



# St Bartholomew's CE Primary School

## Video games and keeping your children safe

12<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

St Bartholomew's Primary School is committed to keeping our children safe and promoting the safe, responsible use of technology. We have been made aware that a few of our children are playing online games that are not suitable for their age. As such, we feel it is our responsibility to remind parents of the PEGI system to ensure that we keep all of our children as safe as possible.

### Ratings denote the content and appropriateness of games

Since 2003 games have been age rated under the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) system which operates in the UK and over 30 other countries of Europe. In addition, where a game showed realistic scenes of gross violence or sexual activity, the game had to be legally classified and received a classification certificate given for videos/DVDs.



The PEGI system has been effectively incorporated into UK law and video games will be age rated at one or other of the following age levels; which you will find on video game sleeves. Ratings do not denote the difficulty or the enjoyment level of a game, but that it contains content suitable for a certain age

group and above. The PEGI age ratings will enable parents and carers to make an informed choice when buying a game for their child.

It is important to note that the age ratings 12, 16 and 18 are mandatory and that it is illegal for a retailer to supply any game with any of these ratings to anyone below the specified age. The age ratings 3 and 7 are advisory only. An 18 rated game is applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes gross violence and/or includes elements of specific types of violence. In general terms it is where the level of violence is so visually strong that it would make the viewer react with a sense of revulsion. This rating is also applied where the level of sexual activity is explicit which may mean that genitals are visible. Any game that glamorises the use of real-life drugs will also probably fall into this category.

### Content Indicators



In addition to age ratings, video games will include indicators of the type of content and activities that the game includes in it. The descriptors are

fairly self-explanatory but should be read in conjunction with the age rating given for a video game. A violence descriptor with an 18 rated game will indicate a more extreme level of violence than a violence descriptor with a 12 rated game. Similarly, a sex/nudity descriptor with a 12 rated game will probably indicate sexual innuendo but a sex/nudity descriptor with an 18 rated game will indicate sexual content of a more explicit nature.

The following pages provide parental advice on some of the games that we have heard our children are playing. Many of these games also have a chat function which could be dangerous to your child. Please take a few minutes to read the following posters, so you are aware of the risks involved in some of the commonly played games.

*Miss Cannon*

Safeguarding Lead

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