

Safer Internet Day 2024 | Tuesday
6 February

Coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre

Safer Internet Day The official day for Safer Internet Day was 6.2.24 and this year's theme is 'Inspiring Change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online.' Mr Crocker led us all in an assembly that looked at challenges we face online - cyberbullying, viruses, phishing, fake news and the influence this has on people. We discussed how we are connected with lots of people in the online world and how this means we must be careful about who we choose to engage with. We talked about appropriate ages to engage online and the importance of

an adult always knowing what we are doing. We also learned about the importance of telling a trusted adult if anything happens online that makes us feel upset, worried or scared. As the week went on, we also spent time in classes learning about this in more detail.

Safer Internet Workshops for children On February 20th, our Year 3 & 4 pupils will take part in an assembly about making 'One Good Choice' online and on February 20th and 22nd, our Year 5 & 6 pupils will take part in a workshop themed on 'The Power to Choose'. Today all children have brought home a leaflet called 'Digital Safety At A Glance', giving more information about this important subject.

Cyber Choices Workshops for parents These online workshops are provided free of charge to support parents on the theme of Safer Internet Day and were shared with all parents last week. There are still two opportunities tomorrow and you can register for these by clicking on the relevant date and time link here: [February 8th at 09:30-10:30](#) or [February 8th at 20:00-21:00](#)

Parent Consultation Evenings Our Parent Consultation evenings are on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 February. These meetings are a good opportunity to review the first half of the year together and agree on targets for the rest of the year. On both evenings the meetings will take place in person at school. You should have received an email earlier this week inviting you to book an appointment with your child's class teacher. If, for any reason, you haven't received this, please get in touch with the admin team. This email also explained arrangements for pupils with an EHCP and those who access SEN Support. We look forward to seeing you after the half term break.

Lunchtime Catering Update You will be aware that, over the last year, the cost of our school dinners has risen twice and after great consideration, and in the best interest for our families, we have made the decision to change catering company. These changes won't take place until September but will mean for all of us that the cost of school meals will *go down* without compromising on the high quality healthy meals available for children. Further information will be coming soon.

Children's Mental Health Week Back to Basics

Miss Windross

"When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower"

Alexander Den Heijer

A partnership initiative by Hampshire County Council, CAMHS and the charity Mind, Back to Basics is about empowering parents/carers to support their children's wellbeing.

It uses the globally recognised '5 Ways to Wellbeing' - Connect, Get Active, Take Notice, Learn and Give.

Follow the link below for more information, suggestions and video clips. The Back to Basics leaflet is also attached with QR codes for easy browsing.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/back-to-basics>

If you would like to discuss this further or find out more details, please do not hesitate to contact Gemma Sacree, our Family Support Worker, via adminoffice@portway-jun.hants.sch.uk.



Key Dates

Thurs 8 February 3:30	Meeting for Year 6 parents about end of year SATS
12 - 16 February	Spring half term holiday
Wed 21 & Thurs 22 February	Parent Consultation meetings
Fri 23 February	INSET day (school closed to pupils for staff training)
Thurs 29 February 3:30	Meeting for Year 3 parents about Hooke Court residential visit
Thurs 14 March	Pyjama Day (to mark Leap Year Day)
Thurs 28 March	PTA Spring Fling
Fri 29 March - Fri 13 April	Break the Rules day for PTA (early April Fools)
	Easter holidays

Office telephone: 01264 352060

adminoffice@portway-jun.hants.sch.uk

Office Hours: 8:30-4:30 (4:00 on Fridays)

Messages can be left on the answerphone outside of these times (or at any time during the day)

INSET Days still to come:

Friday 23 February
Monday 3 June

PTA Events for the Spring Term

29 February - Pyjama Day for Leap Year Day

8 March - Portway's Pancake Day from 7:45am

14 March - Spring Fling (5-7pm)

Bring a decorated Easter Garden to the Spring Fling - entries to be no bigger than a shoebox.

28 March - Break the Rules for April Fools



BREAK THE RULES FOR APRIL FOOL'S

Let's celebrate April Fool's! On **Thursday 28th March** we want you to break the rules! Below is a list of 10 rules that you can break when you come to school...but beware, there is a fine of **50p for every rule you choose to break**. You may break as many or as few as you like!

The Rules

1. NO crazy hair
2. You **MUST** wear school uniform
3. NO temporary tattoos
4. NO nail varnish
5. NO hats
6. NO make up or face paint
7. NO odd socks or crazy tights
8. NO superhero capes or fancy dress
9. NO football/rugby shirts

Thursday 28th March...Come to school and break the rules.

- 1 rule broken = 50p
- 2 rules broken = £1

All fines to be paid online via Scopay



**Thursday 14th March
5-7pm
Infant and Junior Schools**

JOIN US FOR LOTS OF FUN!

- Hot dogs and snacks
- Tombolas
- Raffle
- Games
- Glitter Tattoos
- Biscuit Decorating

We can't run this great event without your support! Sign up to volunteer below or contact portway.psa@outlook.com. Volunteers will receive 5 tickets for their family to use at the Spring Fling



Card Payment available! Buy stall tokens on the gate or in advance (details to be confirmed)

EASTER GARDEN COMPETITION

Bring a decorated Easter Garden or Easter Egg along to our Spring Fling on 14th March to be entered into the competition

Let your creativity shine! Use whatever materials you like!

Please ensure entries are no bigger than an adult shoe box. £1 Entry on the day

**HAPPY
EASTER**

Entries in by 6pm.
Judging closes 6.30pm
and prizes given at
6.45pm



Prizes for the top 3 winners!

Portway PTA Pancake Day

8th March from 7.45am!

Menu:

- Pancake plus topping £1
- Sausage 50p
- Bacon 50p
- Fruit Juice or Hot drink 50p

Positivity

Resilience

Integrity

Dedication

Encouragement

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ROBLOX

PEGI RATING
7+

Roblox is one of the most popular video games on the market. By 2020, the game's makers were claiming that more than half of children in the USA play it. As a 'sandbox' title, Roblox offers a huge amount of creative freedom: it lets players create their own gaming experiences with the Roblox Studio to build custom levels and games, which can then be shared with other players online. Roblox fosters creative thinking and enjoys a robust online community of fans.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Roblox encourages players to communicate online (including a group chat facility). This could expose children to risks such as scammers, online predators, harassment, griefers and more. The in-game chat has some filters, but isn't perfect: players can still send harmful messages to others – such as general hostility – while predators can reach out to children directly.

PUBLIC SERVERS

Roblox has private or VIP servers which allow people to play exclusively with their friends, but this costs money. Most Roblox players will instead be on public servers that anyone can join. Servers can host games which focus on all kinds of aspects, including direct player interaction. Some games and servers, therefore, will put children more at risk of contact from strangers than others.

ONLINE DATERS

These are also called 'ODers' and are quite common in Roblox. An ODer is an individual who joins a game with the intention of finding someone to date online – and eventually meet in person. Such online dating is against the Roblox community guidelines, but this usually doesn't deter ODers. Some player-built Roblox game worlds have even been designed with online dating specifically in mind.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Roblox is actually free to download and play, but bear in mind that there are some hidden costs. Players are encouraged to make purchases in the game, for example, using real money. People can also buy extra Robux (the in-game currency) to spend on cosmetic items in the game, and some private or VIP servers also have a cost.

Advice for Parents & Carers

SET PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox comes with several parental control options, which are explained well on the game's official website. It's essential to enter the correct date of birth for your child, as that allows Roblox to automatically apply the appropriate chat filters. The game also allows parents and carers to set monthly spending restrictions and monitor their child's account.

DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING

Roblox's private messaging function raises the risk of children being contacted by people they may not want to speak with – potentially leading to bullying, harassment, toxicity and scam attempts. The game allows you to disable messages from anyone who hasn't been added as a friend on your child's account.

PRIVATE SERVERS

If your child has some genuine friends to play Roblox online with, paying for a private or VIP server decreases the risk of contact from strangers. Even then, however, some players could invite other people – who might not necessarily be child friendly – into the private server. If your child is a Roblox fan, it's important to talk with them regularly about who they are playing the game with.

MONITOR SPENDING

If they don't understand they're using real money, it's easy for children to accidentally spend a sizeable amount in the game. Using parental controls to place limits on their spending will help avoid any nasty financial surprises. Ensuring that you have two-factor authentication on your payment accounts also makes it harder for your child to spend money inadvertently.

DEALING WITH STRANGERS

At some point in their development, your child will need to learn how to deal with strangers online. Show them how to block and report any users who are upsetting them or asking uncomfortable questions. Talking to them about what's OK to discuss – and what they should never tell a stranger online – will help them understand how to communicate with other people online safely.

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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Sources: <https://www.theverge.com/2020/11/21/2333431/roblox-over-half-of-us-kids-are-playing-virtual-parties-fortnite>
<https://corp.roblox.com/parents/>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MINECRAFT

AGE RATING

7+

Minecraft is a beloved classic of modern gaming. First released in 2011, this open-ended 'sandbox' game of building and exploration still has over 140 million players who happily return to play it at least once every month. Minecraft has also been utilised for much more than just entertainment: it's sometimes used in schools to teach children coding, and it's also employed as a tool for computer-aided design, which is another valuable skill. Encouraging creativity and problem solving, Minecraft has plenty to offer gamers of all ages, and it's available on almost all video game platforms.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

PUBLIC SERVERS

Joining a public network (called a server) lets your child potentially interact with strangers through text chat. Some servers focus on building, while others are dedicated to role-playing – encouraging direct player interaction. Anyone can join public servers and connecting to one is relatively simple. Public server IP addresses (and therefore someone's location) are easy to find with search engines.

GRIEFING

Some people in Minecraft delight in purposefully damaging or destroying another player's creation. This is called 'griefing' and is a form of bullying: it intentionally spoils someone else's experience in the game by deleting hours of their work and forcing them to start from scratch. Many public servers treat griefing as a severe offence and frequently ban offenders.

ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's gameplay is relatively simple, and the outcome (when a child has built something new, for instance) can be extremely gratifying. This can make the game highly addictive. It's easy to lose track of time while playing Minecraft, causing committed young players to forget about other activities like homework or enjoying family time.

SCARY ELEMENTS

The visual design and gameplay of Minecraft is purposefully child friendly, so there's nothing too untoward in the game. However, some of the 'baddies' that can be encountered might prove a little too scary for very young players. In the game, certain enemies come out at night and are accompanied by audio – such as zombie moans and skeleton bone rattles – that may unnerve young ones.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

After initially buying the game, players can make optional extra purchases for cosmetic items and other bonuses. Minecraft Realms is an optional online subscription (requiring regular payments) that lets users run a multiplayer server to play with their friends. Most games consoles also need an active subscription to enable online play – so online gaming can quickly become an expensive hobby.

Advice for Parents & Carers

RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

There are a lots of Minecraft content creators who release helpful videos about the game on YouTube and Twitch. Not all of these, however, are suitable for children. Watching these content creators' channels yourself first is a safe way to find appropriate Minecraft videos to share with your children. This also helps you learn more about the game itself, and how your child plays it.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting 'Creative' or 'Peaceful' mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of moaning zombies or creepers damaging your build.

HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for your child to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given the necessary joining details. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – to ban someone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft.

ENCOURAGE BREAKS

It's easy for the hours to fly by while your child is playing Minecraft, so reminding them to take regular breaks is essential. This is a useful way for them to learn good time management, which they'll benefit from as they get older. It will also teach them to play their favourite games in moderation – limiting addictive behaviour and allowing them to manage their day better.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone needs to have contact with a stranger online. Talking to your child about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan in place for dealing with any hostile or difficult strangers. Ensure that your child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online, and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

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