

Monday 30th January 2023

Newsletter No. 18

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ParentPay & School Spider

On **Friday 31st March**, we will be moving all bookings and payments from ParentPay to the School Spider App.

Please only **book and pay the correct money onto ParentPay up until Friday 31st March**. After this, bookings and payments must be made through the School Spider app which will be easier for parents.

Bookings and payments made through the School Spider app will be available from Saturday 1st April 2023. This means that we **cannot issue ParentPay refunds from Saturday 1st April 2023**.

It is very important that you download and ensure that you can log into the School Spider app as soon as possible. Please contact the school office if you have any difficulties.

We have some unicorn and dinosaur bottles for sale.

There are 28 dinosaur bottles and 40 unicorn bottles, these can be bought via ParentPay. Once the last bottle has been sold, ParentPay will not allow anymore bottles to be purchased.

A bottle costs £1.50 and holds 500ml of liquid.



EVERY
CHILD IS A
different KIND OF flower,
AND ALL TOGETHER,
MAKE THIS WORLD
A Beautiful
GARDEN.

Please remember to visit our website for long term dates. Thank you.

Monday 30th January:	Pupil Passport meetings week.
Wednesday 1st February:	Strike day.
Wednesday 8th & Thursday 9th February:	Parent's Evenings.
Friday 10th February:	School Closes for half term, 3:30pm.
Monday 20th February:	School reopens for Spring 2, 8:45am.
Tuesday 21st February:	The Whitaker performance for children in Nursery & Reception.
Wednesday 22nd February:	The Whitaker performance for children in Key Stages 1 & 2.
Thursday 23rd February:	Vision Screening for Reception children.
Tuesday 28th February:	Purple Class assembly.
Tuesday 7th March:	Gold Class assembly.
Tuesday 14th March:	Turquoise class assembly.



Omegle is a website that pairs random strangers for live text or video chats. It first launched in 2009 and its slogan is "Talk to strangers!" There is an option for adult (18+) content and a section for people aged 13+ with parental permission. Anyone can use the site. Users simply go to Omegle.com and then choose 'Text' or 'Video' chat and the page states how many users are currently online. Depending on the time of day this can be hundreds of thousands. Omegle markets itself as a great way to meet new friends however has been known to feature pornography and inappropriate content within chats, so it's important parents are aware of the risks associated with the site.



What parents need to know about

OMEGLE



NO AGE VERIFICATION MEASURES

Omegle is completely free to use and allows users to communicate with others without the need to register, supply an email address or create a profile. This means users can remain anonymous and it's hard to trust who your children are talking to. Furthermore, there are no age verification measures and other than agreeing to the terms and conditions, your child can easily start online engagement with strangers and potentially access more adult-themed content.



RISK OF CYBERBULLYING

The anonymity of Omegle can increase the risk of cyberbullying on the site. Engaging in chat with strangers means that topics of conversation can lead almost anywhere including discussions about looks, body image or the sharing of other personal information. With the availability of video chat as well, this could lead to children being coerced or forced into carrying out activities online which could then be used against them.



UNMODERATED CHAT

Omegle encourages video chat as much as it can, prompting users during their text chat to activate their web cam. Whilst text chat has a degree of moderation, the content in Omegle's video chat rooms is not moderated by administrators and, at any time of the day, there can be thousands of users online. This means that your child could easily come across illegal, unacceptable or inappropriate images or media. Omegle currently offers no function for reporting online abuse or inappropriate behaviour on its site and instead only offers advice to 'please be careful!' It also advises to 'Use Omegle at your own peril. Disconnect if anyone makes you feel uncomfortable.'



PRIVACY RISK VIA FACEBOOK

Omegle can be linked to a user's Facebook account to match their interests and likes with other users. This means that Omegle can access your child's basic Facebook information, and Facebook friends may potentially view Omegle activity. In addition, users can save the chat log and share the link without the other user's knowledge. It is not uncommon then for users to request being added to Snapchat, Instagram or WhatsApp for further interaction, moving the conversation into a more personal setting.



RISK OF EXPLOITATION

Omegle chat picks another user at random and there is very little way of verifying who your child may be chatting to. This can lead to a number of risks including catfishing (users pretending to be of similar age), identity theft (users eliciting information to commit fraud) and sexual/psychological grooming (users coaxing others to act in a way or do something they wouldn't normally do).



ADULT THEMED CONTENT

Unfortunately, Omegle is infamous for its pornographic content and it is not uncommon for users to expose themselves or engage in sexual acts. If a user selects video chat, then the other user's webcam will automatically be switched on before the action to 'end chat' can be selected. There is also no 'preview' in smaller thumbnail windows. As video chat is so easy to access, it means that unintentionally viewing more mature, inappropriate or even illegal images can't always be avoided.



Safety Tips For Parents

DISCUSS RISKS WITH YOUR CHILD

It is important to speak to your child about the dangers of Omegle. Guiding and educating young children is far more useful than ignoring the possibility of Omegle being accessed. Explain to your child that Omegle is not completely anonymous and that other users will do use Omegle to exploit others. Try to emphasise the risk of speaking to strangers and that engaging online is no different to engaging offline.



PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

Omegle does not provide advice about how to protect your personal information so it's important that children are aware of what they should and shouldn't share online and with whom. If they use Omegle, always advise against sharing any personal information such as their real name, age, phone number, address or any other personal identifiable information. This also includes details of their social media accounts or gaming ID's. You should also adjust your child's Facebook settings to control what information is shared with Omegle.



REPORT CONCERNS

If your child comes across any inappropriate content or something which upsets them on Omegle, then it's important that they are able to discuss it with you and that you provide them with the support they need. If you think the content is illegal, then it must be reported to the police.



DISCOURAGE VIDEO CHAT

Try to discourage your child from using video chat on Omegle. Not only is there no filter or moderation in place, but children may be coerced into sharing intimate images or videos of themselves, which is illegal if they are under 18 and may be used against them. Omegle text chat has a degree of moderation controlled by Omegle through software and several actual moderators. The software moderates, identifies and prevents certain words and sequences of words to try and prevent bullying and grooming however it is still not a 100% failsafe.



TRY OMEGLE YOURSELF

It's always an excellent idea to get a feel for the website or app your child is using so that you can see and understand the issues and risks for yourself. More importantly, it will also provide you with first-hand experience of the risks and dangers (if/when you decide to speak to your child about Omegle and what they need to be aware of).



USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Omegle is a website chat service. Children can only access the text chat on their phone and would need access to a PC or laptop to engage in video chat. If you have genuine concerns over Omegle and don't wish your child to access the site, you can add www.omegle.com to the list of banned websites and URLs. However, it's important to remember that Omegle can still be used via a web browser on an iPad, tablet, smart TV or gaming device and similar controls would need to be implemented on each of these devices separately.



Meet our expert

Jonathan Taylor is an online safety expert and former Covert Internet Investigator for the Metropolitan Police. He is a specialist in online grooming and exploitation and has worked extensively with both UK and international schools in delivering training and guidance around the latest online dangers, social media apps and platforms.



SOURCE: <http://www.omegle.com>



Term Dates – 2022/2023

September 2022						
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	Training Days (children do not attend school)
	Holidays





Term Dates – 2023-2024

September 2023						
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