



Beamont Collegiate
Academy



7 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

We would like to provide you with safeguarding information to support you during this challenging and unusual time. There are three focus areas:

1. Online Safety – Roblox
2. Mental Health Support
3. Criminal Exploitation

We appreciate that not all of this will apply to everyone, but if you could take some time to read it through we would appreciate it as the knowledge is essential.

Online Safety:

It has come to light that there are some concerning games accessible to children on a site call Roblox. Roblox is a website, which has a suite of games available for children to play on and message people on. We are aware that this website is popular with primary school and younger secondary school students. It is an ongoing craze. Students can access games, play online with friends and strangers. Users can create games as well as purchase Robux (this is the currency of the game that can be purchased using real money).

Some of the games on the website are of a sexual nature, where students can select a character, have graphic sex with other characters and chat to other users. This game is an uploaded game, which has been created by users. One of these games is called consent. It is highly concerning that someone has uploaded a sex simulation game for young children to play and therefore it highlights the types of users that are on there with children. Both adults and children can play this game. There are other games involving suicide games, such as jumping off a cliff and breaking as many bones and tearing as many ligaments as possible, and horror shooting games.

As we have said, users can create and upload games onto this site and young children and adults can both join. Please can you check the below:

1. Check if your child plays on this website & the games they are playing on
2. Check their private messages to see who they have been talking to and what is being discussed
3. Check if they have been giving any Robux to other people and if so, why?
4. Check that your bank details or apple ID details etc. are not linked to this as there have been cases where children have spent hundreds of pounds buying in game add ons
5. Check their account settings and check that their date of birth is correct, so that game filters are applied
6. Check that they aren't talking to strangers on other accounts, such as Tik Tok (which is a popular social media account where children are posting videos)
7. Check how long they on the website for? Restrict their time as long periods of playing is unhealthy

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Please be mindful that there are games on this that are worrying. This game website exists to make profit and therefore they want money from your child. As always, there are risks all over the internet and it is important that you discuss these risks with your child and monitor their usage.

Please remind them to not give away their personal information and not to talk to strangers. If you haven't already, set up parental restrictions on your internet and ensure you are able to monitor what your child is doing. Spot check their devices randomly and regularly.

Many parents want to trust their children and therefore don't monitor this regularly. You can't take the risk - PROTECTION has to come before TRUST. To protect your child, you must know what they are doing online. You wouldn't let your child walk into a crowd of thousands of unknown children and adults and leave them to talk and play unmonitored, so you must not leave them unmonitored on the internet.

For further information on keeping your child safe on the internet, please consult the below:

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/?gclid=EAiaIQobChMI-YvV7uHG6AIVVuDtCh1n9w0EEAAAYAAEgI50fD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds

During this time of home learning, if you are using other websites other than those recommended by school, please always only use online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

Mental Health:

During this time of closure, we want to continue as much support as we can with mental health and well-being. Please find attached a booklet, which outlines support on offer during this time.

As always, support is available from BCA's pastoral team .Please email tellus@bca.warrington.ac.uk or mail@bca.warrington.ac.uk.

Other useful organisations are:

Childline: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Kooth: <https://www.kooth.com/>

Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/about-us/>

Encourage the use of Google Classroom and remember to promote healthy eating & daily exercise.

Criminal Exploitation and Child Protection:

What is criminal exploitation?



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Children as young as 7 are being put in danger by criminals who are taking advantage of how innocent and inexperienced these young people are. Any child can be exploited, no matter their background. Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks groom and exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' to supply drugs.

What are the signs of criminal exploitation and county lines?

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- Being found in areas away from home
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Unexplained absences from school, college, training or work
- Unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly dishevelled
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

What should you do if you have a concern?

- If you are concerned about your child's immediate safety call the police on 999
- If you have concerns about your child which are not immediate, please contact your Local Children's Services Safeguarding team, see contact details for different Local Authorities below, or the NSPCC's helpline on 0808 800 5000
- If your child wants to talk to someone they can call ChildLine: 0800 1111 or Get Connected: 0808 808 4994 (text 80849).

Further Information:

The following links provide up to date information about Child Criminal Exploitation.

Eyes Open Campaign <https://aboutmanchester.co.uk/people-across-the-north-west-asked-to-keep-their-eyes-open-to-the-signs-of-county-lines-exploitation/>

NSPCC information, support and guidance regarding Child Criminal Exploitation: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/>

The Children's Society website has advice and guidance regarding Child Exploitation: https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/worried_about_your_child_being_criminally_exploited_the_children_s_society.pdf

Finally:

Youth Connect 5

Free online course, for parents & carers

The Youth Connect 5 course will be taking place online, over five days, starting on Monday 13 April 2020. The course is aimed at parents and carers and is free. The purpose of Youth Connect 5, is to enable families to develop resilience.

Youth Connect 5 covers:



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- Understanding children and young people's mental health
- Understanding wellbeing
- Understanding why we feel the way we do (emotions)
- Life skills and problem-solving

Merseyside Youth Association will be delivering the course as an interactive webinar event, using Zoom.

To apply please visit;

<http://happyoksad.warrington.gov.uk/>

<https://youthconnect5.org.uk/events/parent-yc5-webinar-course-on-13th-april-for-5-days-6pm-8pm/>

Yours faithfully

M Reynolds

Mr M Reynolds
Vice Principal



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