



Kirklevington Primary School

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Head of School: Mrs L Peacock



Wow, I can't really believe it is December on Monday – how time flies!

We have another very busy month in school in the run up to Christmas – a Christingle, Christmas Jumper & Christmas Dinner Day, Parties, Performances and a Christmas sing-a-long on the KS2 playground. *It's such a magical time of the year!*

Our school fundraising this half-term is focussed on the Christmas Raffle which will be drawn in school on Friday 19th December – **information to follow further down.**

Many thanks!
Mrs Peacock

Head of School



We are once again a **GOLD Award Rights Respecting School.**

Article 28: The right to a



November
Amelia (28th)

December
Ted (16th)
Ava (19th)
Oscar (25th)
Ruby (28th)
Archie (30th)

Happy birthday to you all!

Whole-School Staffing for 2025/6

Head of School: Mrs Peacock
School Administrator: Mrs Walker
Nursery (Acorn): Mrs Ridley & Miss Rigby
Reception (Willow): Mrs Patterson, Mrs Burns & Mrs Durham
Y1/2 (Birch): Mrs McGregor & Miss Cameron
Y2/3 (Chestnut): Mr Woollett & Mrs Pederson
Y4/5 (Elm): Mr Drake & Mrs Wallace
Y5/6 (Oak): Mrs Harris & Mrs Newton

** Staffing is always considered in the best interests of the children.*

Safeguarding your children is our priority.

There will be another Trust Safeguarding newsletter sent out before Christmas. Please read it carefully and use the resources it signposts you to. In the meantime, to safeguard your child online, we have shared with you the advice for parents and educators on 'In-Game Chat' and Roblox. We hope these help.



Safeguarding: *useful contacts if you are concerned about any child*

Children's Hub: 01429 284284

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000

NSPCC Helpline for 18 year olds or under to call: 08001111

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>

Attendance

Our current year-to-date statutory attendance is **96.4%** which is above national – well done! (However, it is unfortunately down on this time last year which was 97.2%.)

Our Attendance information can be found at:

<https://kirklevington.org.uk/parents/attendance/>

Please note: Attendance is part of our school's safeguarding duty.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IN-GAME CHAT

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has been accelerated by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT

There are a number of ways that gamers commonly chat with one another online. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat: a group voice conversation that console users can have with anyone on the same platform. This tends to be more commonly used by players who already know each other. Finally, many gamers – especially on PC – will chat via a third-party app such as Discord.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to all players to use. Many games default to making it an opt-in function, but some don't, meaning a child could start seeing messages within the game from people they're playing with, regardless of whether they know those individuals or not. While most strangers won't necessarily have ill intent, there are some who may behave inappropriately when chatting to a child – intentionally or otherwise.

DANGER OF GROOMING

It's been reported that some young gamers have encountered older players online who pretend to be a lower age to manipulate children, sending gifts in exchange for chatting and sending photos. Just as on any messaging platform, it's good to advise young people to avoid speaking to strangers; emphasise that they shouldn't accept gifts from anyone online that they don't know.

BULLYING AND ABUSE

While some in-game chat can turn toxic because of how a match plays out, others turn that way because of people who engage in trolling – in essence, behaving in an offensive and abusive way simply to cause pain or get a rise out of whoever they're talking to. These 'trolls' often lean on racial abuse, anti-LGBT sentiment and other hateful rhetoric; they normally feel most confident preying on younger, more impressionable gamers.

POTENTIAL FOR PRIVATE CHAT

If a player would like a re-match with a stranger after meeting them in the game, they can send a friend request, or use the party chat together in the future. For the most part, this is harmless – but it might lead to messages being exchanged in private. This could then escalate to the sharing of private information, and potentially attempts to manipulate or scam younger players.

COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE

Certain games are very competitive, and players can sometimes get upset if they feel a teammate is underperforming, an opponent won unfairly, or they're just a bad loser. This can lead to unpleasant messages that stray away from playful 'trash talk' and wander into the territory of bullying. Some players have been known to get incredibly abusive in situations like this, and the impact of this on a young gamer's emotional wellbeing could be severe.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT

In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows children to play without risk of contact from strangers – but it will need to be done in each individual game. Text chat appears in the corner of the screen in many titles, so it's normally easy to take a quick glance and see what's being said. With voice chat, explain to children what behaviour is inappropriate, so they can spot the dangers themselves.

REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS

Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag an account as potentially harmful. This normally leads to the account not being matched with yours in the future and, if that person's conduct breaks any of the game's rules, they may be banned from playing entirely. This is done within the game itself, so each title has a slightly different process, but these tend to be designed for simplicity.

CONSIDER OTHER CHAT OPTIONS

If a child wants to play with people they know, consider using party chat or a third-party service like Discord. This allows everyone involved to chat on a private server and even enjoy each other's company while playing different games. It's also far more secure, as anyone looking to join will need to request and be granted access – normally by whoever is hosting the chat.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Make sure children understand the difference between being competitive and being abusive. Talk about what constitutes unusual or inappropriate behaviour from strangers online. Be clear that if anything ever concerns or worries them, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Empower children to identify the risks of in-game chat for themselves and reassure them they won't get in trouble for seeking help if anything goes wrong.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Editor in Chief of GBRecon and has been working in the games media industry for five years. He's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his work has been published at sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.

#WakeUpWednesday
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Source: See full reference list on guide page at nationalcollege.com/guides/in-game-chat

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

ROBLOX

AGE RESTRICTION
PEGI
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WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Roblox is one of the most popular video games among children. In 2020, the game's developers claimed that more than half of the USA's children had played it. As a 'sandbox' title, the game lets players create their own gaming experiences with Roblox Studio to build custom levels, which can then be shared online.

ONLINE PLAY RISKS

Because Roblox connects random players across the world, it can put younger players into an environment with anonymous users who could use the platform for nefarious reasons. For example, some role-play games are used for online dates and mature role play, which could expose youngsters to inappropriate messages in the public chat box.

MATURE CONTENT

Content is difficult to moderate throughout Roblox, due to the number of games available. This is particularly notable on smaller games and experiences, but in summary, some of the games and experiences offered on the platform contain age-inappropriate content that could easily be seen by young players.

IN-GAME SPENDING

The majority of games within Roblox have extensive monetisation options, usually through season passes or microtransactions. Purchases can range in value from a few pennies up to much larger sums of money. While some games offer a lot of content via purchases, others can offer very little for real world money, causing younger players to end up out of pocket.

ANONYMOUS PLAYERS

The anonymity of users can leave players vulnerable to bullying, harassment, and predatory behaviour. Without the right parental controls or monitoring, users can connect with each other via personal messages or friend requests, and it is very difficult to know who's behind a username in this vast online world.

RISK OF ADDICTION

Roblox games can feature rewarding or satisfying mechanics that keep players coming back – or persuade them to stay logged-in for much longer. Like most games, they focus on interactivity, with constant rewards via in-game unlocks and currencies, which can sometimes lead to an addictive need to remain online for long periods of time.

SCAMS

Many of the games on Roblox feature collectible items, pets, or characters. These objects, while digital, are worth a lot of real money on certain online markets. Scammers will attempt to trade with younger users in the hopes of getting rare items that can be sold for real money, manipulating the child into handing them over, usually via misleading information.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MONITOR THE CONTENT

While Roblox does implement plenty of moderation tools and parental controls, it's up to parents and guardians to monitor the types of games a child or impressionable player is experiencing. If a youngster wants to play Roblox, be sure to check out which specific games they want to play within it, and get a good idea of their content.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TOOLS

Use the parental controls within the game itself and teach youngsters how to report and block other players. Knowing the powers within their reach will make Roblox a safer, happier experience. You can set age ranges for who's allowed to contact you, close public chat boxes, block spending, and even make your Roblox profile completely private. All these options are helpful in cutting off bad actors from engaging with children.

PLAY TOGETHER

Consider playing Roblox with the children in your care. There are few more effective ways to see how monetisation works, gauge whether the game could lead to addictive behaviours, or even witness how interaction between players works, than sitting down and trying the game for yourself. This should help you figure out whether it's suitable for particular children.

TEACH ONLINE BEHAVIOURS

Have an open conversation about the risks of online play and how to spend money wisely. By being honest and giving tips on how a younger user can protect themselves, you can empower them to not only take care of themselves, but others too. Any user can be reported to Roblox moderators by other players for behaving inappropriately. With this knowledge, younger players can be aware of what to look for and help prevent it.

Meet Our Expert

Dan Lipscombe is a videogame journalist and author of over 20 books on gaming, including books on Minecraft, Fortnite, Roblox, and more. For 15 years he has been writing about his passion for gaming. When he's not playing games, he's talking about them at GAMINGBible.



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Signposting to Wraparound Childcare

Kirklevington Primary School - Bookable via our Arbor app: **Breakfast Club open 7:45-8:45am (for all children 3-11)** and half-termly after-school clubs 3:15-4:15pm (catering for different interests for Y1-Y6 pupils with limited places)

Puddleducks Childcare, Yarm – 01642 791895 or

<https://www.puddleduckschildcare.com/>

Clever Clogs Childcare, Yarm – 01642 780586 or

<https://www.cleverclogsyarm.co.uk/>

Spring Oscars Layfield, Yarm – 01642 787671 or <https://springchildcare.co.uk/>



N.B. No transport from outside childcare providers are allowed in our staff car park.

Dates for Autumn 2025 & Spring 1 2026

- 1.12.25-12.12.25: Y4 Swimming Lessons (daily for 2 weeks)
- 1.12.25: Christmas tree decorating
- 5.12.25: Picture News Live Assembly from Antarctica
- 11.12.25: EY Christmas Performance to Parents at 9:30am (school hall)
- 12.12.12: Lego League Tournament (selected pupils)
- 15.12.25: Year 1, Year 2 & Year 3 - Dress Rehearsal to school
- 16.12.25: Year 1, Year 2 & Year 3 Christmas Performance to Parents at 2:15pm (school hall)
- 17.12.25: Year 1, Year 2 & Year 3 Christmas Performance to Parents at 9:30am (school hall)
- 17.12.25: Christmas Jumper and Christmas Dinner Day –**
Donate to Save the Children (optional) at:
<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/donate-here>
- 18.12.25: EY Christmas Party (am) – party clothes/Christmas jumper
- 18.12.25: Birch & Chestnut Christmas Party (pm) – party clothes/Christmas jumper
- 19.12.25: Elm & Oak Christmas Party (pm) – party clothes/Christmas jumper
- 19.12.25: Whole-school Christmas sing-a-long in the KS2 playground – All welcome and please join in!
- 20.12.25 – 4.1.26: Christmas Holidays**
- 5.1.25: Return to school
- 12.1.25: Elm – EDF Energy Visit & Workshop
- 16.1.25: Y1-Y6 Diwali Dance Workshops
- 20.1.25: Birch – Pirate ABC Festival at Queen's Campus
- 21.1.25: Willow – EYFS Festival at Queen's Campus
- 20.2.25 – Break-up for February half-term

School Term Dates for 2025-26 can be found on our website at:
<https://www.kirklevington.org.uk/parents/school-term-and-holiday-dates/>

Our PD Days (when school is closed to children) for 2025-26 are:

Monday 1.9.25
Friday 24.10.25
Monday 1.6.26
Monday 20.7.26
Tuesday 21.7.26

Leave of Absence forms for any absence from school need to be completed online and are available at:
<https://kirklevington.org.uk/parents/attendance/>

Remember the majority of photos of events from school are posted onto our social media: <https://www.facebook.com/KirklevingtonPrimarySchool>.



Art Club after-school has had a great half-term creating all sorts of arts and crafts.



Snowy playtime fun for ALL!





Willow have been immersed in the story of Goldilocks & the Three Bears last week.



Acorn enjoyed making fizzy, sparkling potions last week.





Our Kirklevington Superstars



This is where we celebrate the achievements of our children (and staff). If your child would like to share their achievement with our school community, please send a photo of them and a brief write-up to the kirklevington@kirklevington.org.uk.