



The Avenue Infant School
FRIDAY UPDATE
Friday 13th October 2023



Thank you so much for your patience and understanding during our IT issues over the last week. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused. Hopefully you have all now been able to book your parents evening appointment for next week. This is such a valuable opportunity for you to see how your child has settled into their new class and see some of their first few weeks of work. Please ensure you make a record of your appointment time and ensure you arrive in time for your appointment. We do endeavour to keep to given times so your support in arriving on time is greatly appreciated.

Next week is the final week before the half term break. The term has zoomed by and the children have settled so well. We can see many of the children are weary and ready for their break but we hope they will enjoy the final week of term.

REMINDER: All children need coats in school next week as the weather turns cooler. Have a lovely weekend.

In celebration assembly today we said well done to the following children, who received **Special Awards** and special gold Headteacher's Award sticker:

Milan (Beech class) - for being a fantastic role model to others.

Felix (Hazel class) - for his brilliant ideas in lessons.

Chester (Maple class) - for challenging himself in Maths, finding different ways to represent numbers.

Paisley (Cherry class) - for working hard in Maths this week and offering help and support to her friends.



Class Accolades

Maple Class - Mrs Bolter was so impressed of your recall of Science learning this term.

Hazel Class - Miss Morris was proud of your self-portraits based on Giuseppe Archimboldo's work.

Each class was presented with their Class Accolade certificate and earned two class ticks. Well done



WHAT'S ON NEXT WEEK (Autumn 1 Week 7):

Monday 16th Oct	- Rock steady club
Tuesday 17th	- Year 2 P.E. - Parents evenings 3.45 - 6.00pm
Wednesday 18th	-
Thursday 19th	- Year 1 P.E. - Parents evenings 3.45 - 6.00pm
Friday 20th	- Year 1 Family Reading - 8.50-9.10am - Reception P.E.



LETTERS / EMAILS HOME THIS WEEK:

Parents evening email



As part of our commitment to safeguarding, it is important that we ensure that parents/carers are as informed as possible about online safety.

What parents and carers need to know about Among Us

Created in 2018 by a small indie studio that (at the time) had only four employees, Among Us has become one of the gaming world's biggest breakout hits of recent years. In 2020, for example, it was the world's most-downloaded mobile game. Its simplicity helped Among Us to resonate with younger players in particular: the game's second largest audience slice is the 13–18 age bracket.

While the 7+ age rating, emphasis on teamwork and cartoonish, colourful graphics all suit a young fan-base, however, the game does carry more serious risks than betrayal by a team-mate or an untimely on-screen demise. In-game purchases and possible contact from strangers are among the list of hazards that trusted adults should bear in mind.

A larger version of these guides can be downloaded from our school Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/TheAvenueInfantSchool/>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as The Traitors, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



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