



May 9th 2018

Fortnite Game

Dear Parents,

Following some recent discussions with pupils, we are aware that lots of our children are regularly playing on a game called 'Fortnite.' Staying safe online regularly features in our Computing curriculum and pupils are aware of how to stay safe online. Where necessary we will also provide parents with any useful information we find around current trends.

The following guide was taken from the 'Ask About Games' website which provides parents with information about a variety of popular games, their ratings and how to keep children safe at home when they are playing them.

Parents' Guide to Fortnite (PEGI 12+)

Fortnite is a popular strategy survival game for PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Windows, and Mac. It combines Minecraft resource collecting and building with team based survival shooting games.

The main action, in the Save The World mode, is shooting and attacking with melee weapons, but players can also build fortifications and work with teammates to defend survivors from waves of enemy monsters. This combines with exploration and resource gathering to play a little like Minecraft.

Fortnite leapt to greater popularity with its Battle Royale mode that can be played for free and pits up to 100 players against each other while a mysterious cloud steadily reduces the size of the war zone, creating knife edge and climatic gun fights.



Although it is just a shooting game players will develop strategic thinking, forward planning and creative approaches to combat. It teaches a deep amount of collaboration and working together and saving team mates.

Ratings

In the UK the Video Standards council rate Fortnite as PEGI 12 for frequent scenes of mild violence. It is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age.

The VSC expand on the PEGI rating by stating that "Violence consists of you using whatever weapons you can find or make to fend off the monsters of the Storm and save the survivors. Damage is dealt by numbers and life bars and monsters disappear in a purple flash when defeated."

Not covered by ratings are the interactions with other players online. Although the game isn't rated for profanity, its online nature could expose younger players to offensive language from random strangers via the voice or on-screen text chat.

It's also a game where the sound is crucial (hearing footsteps of other players in particular). This means that players will wear headphones and parents can't always hear what is being said by strangers.

Because of this it's worth setting up your console or PC to have sound coming from the TV as well as headset so you can hear what other players are saying to your children from time to time.

On consoles, players can join a lobby of friends before they play. This enables them to mute other players and just talk to people they know.

In App Purchases

The popular Battle Royale mode is free to play. It's worth noting that you do need Xbox Gold subscription to play online on Xbox One but you do not need the equivalent PlayStation Plus subscription to play on PlayStation.

The game does push players to make additional in-game purchases, though they're not required to play the game. These mainly focus on new clothes and equipment in the online game. These are elements that don't improve a players performance but just make them look better.



Competitive Angst

Like any game with a fiercely competitive online mode, younger players can find that Fortnite makes them cross or angry when they lose. This is common in games like FIFA and Rocket League, but even more in Fortnite because you only have one life and then you are out the game.

Taking regular breaks can help this, as well as playing with parents nearby, or in shared family rooms. Playing Battle Royale in teams is also a nice way to mitigate the sudden loss, as you can then spectate and cheer on teammates – offering advice and guidance via the voice chat.

This competitive and online play style also means it is hard to stop a game part way through, as children will complain this will affect their standing in the game. Games can last up to 20 minutes so advance warning of tea time, and a clear responsibility on the child to be ready for this, is a good idea. Still, they will always want, “just one more go” and complain that they “can’t stop now”.

Many thanks for your support,

Miss Wilson

Health & Wellbeing Lead.



