



# Year 4 Newsletter



Year 4 Attendance: 96.2%

Whole School Attendance: 96%

The single biggest barrier to learning is low attendance, let's work together to ensure our children receive the education they deserve.

## Dear Parents/Guardians

Thank you for taking the time to support your child at home with their learning, we have seen a huge effort from the children who remember to practise their timetables at home. Keep it up!

## English

The children have loved looking at different forms of information about the digestive system—this has included a video clip, an information explanation text aimed at older children and adults and then a fun 'faction' book aimed at younger children. The children have looked at the similarities and differences and have now planned to write their own entertaining non-fiction text for our Year 3 children. They have come up with some very witty subtitles for their own piece of food which will be travelling through the body's digestive system. Our spelling focus when we return after half-term will be words using 'sc' e.g. science and scene.

## Mathematics

We have been really focussing on our Times Tables in Year 4 over the past two weeks. The children have been completing soundchecks every day and all of the children are making steady progress. The children's recall of their times tables has improved every day and the children should be very proud of the progress they have made.

Please do encourage your children to keep up their Times Tables Rock Stars soundchecks over half-term. It would be such a shame for their hard work to go to waste!

## Project

The children have now concluded their science learning for this project. The children have been learning about different diets for animals—herbivores, carnivores and omnivores and looking at the different clues that we are given that tells us what an animal eats. For example, the different types of teeth that they have or the size and sharpness of teeth can tell us what that animal eats. We have also dissected animal 'poo' (plasticine!) to see if we could work out the diet of the animals based on what is left in their stool.

The children have also been planning and have either made or will be making healthy cereal bars as part of their DT project.

## Online Safety

- This week's online safety advice is all about Minecraft.

## Dates for your diaries and important messages

- PE and Swimming - Tuesday
- Week commencing 25th May: half-term
- Monday 1st June INSET day
- Multiplication Tables Check: official check will be completed over the first two weeks back after half-term.

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT

As the best-selling game in history, Minecraft has made a name for itself by empowering audiences of all ages to harness their creativity. Originally an indie hit, it's become a cultural phenomenon with merchandise, spin-off titles, and wider media adaptations. Even if you don't know your Creepers from your Endermen, this guide will explore the risks of Minecraft in 2026 and explain how to support a safe gaming experience for the children in your care.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### PUBLIC SERVER COMMUNICATION

Many players enjoy Minecraft with others, including friends and unknown players online. In-game text chat is commonly used to coordinate building projects and gameplay, and this can extend to adding friends to voice chat. While often harmless, this creates risks around contact with strangers, and in some cases server hosts may expose IP addresses (if hosting independently), which raises privacy and security concerns.

### GRIEFING BEHAVIOUR

Some players deliberately damage or destroy other players' creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying that can undo hours of effort and cause frustration or distress to affected players. Although many servers treat griefing as a serious offence, enforcement varies. Children who prefer to build independently may feel safer working on private worlds or controlled servers.

### ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY LOOPS

Minecraft's creative focus can make it easy for players to lose track of time. The cycle of gathering resources and building projects can be highly engaging, which may challenge agreed screen-time limits. If not managed effectively, this can impact children's sleep, schoolwork, and real-world social interaction.

### SCARY GAME ELEMENTS

Although often compared to digital construction toys, some gameplay modes include hostile creatures with unsettling sounds and sudden encounters. While there is no graphic violence, younger players may still find zombies, spiders, or dark environments frightening. These experiences can lead to anxiety or reluctance to play, depending on the child's age and sensitivity.

### IN-GAME SPENDING

Minecraft requires a one-off purchase after a free trial, usually around £15, but additional spending is possible. Players can buy cosmetic content or subscribe to Minecraft 'Realms' for private servers. Without supervision, children may make unintended purchases. Subscription services and add-ons can also increase overall costs over time if not monitored.

### ONLINE INTERACTIONS

Playing with others can introduce broader online safety concerns, including exposure to inappropriate language or behaviour. Some players may attempt to move conversations beyond the game, which can increase risks to children's safety and welfare. Children may not always recognise these situations, meaning guidance and ongoing conversations about safe interactions are essential.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHOOSE SUITABLE GAME MODES

Creative or Peaceful modes remove hostile creatures and reduce the pressure during gameplay. These options allow children to focus on building and exploration without fear of attack. They are also ideal for shared play between adults and children, creating a calmer environment to learn the game and enjoy collaborative projects.

### USE PRIVATE SERVERS

Setting up a private server helps control who can join a child's game. Access can be limited to trusted friends through passwords or invitations. This reduces the likelihood of unwanted interactions and gives adults greater oversight. While some options involve a subscription fee, they offer a safer and more controlled multiplayer experience.

### DISCUSS ONLINE STRANGERS

Children should understand that not everyone they meet online is who they claim to be. Clear guidance about not sharing personal information is essential. Encourage children to report any worrying or uncomfortable interactions and reassure them that they can seek help without fear of punishment. Open, ongoing conversations help build their confidence and awareness of these issues.

### SET SPENDING BOUNDARIES

Agree on clear rules around purchases before letting children play, and use device settings or platform controls to restrict spending within agreed limits. Explaining that in-game currency uses real-world money can help children make informed decisions. Regularly reviewing purchases together can also prevent unexpected costs and encourage responsible behaviour.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes spent 7 years in games media, before moving into the games industry via PR and marketing. A parent himself to a Minecraft-loving son, he understands why it's so important to stay safe online.



See full reference list on our website

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