



E-safety Newsletter Autumn term 2 Antbullying Week 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

You may be aware that this week has been National Antbullying week. As such, in school this week, the children have been focusing on how to identify online harassment and cyberbullying and what to do if this happens to them, or if they become aware that it is happening to someone in their friendship groups or family.

Our children are very good at telling us that they know how to find and use the 'Report' buttons on their online games etc., but we know that they still find it difficult to talk to adults about their online experiences as they worry that they may have done something wrong and may 'get into trouble'. We need to continue to reassure children that they do not need to fear judgements and reprisals, we would much prefer that they talk to us and tell us about anything they are concerned about so that we can help them; we are more concerned with knowing they are safe.

Please also reassure your child that they are safe to share their concerns with staff in school; we are here to help and advise, even if the concern is about something that happened online out of school hours.

I have attached three very helpful factsheets for you, with lots of useful tips and advice:

1. A factsheet to advise parents how to minimize the risk of your child becoming vulnerable to bullying on 'WhatsApp'
2. A poster about a new game that is currently trending called "Overwatch 2"
3. A brief summary of 'the most popular apps and games children use' that adults should be aware of.

Please read and share these factsheets with your child to initiate conversations about how they interact and conduct themselves online.

The message we try to reinforce in school is that we don't want to stop children having fun online, we just want to know that they can keep themselves safe whilst doing so. And that the most important way that they can keep themselves safe, is by always telling an adult when something goes wrong or worries them.

If your child has expressed concerns, that you would like advice or support to address, please do not hesitate to let us know; we will be more than happy to support and advise you or signpost you to further advisory services.

Yours sincerely

Sharyn Ailara, Deputy Head Teacher

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# Keep your child safe on WhatsApp



## What are the risks?

- › Bullying, particularly in group chats
- › Seeing content of a sexual nature, or showing violence and hatred
- › Settings that allow messages to disappear after 24 hours or 7 days. This could make it harder to track bullying, and your child might share things they wouldn't otherwise because it'll disappear
- › Sharing their live location, particularly with people they don't know in person
- › Spam or hoax messages
- › Being exposed to strangers through group chats

WhatsApp says the **minimum age** to use it is **16**, but younger children can still use it easily.

## 6 steps to help your child use WhatsApp safely

### 1. Keep their personal information and location private

By default, WhatsApp shows profile photos, status and when you last used it to all users.

Encourage your child to only share this information with their contacts, and be careful about who they talk to on the app, as anyone could pretend to be a child online.

To check and change these settings:

- › On an **iPhone**, open settings in WhatsApp (the cog icon), then Account > Privacy. Tap the setting you want to change, then choose who it should be visible to
- › On **Android**, tap the 3 dots in the top-right of the home screen, then > Settings > Account > Privacy. Tap the setting you want to change, then choose who it should be visible to

WhatsApp also has a feature that you can use to share your 'live location' with others. Tell your child to keep this turned off, or to only share their location with people they trust.

To check this:

- › On an **iPhone**, go to phone Settings (the cog icon) > WhatsApp > Location, and tap to change if you need to
- › On **Android**, go to privacy settings as above, then scroll down to 'Live location', and tap to change if you need to

### 2. Remind your child to be careful about what they share

It's easy to forward messages, photos and videos to others on WhatsApp. Even if your child sets a message to automatically disappear or deletes it after sharing it, the person they send it to could still screenshot it, forward it to someone else, or save it.

So before they share anything, tell them to ask themselves: "Would I want others to see what I'm about to send?"

### 3. Remind your child they can leave group chats

If they see something they're not comfortable with in a group chat, or are in a chat with someone they don't know and are uncomfortable with, they should leave the group. To do this:

- On an **iPhone**, go into the group chat, tap the group subject, then > Exit group > Exit group
- On **Android**, go into the group chat, tap the group subject, then > Exit group > Exit

### 4. Make sure your child knows how to report and block people

When they first receive a message from an unknown number, they'll have the option to report it.

If someone in your child's contacts is upsetting them or making them uncomfortable, they can report or block them at any point (WhatsApp won't tell the user they've been blocked/reported).

To do this:

- On an **iPhone**, open settings in WhatsApp, go to Account > Privacy > Blocked > Add New..., then find the contact they want to block, and tap the contact
- On **Android**, tap the 3 dots icon, then Settings, then tap Account > Privacy > Blocked contacts, tap the icon in the top right showing a person and a plus sign, search for the contact they want to block, then tap the contact to block them

To report issues like offensive or abusive content or spam:

- On an **iPhone**, open the chat with the user you want to report, tap the contact then then tap Report Contact > Report And Block
- On **Android**, open the chat with the user you want to report, then tap the 3 dots icon, then > More > Report

### 5. Encourage your child to watch out for spam and hoax messages

These can appear to come from contacts, as well as people they don't know. Tell your child to watch out for messages that:

- Ask them to tap on a link, or specifically to click on a link to activate a new feature
- Ask them to share personal information like bank account details, date of birth or passwords
- Ask them to forward the message
- Say they have to pay to use WhatsApp
- Have spelling or grammar errors

### 6. Tell our school about any bullying they experience

Look for signs that your child may be being bullied, like being afraid or reluctant to go out, to go to school, or to go online and do the things they used to; feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, or losing sleep.

#### Sources used in this factsheet

- [Bullying and cyberbullying, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/)  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>
- [Help Centre, WhatsApp](https://faq.whatsapp.com/?locale=en_US)  
[https://faq.whatsapp.com/?locale=en\\_US](https://faq.whatsapp.com/?locale=en_US)

This factsheet was produced by [The Key Safeguarding](https://www.thekey.org.uk/): [thekeysupport.com/safeguarding](https://www.thekey.org.uk/)

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about OVERWATCH 2

A long-awaited sequel to 2016's massively successful Overwatch, this is a futuristic shooting game with a focus on teamwork and strategy which gives it an extra dimension to the majority of titles in the genre. Its cast of characters is diverse and memorable, while there's a definite (and rewarding) learning curve to players improving their skill. Created by established developers Blizzard Entertainment, Overwatch 2 is free to play, with an emphasis on competitive multiplayer action – meaning that children may want to play the game even more simply because their friends have it.

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## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### MULTIPLE PASSWORDS

Overwatch 2 supports convenient cross-play across consoles and PC – as long as users link all their devices under a unifying account on the Blizzard battle.net platform. This has other benefits (preserving a player's original skins for use in the new game), but if your child does want to link their accounts, be warned: the process can be extremely tricky and requires multiple passwords.

### VOICE CHAT

As a shooting game which focuses on fast-paced, competitive play, teamwork is central to getting the most out of the Overwatch 2 experience. Many players use voice chat to coordinate with other users – often with friends, but sometimes also with strangers. In either case, this means your child is in contact with others, who may – for example – use offensive language in the heat of the moment.

### IN-GAME PURCHASING

Like many free-to-play games, Overwatch 2 offers in-game purchases for unlocking its colourful skins. While new characters arrive as part of a free 'battle pass' each season (normally lasting around three months), players can unlock them much earlier by buying a premium version of the pass. There are also in-game bundles (with varying costs) themed around certain characters or events.

### VIOLENT GAMEPLAY

Overwatch 2 heavily features combat, although the on-screen shootouts are relatively sanitised. Most of its characters are of a fantastical nature (there's a gorilla scientist with a laser weapon, for instance, and a DJ on roller-blades who fires sound energy), but some – such as Reaper, an assassin in a wrath-like metal mask – are a little on the darker side and could unnerve younger players.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### ASSIST WITH ACCOUNT LINKING

If your child is trying to link their accounts from different devices together, it might be wise for you to help them set it up. Not only should it enable the process to run more smoothly (and save you being asked for the passwords for each account), but you'll also be able to make sure that the website for linking is correct. We've put the right web address under the expert's bio at the bottom of this guide.

### MONITOR COMMUNICATIONS

Playing Overwatch 2 with friends is almost universally the most popular way to enjoy the game. If your child is playing with a new friend they only know online – or a stranger – you may want to monitor the chat to make sure they aren't being exposed to anything unsavoury. You might also decide to adjust the in-game voice chat settings so only confirmed friends can speak to your child.

### USE IT AS INSPIRATION

Overwatch characters represent many races, nationalities, gender identities and sexual orientations. This eclectic roster of heroes offers a superb jumping-off point for discussing racial, sexual or gender diversity with your child. Whether it's finding Nepal on a globe together or talking about non-traditional relationships, the game could be an excellent conversation starter.

### LIMIT IN-GAME SPENDING

The loot boxes featured in the first Overwatch have been replaced by a rotating storefront – so users only have a set time to purchase a skin or item before it becomes unavailable. Your child can still earn plenty of items, however, through the free battle pass. In any case, we'd advise removing any payment methods – or at least setting limits in advance – if you're worried about in-game spending.

### WATCH SOME GAMEPLAY

Overwatch players fight with an array of weapons and explosives, but the battles are presented in a way that forgoes blood, gore or dismemberment, regardless of the mode or characters selected. The game also usually avoids the word "kill" – referring to "eliminations" instead. Watching footage of Overwatch 2 on YouTube could help you decide whether it's suitable for your child before they play.

## Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Games Editor of technology and entertainment website Dexerto and has been working in the gaming media for three years. A long-time fan of gaming, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have also been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar, among others.






Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-54848>



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# Top apps and games to be aware of

APP/GAME	WHAT IS IT?	LISTEN OUT FOR CHILDREN TALKING ABOUT:
<b>TikTok</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users share short videos of themselves, often lip-syncing to music, and watch other people's videos</li> <li>• You can gain 'fans' and follow other people</li> <li>• There are often 'challenges' that spread among users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos that sound inappropriate</li> <li>• 'Challenges' that are potentially dangerous</li> <li>• Strangers they've made contact with through TikTok</li> <li>• Content about eating disorders and bullying content</li> </ul>
<b>Snapchat</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picture, video and message-sharing with contacts</li> <li>• 'Snaps' disappear and aren't saved on phones</li> <li>• Known for sharing nude and semi-nude images</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing explicit images and requests for photos</li> <li>• Screenshots of 'Snaps' being shared</li> <li>• Strangers they've made contact with</li> </ul>
<b>Twitch</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A website where users can watch videos and live streams of other users, typically playing computer games</li> <li>• They can also live stream themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strangers they've made contact with</li> <li>• Inappropriate content they've seen</li> </ul>
<b>Minecraft</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A game where children explore an online world. They can use 'building blocks' to customise the world and create new parts to it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Griefing', where someone intentionally ruins the game for others</li> <li>• Contact with strangers</li> </ul>
<b>Roblox</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An online game creating system where you can create and publish games, and play other users' games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Griefing', where someone intentionally ruins the game for others</li> <li>• Contact with strangers</li> </ul>

**Remember – If you have any concerns and would like some help or advice, please contact your child's teacher or the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Ailara).**

## Further information and advice

- > [TikTok is filled with pro-eating disorder content, despite its own rules, BuzzFeed](https://www.buzzfeed.com/cameronwilson/tiktok-eating-disorder-videos-algorithm-for-you-page)  
*https://www.buzzfeed.com/cameronwilson/tiktok-eating-disorder-videos-algorithm-for-you-page*
- > [TikTok app safety – what parents need to know, Internet Matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/tik-tok-app-safety-what-parents-need-to-know/)  
*https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/tik-tok-app-safety-what-parents-need-to-know/*
- > [Livestreaming and online video apps, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/livestreaming-online-video-apps/)  
*https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/livestreaming-online-video-apps/*
- > [Online games, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/)  
*https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/*