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Dear parents and carers,

It has come to our attention that many children in the school are playing a multiplayer online game called **Fortnite: Battle Royale** and we wanted to share with you some information about the game to help you make decisions about the suitability of it for your child.

The game is essentially a fight to the death for 100 players. The 100 players are dropped onto an island, on which are hidden weapons for the players to collect and use. Buildings and structures can be used and built to help hide and protect players. As the match progresses, the land area reduces, so players are forced closer together. The last survivor is the winner.

Fortnite has a **PEGI rating of 12**, PEGI have said this is due to the: *'frequent scenes of mild violence. It is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age'*. This PEGI rating only takes into account the content and visuals in the game and not the contact element, where players may be exposed to swearing and offensive language from strangers in voice or on-screen text chat. It is our recommendation that children under the age of 12 should not play the game, as they may not have the necessary maturity to manage the content of the game or the online chat element.

Players can choose to play solo or team up with a partner or a group. When playing alongside others, players can chat to each other and, if children are able to access online chat, it is essential that parents are aware of whom their child is playing with, especially as it has been reported that much offensive and foul language can be used by players during the game, verbally and via text-chat as the game is played. The NSPCC have issued a warning to parents about the online chat element of the game and explained that this exposes children to the risks of communicating with sexual predators and paedophiles.

There are many in game purchases that are offered throughout the game play and some parents have reported huge costs that their children have accrued whilst playing the game and buying items.

Most reviews of the game state that the violence is comedic and cartoon like, which many parents believe makes the game safe for young children to play. However, the point of the game is to kill other players and there are many reports in the media from parents citing concerns about the violent conduct of their own children as a result of playing violent computer games.

There are also many reports in the news, citing parental concerns over the addictive nature of the game due to the amount of rewards available during play.

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If you would like to know more about the game and some of the reasons why the game is certified for children aged 12 and over, please read the following articles:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/a-parents-guide-to-fortnite-battle-royale>

<https://www.theguardian.com/games/2018/mar/07/fortnite-battle-royale-parents-guide-video-game-multiplayer-shooter>

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/954412/fortnite-battle-royale-nspcc-child-protection-warning>

The following video from New Zealand may also provide you with a useful overview of the game and the risks it poses to children who play it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTSIqmjY5_8&safe=active

Should you have any further questions about this advice, please contact the academy using the above number or email.

Yours sincerely,



Laura Hill
Deputy Headteacher