

Ivy Lane School

Computing Newsletter

December 2021



Welcome to the first edition of our Computing newsletter. I aim to use this termly newsletter to help keep our community up to date with all matters relating to online safety, technology and the Computing curriculum at Ivy Lane School. As the newsletter develops we will also use this as a platform to share learning which has either been enhanced or supported through the use of technology.

Technology to support Home Learning (and keep the children occupied):

With the Christmas holidays (thankfully) looming, and the potential for getting outside decreasing due to deteriorating weather we thought it would be useful to share a selection of apps and websites which will help promote and support learning over holidays:



For younger children: Go Explore from CBeebies Android/Apple/Amazon – free

This app from the BBC focusses on learning games, from phonics and geography to well-being, feelings and self-care, all based on the parent channel's shows and characters.



Teach Your Monster to Read (Android/Apple/Amazon – free)

This fun app gets children to create a monster and then teach it to read a great way of learning themselves.



Scratch Jr (Android/Apple/Amazon – free)

Scratch is the programming environment that a lot of children will be familiar with already, and we use it regularly as part of our curriculum at Ivy Lane. Scratch Jr is an app version designed for five to seven-year-olds, although older children can have fun with it, too. It uses coding blocks to create programs for games, animation, music and other creative tasks.



Google Arts & Culture (Android/Apple – free)

Thankfully trips and museum visits are beginning to resume but if you are unable to partake Google's Arts & Culture app at least has virtual tours of more than 1,200 museums and galleries. Children can look and read as well as curate their own lists of favourite artworks to share.



Duolingo (Android/Apple – free + in-app purchases)

Duolingo isn't just a fun and popular way to learn languages that children already study at school. It covers more than 30, including Arabic, Hindi, Hebrew and Welsh. It's well designed, rewarding short daily sessions of practice. It's free, but in-app purchases remove ads and unlock some extra features.

E safety:

The Internet is an unmanaged, open communications channel. The World Wide Web, email, blogs and social networks all transmit information using the Internet's communication infrastructure internationally at a low cost. Anyone can send messages, discuss ideas and publish material with little restriction. These features of the Internet make it an invaluable and amazing resource used by millions of people every day.

Children (and adults) need to develop critical skills to evaluate online material and learn that publishing personal information could compromise their security and that of others. Schools have a duty of care to enable pupils to use on-line systems safely both in and outside of school.

E-Safety encompasses not only Internet technologies but also electronic communications via mobile phones, games consoles and wireless technology. It highlights the need to educate children and young people about the benefits, risks and responsibilities of using information technology.

- e-Safety concerns safeguarding children and young people in the digital world.
- e-Safety emphasises learning to understand and use new technologies in a positive way.
- e-Safety is less about restriction and more about education about the risks as well as the benefits so we can feel confident online.

If you would like some practical ideas on how to discuss e-safety with your child then please follow [this hyperlink to the NSPCC e-safety site](#).

As parents, we nurture our children with life skills – gradually exposing them to the various risks they might come across and help them to learn how to keep themselves safe, until one day we have to let go of their hands and let them venture out on their own. But what nurturing do we do when it comes to their on-line activity and do they understand the difference between the real world and virtual world? In our Computing lessons, we teach the children how to use technology safely, but have been alarmed to hear about some of the films, APPS and games they are accessing at home. The PEGI ratings do not correspond to the difficulty of a game, rather the suitability of the content. Many children as young as 5 years old are playing Black Ops (rated 18), Fortnite (rated 12) and watching films such as The Joker (15), all of which contain gratuitous violence. I would really urge parents to look carefully at content before allowing children to access it and if you unsure, err on the side of caution.

APP/ GAME/ Site	Age Rating	Risks
 TIK TOK	13 +	Grooming Swearing Violence Nudity
 Whatsapp	16+	Grooming Swearing Violence Nudity
 Instagram	13+	Bullying Nudity Grooming
 Snapchat	13+	Bullying Nudity Grooming
 Imvù	16+ - This is a dating APP!	Grooming Nudity
 Fortnite	13+	Gratuitous violence Explicit content Online bullying Grooming
 ROBLOX	13+	Gratuitous violence Explicit content Online bullying Grooming
 Call of Duty	18+	Gratuitous violence Explicit content Online bullying Grooming
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These are some of the apps which we are aware that some children have accessed recently, alongside their age rating and potential risks.

Dates for your diary:

December:

A family agreement is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet, and to start discussions together around how to behave in a positive way when online, whether this is at home, at school or at a friend's. The [Childnet family agreement](#) provides a list of things to consider when creating a family agreement, and some examples to get you started. An agreement template is also provided to help families set clear expectations for positive and safe internet use.

January:

New year, new me? January is a great time to think about new years resolutions, why not incorporate resolutions about how you and your children spend time online. Did you know 80% of young people have seen something hateful online aimed at a particular group? [Talk it over](#) is a resource designed to support parents in facilitating empathetic, honest, and evidence-based conversations about how to tackle online hate.

February:



The biggest event in the E-safety calendar takes place on Tuesday, 8 February 2022 as we celebrate the 19th edition of [Safer Internet Day](#) with actions taking place right across the globe. With a theme "Together for a better internet", the day will call upon all stakeholders to join together to make the internet a safer and better place for all, and especially for children and young people.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, hopefully you have found it useful and informative. If you have any questions or concerns regarding keeping your children safe online please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Have a lovely Christmas and stay safe!

Mr Faulkner

(Computing and E-safety Lead)