

Revoe Learning Academy



Grasmere Road,
Blackpool.
FY1 5HP



Headteacher: Mr. D. Harrison
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs. S. Swinson
Assistant Headteacher: Mrs. K. Bastow
Business Manager: Mrs. J. Heywood
Children's Centre Manager: Mrs. C. Nicholson

To contact us at RLA, you can ...

Email: admin@revoe.blackpool.sch.uk

Phone: 01253 763414

Or, to find out more about RLA, please visit:
www.revoelearningacademy.co.uk

Friday, 15 February 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Video Games and keeping your child safe: E-safety - key information for parents/carers

It has been brought to our attention through current online safety work that a number of our children have been playing console games with a 12+, and in some cases an 18 certification based on International PEGI ratings.

Social media and games provide excellent opportunities for children to play and learn while engaging with their family and friends. While many video games are entirely appropriate for children, studies into the effects of the violence and adult content frequently associated with games rated 18 show increases in aggressive and sexualized behaviour by children. Children are known to replicate the language and behaviour learnt from age-restricted video games in their play and interactions with other children.

RLA is committed to keeping our children safe and to promoting the safe, responsible use of the technologies. As such, we feel it is our responsibility to raise this particular issue as a concern.

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. 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 or downloading a game for their children.

It is important to note that the age ratings 12, 16 and 18 age ratings 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.



'RLA: A place where we all ... **Respect. Learn. Achieve.**'
University of Cumbria  





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 reasonable viewer react with a sense of revulsion.

It is not appropriate for children to play, or to watch others playing games rated 18 and therefore suitable only for adults aged eighteen or over as they contain content that is unsuitable for children, including blood and gore, extreme and intense violence, mature humor, nudity, strong adult content, strong language and use of drugs and alcohol.

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.

Parental responsibility

We feel it is important to point out to parents the risks of underage use of such video games, so **you** can make an *informed* decision as to whether to allow your child to be subjected to such images and content.

- The PEGI ratings system helps you make informed decisions about which video games to choose for your family and playing these as a family is the best way to understand and enjoy them together.
- A PEGI rating gives the suggested minimum age that you must be to play a game due to the suitability of the content.
- As parents you can take direct control of what games your children play at home, how they play them and for how long through parental controls on video game systems such as the Xbox or Playstation.
- The stories, worlds and characters in video games offer playful ways to engage with a wide range of subjects and fuels creativity, interests and imagination.
- The following websites provide information about video games ratings and how to keep your child safe online: askaboutgames.com
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.commonsemmedia.org/game-reviews
- <https://pegi.info/page/tips-parents>
- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>

If you feel that you, or your child, needs further support in keeping your child safe on the internet, please make an appointment to see Mrs Bastow (Assistant Headteacher). Because of our duty to all the children in our school, we will take action if a problem comes to our attention that involves the safety or wellbeing of any of our pupils.

Thank you for your continued support,