



# Safeguarding News

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## PARENTAL GUIDANCE FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE

Discord is one of the most popular communication tools for gamers. It allows users to create or join what are known as 'servers', where different users can talk in groups via text message or voice call. There is also the option to send direct messages and make video calls.

There is an age restriction and users are required to be above the age of 13 years. We are including information from National Online Safety which covers points that parents need to know about Discord and how to protect children who use this tool.



<p><b>INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT</b></p> <p>Your child can access almost any chat server on Discord. This means they can easily be exposed to content and conversations that are inappropriate, upsetting or potentially harmful.</p> 	<p><b>SEXUAL IMAGERY</b></p> <p>Despite there being guidelines in place to prevent it, users are able to circulate adult content. This can include sexualised images, pornographic videos and provocative discussions. It's important to stay alert and know the risks that your child could be exposed to.</p> 	<p><b>RISK OF CYBERBULLYING</b></p> <p>Interactions on the platform are largely unregulated. This means other users can easily say and show things to your child that might be offensive and upsetting. The competitive nature of gaming can lead users to make abusive and harmful remarks about your child.</p> 	<p><b>HIDDEN CHARGES</b></p> <p>Though the basic platform is free, your child will be encouraged to sign up to premium subscriptions, which give extra perks, such as animated emojis and free games. The two options are known as 'Nitro Classic' (which costs \$4.99 a month) and Nitro (which costs \$9.99 a month). Prices are only converted to pound sterling during the payment process.</p> 	<p><b>RISK OF CYBERCRIME</b></p> <p>Cybercriminal groups have been linked to the platform due to reports of hackers sharing stolen data. It's also possible that your child may be encouraged to share the data of their friends, either through peer pressure, or 'for fun', without realising the consequences.</p> 	<p><b>STRANGER DANGER</b></p> <p>To create an account, you only need to display a username and profile image. This makes it easy for someone to hide his or her real identity. Predators from anywhere in the world can join a chat server, message your child and quickly leave to avoid detection. Forbes reports groomers have been targeting children susceptible to online coercion on the platform.</p> 
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### Top Tips to Protect Your Child



<p><b>1 BEWARE OF WHAT'S SHARED</b></p> <p>Whatever your child says or shares on the platform can be seen, heard and shared with a much larger audience. Be careful to make sure your child understands this and does not say or share anything that could be deemed offensive, harmful or put themselves or others at risk.</p> <p>You can find Discord's own guide for parents here: <a href="https://blog.discordapp.com/parents-guide-to-discord-c77d91793e9c">https://blog.discordapp.com/parents-guide-to-discord-c77d91793e9c</a></p> 	<p><b>2 IMPROVE SECURITY SETTINGS</b></p> <p>To help protect your child, make sure they set strong passwords. You should consider using the 'two-factor authentication' function for extra protection. It's also important to remind your child to never to share their personal information, or the details of another user.</p> 	<p><b>3 CHECK THEIR FRIEND LIST</b></p> <p>You can restrict who is able to make 'friend requests' to your child in the 'Friends' tab. It's a good idea to deselect the default option that allows anyone to connect. Of course, you should also talk to your child about why it's a risk to allow strangers to connect with them through such platforms.</p> 	<p><b>4 REPORT &amp; BLOCK SUSPICIOUS USERS</b></p> <p>Make sure your child knows how to report and block abusive or suspicious users. If you do find your child suffering repeated abuse, contact the platform directly using the email: <a href="mailto:abuse@discordapp.com">abuse@discordapp.com</a>. It's a good idea to teach your child how to screenshot any negative interactions too.</p> 	<p><b>5 BEWARE OF NSFW CONTENT</b></p> <p>Public forums on the platform are a potential venue for inappropriate content that you should be wary of. There is a Discord mascot known as 'Wumpus', which is supposed to represent anyone under 18. Anyone who posts content unsuitable for under-18s, should mark it NSFW (Not Suitable For Wumpus).</p> 	<p><b>6 SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS</b></p> <p>It's important you actively teach your child to treat other users with respect and behave online the same way as they would offline.</p> <p>Take the time to read through Discord's Community Guidelines with your child. Find them at: <a href="http://www.discordapp.com/guidelines">www.discordapp.com/guidelines</a></p> 
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As always, we recommend you talk to your children about the websites and applications they use online, and if needs be ask them to no longer use it, explaining to them the potential dangers.

More information is available on our website under the safer internet section. You can use this link: <http://www.mellor.leicester.sch.uk/?p=home/saferInternet.htm>

Please remember that staff at Mellor are always willing to help with any issues regarding E-Safety.