

Friday 6th December 2024

Dear parents and carers,

Online Safety Newsletter – Autumn 2024

Christmas Presents

Many children will be receiving gifts this year for Christmas that will bring potential online safety risks. Whether receiving a phone, tablet, games console or game, we would always recommend thoroughly researching the present beforehand so that you have a clear understanding of the associated risks and steps that can be put into place to manage them. Whatever the gift is, there will undoubtedly be a guide somewhere online which will include such guidance as the settings that you are able to put in place. A range of guides can be found on our school's Online Safety page at: <https://www.connaughtjuniorschool.co.uk/page/?title=Online+Safety&pid=37>

Loot boxes

For many children and young people, playing games is predominantly about socialising with their friends. Because of this there can be significant peer pressure to look and be better than everyone else, to get further in the game than other and more. In-game purchases such as loot boxes capitalise on this peer pressure, essentially enticing users to get ahead more quickly by spending money.

Concerningly, a BBC investigation has found that, out of the top 45 biggest games on the Google Play store, most are not disclosing that the games contain loot boxes properly. Many parents rely on the information that is available on the various game/app stores as well as ads to decide what is/is not appropriate for their children and this lack of important information is inexcusable. [Alan Mackenzie, Online Safety Specialist]

The BBC article can be found at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c748ww9y9nno>

Report Remove - Childline

The illegal sharing of nude images online has sadly become a national problem in recent years, with many young people having images of themselves shared on the internet against their wishes. Childline have developed a tool designed to help young people report such images and videos of themselves and help remove them from the internet. For more information, please visit the Childline website at:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/report-remove>

Yours sincerely,

Mr Stevens

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Registered number: 0856427

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