of drug use. Not suitable for persons below 16 years of age.*

This is another Battle Royale style game available on PS4. It's an online multiplayer game, in which a group of students are forced to fight to the death. 100 players are dropped on to the island and they then try to kill each other until they are the only remaining player.

This is another game that can become addictive and you need to be aware that due to the live chat, **inappropriate or offensive language** may be heard.

## Child on social media?

**If your child is on social media, how old were they when they signed up?** If your child is 10 when they join Facebook (for example), they have to say they're 13 to be allowed to join. This means when they turn 15, their Facebook account will actually state they are 18 so not only could they see advertising only suitable for adults, others may approach them knowing they are younger than 18 (from their photograph) and try to establish a relationship with them on the basis that they claim to be 18. Ask your children to check their age to make sure it is their current age.

## Do you overshare?

Just as in real life, we need to show by example how our children should behave online and set clear expectations. **You need to be their role model.** Are you guilty of oversharing/not thinking before you post? If you do post online, try following these basic rules:

- ✓ Don't post any photos of your child that show their school logo or recognisable places by where they live that can make it easy for people to find out their location.
- ✓ Never include your child's full name.
- ✓ Are there any other children in the pictures you share online? If yes, do you have permission from their parent/carer to upload it?
- ✓ Would your child be happy for your comment/photo about them to be online – remember what might be 'cute' now may be embarrassing to them in the future.
- ✓ Make sure your privacy settings are on.
- ✓ Don't overshare! If you share everything or private information online then will your child want to chat to you about things that are concerning them as they may worry that it will be posted online?

## Safety tip

When gaming, usernames can be seen by other players so teach your children that user names need to be non-identifying too so don't include your age, year of birth, full name, location etc.

## The Lost Summer

This is an educational video game designed for 11-14 year olds to build digital intelligence skills and encourage online safety. Play online:

<https://esafety.gov.au/education-resources/classroom-resources/lost-summer>

## Kik

The BBC have recently reported that this chat app has been 'involved in 1,100 child abuse cases'. You must be at least 17 years old to download this application. Full story here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45568276>