

Online Safety Newsletter

Update

Omegle

You must be 18+ to use or 13+ with parental permission.

Omegle is a social networking/chat site that connects two strangers together for either a text or a video chat. Chats are anonymous unless a user provides this information. Omegle state *"that the people you encounter on Omegle may not behave appropriately, and that they are solely responsible for their own behavior. Use Omegle at your own peril. Disconnect if anyone makes you feel uncomfortable."*



What should I be aware of?

- No registration is required to access Omegle (therefore no age verification) and there are no reporting facilities.
- Users are given an option to save the chat's log and share the link. It is always possible for other users to take screenshots of text and video chats.
- **We recommend that Omegle is not used by children due to the language used which can be particularly explicit.**

Roblox

PEGI have rated Roblox PEGI 7 which means it is not suitable for persons under 7 years of. However, remember a PEGI rating does not take into consideration the presence of a chat facility. Roblox gives players the opportunity to play, build and create games. It is available on PC, Mac, iOS, Android, Amazon Devices and Xbox One.

What should I be aware of?

Chat Facility

Players can chat to each other, you can add parental controls to turn this feature off completely or add restrictions. Further information can be found here: <https://corp.roblox.com/parents/>

Blocking users and reporting

Roblox offers the ability to block users so as with all games your child plays, ensure they know how to block users that may be acting inappropriately, harassing or bullying them.

Virtual Currency

Roblox is free to download and free to play. Players can however buy Robux (their virtual currency) to buy in-game upgrades or accessories. If you do not want your child to purchase them ensure your card details are not saved.

Account PINs

You can set up a 4 digit Account PIN to stop your child making any changes that you've set to the account. The account will also allow you to restrict access to curated content by Roblox only.

Grooming risk

As featured in our previous newsletter, apps and games that include chat facilities may increase the risk of online grooming as some people may use the online chat features to build a relationship with your child. For some games, the chat can be turned off and depending on the age of your child, this may be the safest manner for your child to play games online. Furthermore, go online with your child, see what they are playing and who (if anybody) they are interacting with. Try to encourage the use of technology in family spaces only.

Review what games your children are playing and check the PEGI rating (age rating). Should your child be playing that game?

What can I do?

As always talk to your child about what they are doing online and discuss the following points:

- Do they know how to report and block players?
- Encourage them not to share personal information online. If somebody asks them for personal information, to meet up or if they just feel uneasy then make sure that they know that they should talk to a trusted adult.
- Tell your child that they should be very wary of anybody who encourages them to keep anything secret or who offers to buy them gifts.
- Talk to your child about the importance of only accepting friends.

If somebody does do anything inappropriate then you should report that person using the in game/app reporting options. **If you think somebody has tried to groom your child online then you can report this to CEOP. CEOP can help in a number of ways, for example they can assist you if you are worried that your child is being groomed online or if somebody is asking your child to communicate with them on a live-streaming platform. (<https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>).**

Further information about Grooming:

- <https://parentinfo.org/article/what-you-need-to-know-about-online-grooming>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/grooming>