



E-Safety Newsletter

Minecraft

Minecraft is rated as PEGI 7, meaning it is suitable for those over 7 years of age. Minecraft is a game where players can create worlds using blocks. There are two different modes, creative and survival. In creative mode, users can build what they wish and have unlimited resources whereas in survival mode, players must gather resources, find food and defend themselves against mobs. Survival mode may include mild violence and scary characters. You should be aware that there is a multiplayer option available where players can chat to each other. In-app purchases are also available to buy items such as skins, so ensure purchases are disabled or that a password or PIN is required to make them. Ensure appropriate parental controls are applied, on both Minecraft and the console itself. Find out more here:

<https://www.minecraft.net/enus/article/parental-controls>

Further information
<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/minecraft>

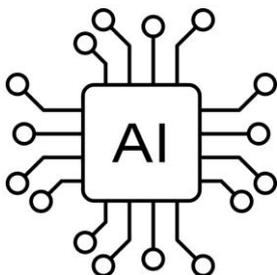
E-Safety Week Focus - AI

E-Safety Week will take place during the week of 16 February 2026. This year's focus is on Artificial Intelligence. Our aim is to educate pupils about the potential dangers and risks associated with AI, while promoting safe and responsible use of digital technologies.

What are the potential risks of AI for children?

- Manipulation: AI can be used to create convincing but false content, which may influence children's beliefs or decisions.
- Misinformation: AI-generated answers or videos may look accurate but contain errors or misleading information.
- Identity confusion: children may struggle to tell whether they're interacting with a real person or an AI system.
- Exposure to harmful content: some AI tools may generate inappropriate or upsetting material.
- Cyberbullying and harassment: AI can be used to mimic voices or create fake messages which could be used to cause harm and distress.
- Privacy and data security: AI tools often collect data, and children may not know what's being stored and shared
- AI-generated abuse and sextortion: in rare but serious cases, AI can be misused to create abusive and illegal content.
- AI-generated sexualised or abusive images: some children may use AI tools to create fake nude or sexualised images of others, often referred to as 'nudification' or 'deepfakes'. Even if the image is not real, it can cause serious emotional harm, reputational damage, and may be illegal if it involves anyone under 18.

How to support your child spot the dangers of AI



Remind young people not everything is real

You can remind them that not everything online is real and much of what we see may have been edited. AI is continually evolving but there can be common indicators to show something is AI generated but remember it is not always obvious. Some of these indicators can be an overall 'perfect' appearance, body parts or movements appearing differently or not looking 'true to life'.

Discuss misuse of generative AI

It's important to address the misuse of generative AI to create harmful content in an age-appropriate way. Make sure that your child knows it's not OK for anyone to create content to harm other people.

3 things to consider before giving your child a smartphone

1. What Is the Appropriate Age?

One of the first concerns parents have is what age should my child get a phone?

- It's not just about age, it's about readiness. Some children can handle responsibility earlier, while others may need more time.
- Their friends having phones isn't a reason to rush. Peer pressure is real, but setting boundaries based on your child's needs, not what everyone else is doing.
- It's easier to introduce a phone with guidelines and set expectations from the start.

2. The Hidden Impact of Social Media and Explicit Content

Giving your child a smartphone isn't just about calling and texting, it is opening the door to the internet, social media, and everything that comes with it.

- Explicit and harmful content is everywhere. Even if your child isn't searching for it, social media algorithms often push mature or inappropriate content.
- Apps aren't always as safe as they seem. Platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram have parental controls, but they're not foolproof.
- Digital wellbeing isn't just about screen time. It's about what they're consuming and how it's shaping their worldview.

Tip: Start off on the right foot by ensuring parental controls are enabled. Many smartphones offer built-in settings to filter content, manage screen time, and prevent unauthorised purchases.

3. Filter Bubbles: What They See and What They Don't

The term filter bubble, coined by internet activist Eli Pariser, refers to the personalised online universe created by algorithms that decide what you see and what you don't.

- Algorithms analyse your behaviour: Platforms like Google, Facebook, and YouTube track what you click, watch, or like.
- They prioritise content you'll engage with: The goal is to keep you scrolling longer so they can serve more ads.
- They filter out opposing views: By only showing what aligns with your preferences, they limit exposure to different perspectives.
- For children, this can mean being constantly fed content that reinforces their existing beliefs; whether that's harmless interests like gaming or something more concerning like extreme viewpoints or unhealthy body image ideals.

Tip: Have open conversations about online content and critical thinking. Encourage your child to follow a variety of sources and perspectives. Most importantly, be their go-to person when they have questions or encounter something troubling.

Smartphone free Childhood

The Smartphone Free Childhood Parent Pact is a way to band together with other parents in your area to agree to delay getting your child a smartphone until at least 14, and social media until 16. It's all about strength in numbers – if your child knows that other kids in their class won't be getting a smartphone for a few years either, the peer pressure instantly dissolves.

It takes 30 seconds to sign the Parent Pact, and the more of us who do, the quicker we'll change the social norm.

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/sign-the-parent-pact>

