



Wombwell Park Street Primary School

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Executive Headteacher: Mrs G Foster-Wilson

Headteacher: Mrs C Lawson

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs L Longden

Friday 5th October 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

Fortnite and Online Safety

The game Fortnite comes in two versions: Fortnite: Save the World (previously known as just Fortnite, which you have to pay for), and the free Fortnite: Battle Royale – the most popular version that more than 40 million people have downloaded. The aim of Fortnite is to stay alive, playing as an individual or as part of a team with people across the globe. Each game lasts around 20 minutes, providing you are not 'killed'.

Unfortunately, like many other gaming apps, Fortnite has a chat area allowing users to communicate both verbally and through messaging. In September 2018, it was announced that 24 alleged predators had been arrested due to the inappropriate communication between themselves and a minor. As you can see, this is a worry, considering that there has been a vast increase in the number of children in school talking about Fortnite, even children as young as four years old. The staff in school want to ensure that parents are aware of the dangers of this online game in order to protect our children.

In addition, Park Street prides itself on children who behave well during learning **and** at play times and we are concerned that this inappropriate 'talk' about Fortnite has already begun to impact on teaching and learning **and** behaviour at play times. We **will not** accept children discussing the game during learning or playing inappropriate games, which could well result in children fighting and hurting each other. In line with our behaviour policy, children who demonstrate such behaviour will be placed on the traffic light and spoken to regarding inappropriate play. This could result in a letter of concern being sent home. We would also appreciate you bearing the following in mind.

Playing video games has become a popular activity for people of all ages. Video gaming is a multibillion-dollar industry, bringing in more money than movies and DVDs. Like films, all video games carry age ratings. The particular game Fortnite has an age restriction of **12 years old** and therefore children at Park Street **should not** be accessing this type of material. As of next year, new laws are going to be put in place to prosecute any parents caught allowing their child to access material when underage.

While some games have educational content, many of the most popular games emphasise negative themes and promote:

- The killing of people or animals
- The use and abuse of drugs and alcohol
- Criminal behaviour, disrespect for authority and the law
- Sexual exploitation and violence toward women
- Racial, sexual, and gender stereotypes
- Foul language and obscene gestures

Whilst we acknowledge that a lot of games may have educational purposes we **strongly** advise that you do not let your child/children play on games that are not appropriate for their age. In order to safeguard the children, we will contact parents if we hear or feel that their learning or behaviours are being affected by gaming and as always, work with you on this matter.

Many thanks for your cooperation and understanding,

Mr A Fidment and Miss L Garratt
(KS1 and KS2 Computing and E-Safety Leads)

Wombwell Park Street Primary School is proud to be part of



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