



## FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER No 6

24<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you all had a peaceful and refreshing half term break. It has been lovely to see the mornings finally getting lighter and at last there are signs of spring appearing. It's so nice to once again see the daffodil maze coming in bloom!

We would like to warmly welcome Sophie in Wagtails class and Eva in Falcons class and their family to the school and hope that you all quickly settle in to school life.

### World Book Day – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March



On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March we will be celebrating World Book Day (moved from Thursday to avoid any strike action). Details of this were sent out via Weduc on 8<sup>th</sup> February but as a reminder the theme this year is 'You Are a Reader' and we want to enable every child to develop a love of reading, gain confidence and be successful.

We are inviting the children to come dressed in something comfortable. For example- joggers, pyjamas, cosy jumper, etc... Children are also invited to bring in their favourite soft toy and story book (can you please ensure these are clearly named to avoid loss). We are planning a 'Booknic' so the children can share stories with others in a relaxing environment.

An activity has been sent home which is a special reading challenge sheet with lots of fun reading activities that your child can tick off once they have completed it. **Can you please bring this back in to school by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.**

This is a fabulous link to online stories that you can share with your child.

<https://www.worldbookday.com/share-a-story-corner/>

Each child will have received a book voucher that can be used to get a 'World Book Day Book for free or £1 off a book or audio book costing £2.99 or more.

We would like to thank you for your support and we look forward to celebrating World Book Day with you.

## **Red Nose Day – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March**



To mark Red Nose Day, this will be a non-uniform 'wear something red to school' day. We will not be selling red noses or other merchandise in school but children will be allowed to wear red noses if they have them on this day. During the day the children will take part in a range of activities to raise their awareness of this very worthwhile charity.

If you would like to make a small cash donation, please send it with your child to give to their class teacher - we will then forward all donations on your behalf.

## **Parent Consultations – 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> March**



Parent Consultations will be held online on the above dates and appointments are now available to book. In line with other schools, parent consultations are a short 10-minute appointment to inform you about your child's current progress and attainment. We understand that sometimes parents have issues they would like to discuss which may take more time than this, and so in these instances we would ask you to contact the class teacher to make an appointment for a face to face meeting outside of these times. Teachers are happy to talk with parents at any point during the school year, you do not need to wait for consultation evenings to discuss concerns. Your child's work is available for you to look at following their year group assemblies, but again, if you wish to look at this at a time other than this, then please speak to your child's class teacher.

## **School Grounds Day – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**



This term we will be having a full day for our grounds work in order that we can begin to create our new Forest School area in memory of Paul Andrews. Year groups will be given a set time to come outside and carry out activities and parents are warmly invited to join us as follows:

YR 9.15 – 10.30;      Y1 10.45 – 12.00;      Y2 1.15 – 2.45

More details will be sent out closer to the time but do mark this date and time in your diary if you think you would like to come and help.

We are pleased to report that you have very generously raised £170 so far to put towards the plans to create an area in memory of the late Mr Andrews, there is still time to donate via Weduc or cash in an envelope via the school office if you so wish.

To help us with the cost of the project if any parents/carers have a connection to a business that can put up post and rail fences or a gardening business we would love to hear from you. We appreciate that people cannot always give up their time freely so if the company can offer a reduced rate on a mutually convenient date then please do email Mr Hill, the School Business Manager on [office@epinf.co.uk](mailto:office@epinf.co.uk) to discuss.

## **Governors Corner**

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we are on the lookout for a new parent governor to join our board. Do you have time to commit to developing the school for the benefit of your child and future pupils? There are no skills prerequisites and a comprehensive training programme is freely available for governors. We just ask that you consider your availability to commit to this rewarding role. If you are interested, please leave your details with the school office and I will be happy to have a chat about what the role entails. The National Governors Association also publishes information on what it means to be a school governor (see [www.nga.org.uk/Be-a-Governor.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/Be-a-Governor.aspx)).

*Paul Willetts*  
*Chair of Governors*

## **YR Request for Plastic Food**

If anyone has any plastic food (fruit/vegetables etc...) they could donate to the YR classes for their role play areas it would be much appreciated.

## **Spotlight on Safeguarding**

Following on from last months Spotlight we have found some useful posters about online gaming.

Online gaming is simply the playing of a video game over the internet, usually with friends. Online games can be played on any number of devices from dedicated video games consoles such as PlayStations, Xboxes, and Nintendo Switches, to PCs, laptops and mobile phones.

Online gaming provides many benefits. Unfortunately, it also comes with some risks. The two posters below may be useful information and guidance. In particular looking at the PEGI rating for games as a way to see if games are suitable for your child. Over the next few newsletters we will share some other online games posters with you.

*Lucy Owens*  
*Designated Safeguarding Leader*



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# ROBLOX

Roblox is one of the most popular video games on the market. By 2020, the game's makers were claiming that more than half of children in the USA play it. As a 'sandbox' title, Roblox offers a huge amount of creative freedom; it lets players create their own gaming experiences with the Roblox Studio to build custom levels and games, which can then be shared with other players online. Roblox fosters creative thinking and enjoys a robust online community of fans.

PEGI RATING  
**7+**

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Roblox encourages players to communicate online (including a group chat facility). This could expose children to risks such as scammers, online predators, harassment, griefers and more. The in-game chat has some filters, but isn't perfect: players can still send harmful messages to others – such as general hostility – while predators can reach out to children directly.

### ONLINE DATERS

These are also called 'ODers' and are quite common in Roblox. An ODer is an individual who joins a game with the intention of finding someone to date online – and eventually meet in person. Such online dating is against the Roblox community guidelines, but this usually doesn't deter ODers. Some player-built Roblox game worlds have even been designed with online dating specifically in mind.

### PUBLIC SERVERS

Roblox has private or VIP servers which allow people to play exclusively with their friends, but this costs money. Most Roblox players will instead be on public servers that anyone can join. Servers can host games which focus on all kinds of aspects, including direct player interaction. Some games and servers, therefore, will put children more at risk of contact from strangers than others.

### IN-APP PURCHASES

Roblox is actually free to download and play, but bear in mind that there are some hidden costs. Players are encouraged to make purchases in the game, for example, using real money. People can also buy extra Robux (the in-game currency) to spend on cosmetic items in the game, and some private or VIP servers also have a cost.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### SET PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox comes with several parental control options, which are explained well on the game's official website. It's essential to enter the correct date of birth for your child, as that allows Roblox to automatically apply the appropriate chat filters. The game also allows parents and carers to set monthly spending restrictions and monitor their child's account.

### DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING

Roblox's private messaging function raises the risk of children being contacted by people they may not want to speak with – potentially leading to bullying, harassment, toxicity and scam attempts. The game allows you to disable messages from anyone who hasn't been added as a friend on your child's account.

### PRIVATE SERVERS

If your child has some genuine friends to play Roblox online with, paying for a private or VIP server decreases the risk of contact from strangers. Even then, however, some players could invite other people – who might not necessarily be child friendly – into the private server. If your child is a Roblox fan, it's important to talk with them regularly about who they are playing the game with.

### MONITOR SPENDING

If they don't understand they're using real money, it's easy for children to accidentally spend a sizeable amount in the game. Using parental controls to place limits on their spending will help avoid any nasty financial surprises. Ensuring that you have two-factor authentication on your payment accounts also makes it harder for your child to spend money inadvertently.

### DEALING WITH STRANGERS

At some point in their development, your child will need to learn how to deal with strangers online. Show them how to block and report any users who are upsetting them or asking uncomfortable questions. Talking to them about what's OK to discuss – and what they should never tell a stranger online – will help them understand how to communicate with other people online safely.

### Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://www.theverge.com/2020/7/21/2133343/roblox-over-half-of-us-kids-joining-virtual-parties-fortnite>  
<https://cor.roblox.com/parents/>



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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# 10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage ...

## THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

## ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

## SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

## TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fail or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

## REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

## A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

## PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

## THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

## TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

## ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain; that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

## Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.



Source: [https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0024/234609/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf](https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/234609/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf)



## Middy Meals Supervisor Vacancy



### **EAST PRESTON INFANT SCHOOL MIDDAY MEALS SUPERVISOR**

We currently have a vacancy for a Middy Meals Supervisor

Hours: As and when required 1 hour per day (1200 – 1300) term time only

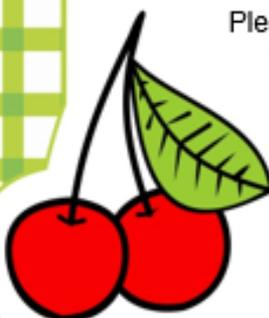
Salary: Starting at West Sussex grade 2 point 2 - £10.60 per hour

Do you:

- 
- Have a friendly, cheerful disposition
  - Enjoy working with children
  - Like to organise play activities
  - Don't mind "rolling up your sleeves" to do practical work and supervising lunches and to clear tables and chairs at end of lunch session etc
  - Enjoy working within a team
  - Have a firm but fair approach to behaviour management
  - Understand the importance of confidentiality

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The post is subject to a successful DBS and health check.

Please contact Stephen Hill, School Business Manager, via email at [office@epinf.co.uk](mailto:office@epinf.co.uk) for further details.



## Dates for Your Diary

Attached are some dates for you to note on your calendar, please check each newsletter for any updates or amendments.

Once again, we would like to thank you all for your ongoing support of the school.

*Claire New*

Claire New (Mrs)  
Headteacher





## Diary Dates

Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	-	9.15am Kestrels Class Assembly
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	-	9.15am Hawks Class Assembly
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	-	9.15am Falcons Class Assembly
	-	FEPIS Bag2School
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	-	World Book Day
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> March	-	9.10am – 9.40am Y2 & Y1 Stay & Play
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	-	9.10am – 9.40am Y2 & YR Stay & Play
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	-	9.10am – 9.40am Y1 & YR Stay & Play
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> March	-	3.45pm – 6pm Parent Consultations
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	-	3.45pm – 6pm Parent Consultations
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	-	3.45pm – 6pm Parent Consultations
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	-	Red Nose Day – details to follow
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	-	FEPIS/Eco Committee cake sale
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	-	School Grounds Day
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	-	2.30pm – Starlings Class Assembly
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	-	2.30pm – Blackbirds Class Assembly
	-	FEPIS disco donation day
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	-	2.30pm – Woodpeckers Class Assembly
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	-	FEPIS Discos – details to follow
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	-	Term ends at 3.15pm

**Easter Break – Monday 3rd April to Friday 14th April inclusive**



*Learning, Playing and Laughing Together  
to be the best that we can be*