Dear Parents/Carers,

It has come to our attention that many of our pupils are playing the online game **'Among Us'.** Whilst the game has many good features; promoting collaboration and teamwork, there are some safety concerns that you should be aware of.
The game has a PEGI rating of 7+ and the Apple App store rate it as 9+ (meaning Apple consider that children under the age of 9 may be upset by some of the content).
The main risk to your children playing 'Among Us' is the 'Public Feature'.

Public Feature

This allows users to join games that are set as public (available for everyone to join). Only 10 players can join each game before the game has started. This means that children may interact with a huge number of users they don't know

Private and Public Settings

Games can be set to be public or private. The host of each game controls whether a game is public or private. If a game is private users will require a specific code to play the game. If a game is public, any user on the platform will be able to find the game under the "Public" section and join the game (provided it's not full).

To limit potential interaction with strangers, setting games to private and requiring users to have a code to play is a safer option. This will mean that if a child wants to play with their friends, they will have to send the code to friends through other platforms.

Tips to Keep Children and Young People Safe

- Encourage your child to **set get games to private** and only **play with people that they know**

- If they are the Host of the game, advise them to be more vigilant of what players are saying or doing to **remove anyone that is not respecting others or sharing inappropriate content.**

- If they do choose to play public games, **make sure they keep their personal information private**, particularly if they are playing with people they don't know.

- For young children using Discord to speak to players in the game, **encourage them to put the sound through the PC speakers** rather than on a headset **so you can be aware of what is being said.**

- **Talk to them** about issues such as cyberbullying and online grooming **so they know how to recognise these risks** and have some coping strategies to use if they come across them in and out of the game.

For further information, please visit these links:

https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/is-among-us-multiplayer-game-safe-for-children/

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/game-reviews/among-us

Thank you for your continued support

Elaine Wagg

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