

**Autumn term CARE values:**

Every term we focused on 4 of our CARE values across school. I mention these in assemblies and the children and staff try to use these values throughout the term.

Our new CARE values are;

**COMMUNITY, AMBITION, RESPECT AND ENJOYMENT**

Protected Characteristics



**KEY DATES**

- 10<sup>th</sup> December – EYFS Christmas Show
- 11<sup>th</sup> December – Upper KS2 Christmas Show 2PM
- 12<sup>th</sup> December – Lower KS2 Christmas Show 9AM
- 12<sup>th</sup> December – KS1 Christmas Show 2PM
- 15<sup>th</sup> December – Upper KS2 Christmas Party
- 16<sup>th</sup> December – KS1 and Lower KS2 Christmas Party
- 17<sup>th</sup> December – EYFS Christmas Party
- 18<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Dinner and Jumpers
- 19<sup>th</sup> December – PJs and singalong

**BACK TO SCHOOL**  
 Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026



The festive season with activities and experiences has been in full swing at Westlea. Pupils are continuing to complete lessons with the teachers' linking learning objectives to Christmas themed activities.

**CHRISTMAS FAIR**

Many thanks for the wonderful support at the Christmas Fair held on Monday. There are still some monies to be calculated but we raised £830 on the evening. This will go towards Christmas parties and additional extras to enhance our setting. Raffle numbers were drawn on Friday afternoon. The winning numbers will be displayed in our main reception as well as in this week and next week's newsletter.

**WESTLEA WESTEND SHOWS!**

Westend performances have hit Westlea school this week. A **HUGE** well done to every pupil in school from Nursery to Year 6 in their participation in the **THREE DIFFERENT** Christmas extravagances!

Our youngest performers were fabulous, showing bravery and composure to perform on the stage. The singing dancing and acting were heart-warming to see and we are all so proud of you. The Sleepy Shepherd actors were brilliant and the additional Christmas songs made everyone in the hall full of Christmas cheer.

Key stage one pupils performed their Christmas show stopper "Midwife Crisis!" The singing, acting and dancing thoroughly entertained us and the narrators spoke with confidence and composure. We definitely have some budding actors at Westlea.

The whole of Key stage two joined together to produce an **AMAZING** show. I always say, and I know I'm biased, that we have the best singers in Seaham at this school. Their energy, enthusiasm and sense of community was really on display for their two performances.

To all of our parents and carers, thank you for coming to support your children at this special time. It means a lot to us all at school.

**IN THIS WEEK'S NEWSLETTER**

**KS2 Christmas Choir**

Shoppers at Tesco got a surprise this week with singers from Westlea entertaining them.

Pupils from KS2 choir performed some toe tapping Christmas songs and carols at Tesco. The singing was magical and brought a community feel to the store.

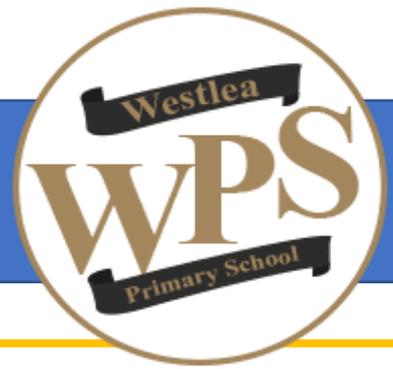


**EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS**

There will be no clubs in our final week before we break up for Christmas. Our wide variety of clubs will begin again in January.

Class 4 have a special Christingle activity. Read about the visit in this week's newsletter.

# THIS WEEK'S ATTENDANCE



	WE 12.12.25
Class 1	99.3%
Class 2	95.4%
Class 3	98.5%
Class 4	90.8%
Class 5	89.3%
Class 6	97.6%
Class 7	96.3%
Class 8/9	96.8%

## Our Attendance Pledge

At Westlea we are committed to ensuring every child receives an excellent education, and consistent attendance is fundamental to achieving this. Regular attendance directly supports academic progress, fosters crucial social and emotional development, and cultivates positive learning habits. By working together – pupils, parents, and staff – to achieve our attendance target of **96%**, we create a stable and supportive learning environment that promotes uninterrupted learning, strengthens relationships, and enhances each child's sense of belonging within our school community.

This week **5** classes reached 96% or above.

Keep up the great work!

Our whole school attendance for WE 12.12.25 is **95.6%**

Our attendance for the year to date is **95.3%**

Our target for this half term is **96%** we are currently at **94.8%**



## ATTENDOPOLY OUTCOMES THIS WEEK

Classes who rolled the dice this week won;

Class 1- Bingo/Quiz,

Class 3- Fruit platter

Class 6- Ninja track/field

Class 7- Mindfulness session

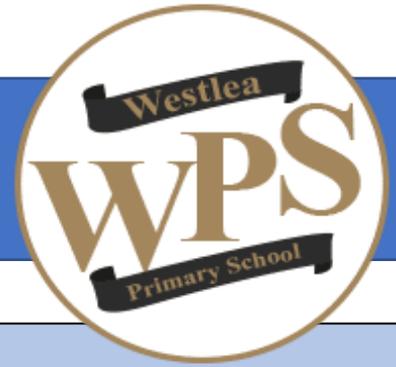
Year 6- Board games

## SAFE GUARDING AND ATTENDANCE TEAM:

Mrs Scothern is our Designated Safe Guarding Lead with Mrs Davey and Mrs Simmons as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. Please get in touch with any queries or concerns.



# THIS WEEK'S AWARDS



## Head Teacher's Award

Skye (Class1) for showing community spirit and a caring attitude towards others in school.



### INDIVIDUAL CLASS STAR OF THE WEEK AWARDS

Class 1	Theo
Class 2	Indy
Class 3	Oscar
Class 4	Lydia
Class 5	Alana
Class 6	Reuben
Class 7	Chris
Class 8	Isla C
Class 9	Malaya

### RIGHTS RESPECTING AWARD

Class 1	Amelia
Class 2	Flynn
Class 3	Imogen
Class 4	Charlie
Class 5	Archie
Class 6	Olivia
Class 7	Grace
Class 8	Eden
Class 9	Bronson

## Next week's Right of the week- Article 31 – your right to relax and play

Character values: CARE		
Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Community	Compassion	Cooperation
Ambition	Actions	Achievement
Respect	Responsibility	Resilience
Enjoyment	Endeavor	Empowerment



**Pupil discussions:** This week's pupil discussions took place at Lunchtime. Whilst pupils were enjoyed their food, I spoke to them about lunchtimes and we talked about performances we had enjoyed this week.

### Head teachers awards: Our CARE values this term are...Community, Ambition, Respect and Enjoyment

These are given to pupils in school who have shone outside of the classroom. It maybe they have shown excellent manners and held a door for a visitor or a friend or have shown our WESTLEA CARE values in some way. Perhaps they have cooperated with each other to play a game or complete a group activity or shown resilience to keep going when a task or a learning activity has been a challenge. Visitors and other members of staff can nominate these students so it is very special if you are recognised for your efforts or for just being you!

# In other news...

## PJ and movie (Friday)

Our last day at school, the whole school has a **movie and PJ Day**. We will come to school in our comfortable PJ's and spend the morning with our friends watching a movie (**Please note: This is not a toy day**).

On the afternoon, the whole school comes together for our annual Christmas sing-a-long.

Please remember that all pupils will still go outside for playtimes and lunchtimes so they will need some outdoor shoes and a warm coat.



# In other news...

## Well done Ella

Congratulations Ella on winning a competition linked to Seaham Police. Ella's winning design for the police drone will be created and her name 'The Catcher' will now be used by the police. Ella received a special certificate from the Mayor of Seaham and a gift of £50!



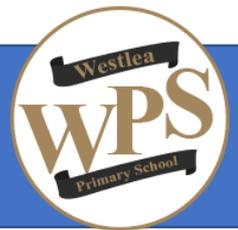
# In other news...

## Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

This week we found out that our fund raising in school for the RBL Poppy appeal came to £196.65

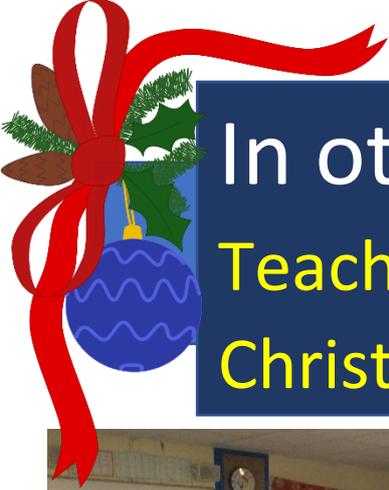
As a district the RBL raised £22,700

Many thanks to all of our families and pupils who show by their actions on a daily basis, that we really are a caring community.



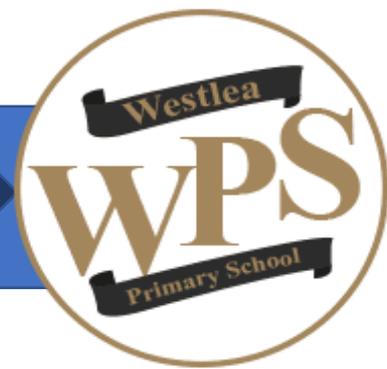
### SHOUT OUT

These dedicated School Council members were responsible for the Poppy Appeal Shop and collection of funds. You should be very proud of the part you have played in the fund raising.



# In other news...

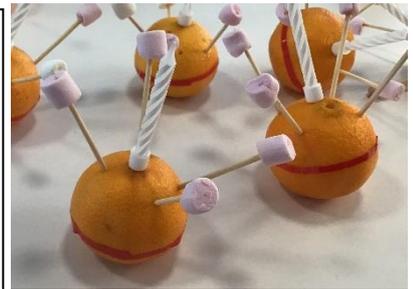
## Teaching and learning – Christingle



It was lovely to welcome Rev. Anita Burke to Class 4. Rev Anita discussed with Class 4 the importance of Christmas for Christians and the symbolism of the Christingle. The pupils created Christingles and then had some reflection and quiet time with Rev Anita.

What have you learnt about in school today?

We explored the words **hope** and **love**. Two lovely concepts to be exposed to in a different way.



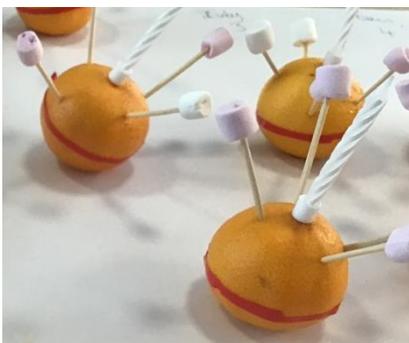
During the service, each person takes a Christingle and the candles are all lit to create a warm, magical glow symbolising the light of Christ and bringing hope to people living in darkness.

Christingles are made using oranges and a few other bits, as you choose. You light the candle at the end of a service to spread a magical glow around everyone.

Each element of a Christingle has a special meaning and helps to tell the Christian story:

- The orange represents the world
- The red ribbon (or tape) symbolises the love and blood of Christ
- The sweets and dried fruit represent all of God's creations
- The lit candle represents Jesus's light in the world, bringing hope to people living in darkness.

[What Is Christingle? | The Children's Society](#)



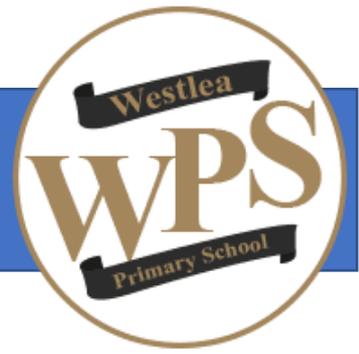
Community links: We really value our strong links to Christ Church. Over the next 2 weeks, Class 1 will visit the church to explore how it looks at Christmastime. Next week, Key stage 2 pupils will all visit and take part in a special carol concert.



**CARE VALUES AUTUMN TERM: COMMUNITY, AMBITION, RESPECT, ENJOYMENT**

In other news...

# Christmas Fair



Our Christmas Fair did not disappoint. It was amazing!

Many thanks for all of the kind donations and for the delicious cakes, pies and biscuits.

It was a fabulous whole school community event and it was wonderful to see past pupils as well as extended family members.

We have raised £830





Many thanks to members of our community who came along with their stalls. Displaying some beautiful crafts to purchase.  
The lucky dip was a huge hit!

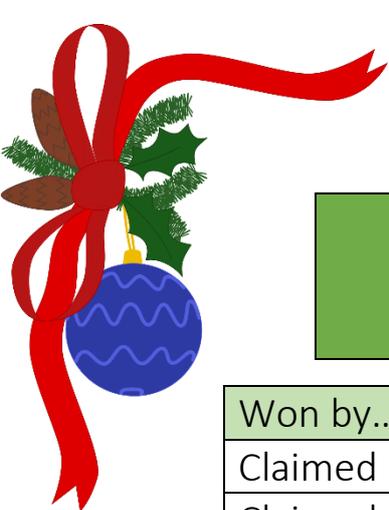


There were some excellent bargains to be had. Our school toy and bric-a-brac stall was hugely popular.



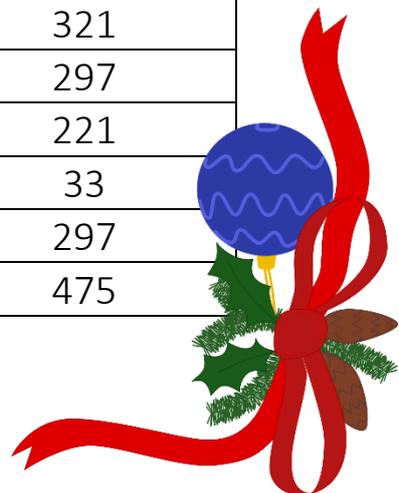
We have some excellent hampers in this year's raffle.  
Raffle tickets winners are overleaf...





# Christmas Raffle Draw

Won by...	Prize	Ticket Colour	Ticket Number
Claimed	1	White brown border	373
Claimed	2	White brown border	80
	3	White brown border	172
	4	Green	281
Claimed	5	White brown border	322
	6	Green	311
	7	Green	444
	8	Green	305
Claimed	9	Grey	651
Claimed	10	White brown border	222
Claimed	11	Green	90
Claimed	12	White brown border	132
Claimed	13	Yellow	251
Claimed	14	White brown border	280
	15	Green	250
Claimed	16	White brown border	321
Claimed	17	White brown border	297
	18	Yellow	221
	19	White brown border	33
Claimed	20	White brown border	297
Claimed	21	Grey	475



Please come to the office with your winning ticket to claim your prize!



In other news...

# EYFS "Sleepy Shepherd"





# In other news...

## KS1 "Mid-wife Crisis!"



An outstanding performance from Year 2 and Year 1 pupils! The singing, dancing and acting was brilliant. We definitely have some budding performers in our school.

British Sign Language: The pupils in school have begun to learn BSL. During the performance classes were signing and singing. It always amazes me how our pupils are very accepting of each other and adapt how they communicate to help others.



Well done Key Stage One. Your message for Christmas was wonderful to hear.

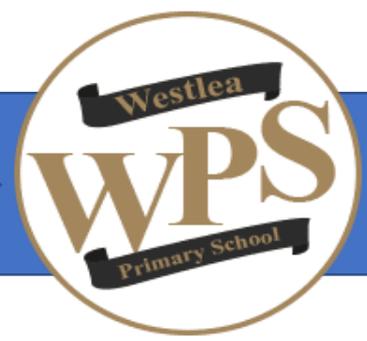


"Nobody ever listens to a Donkey!"



# In other news...

## KS2 Christmas Concert



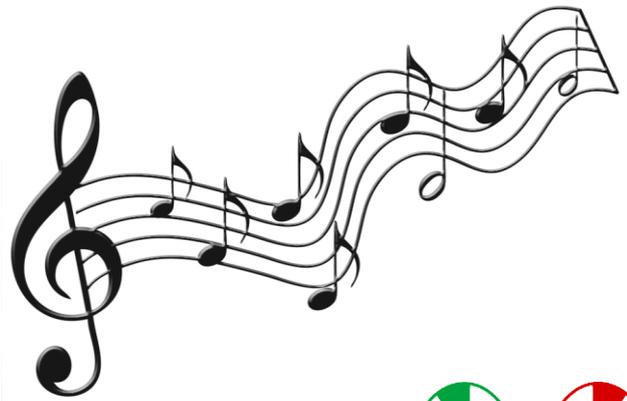
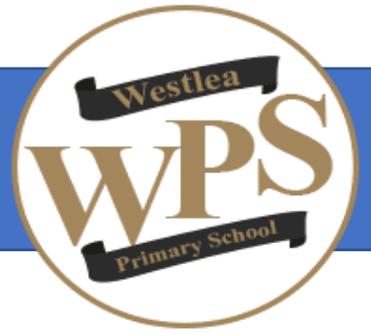
The KS2 Christmas concert centred on the traditions and symbols used at Christmas time. The pupils explained about advent calendars, snowmen, Christmas trees and the craziness of Christmas shopping. We also took time to reflect on the first Christmas. Pupils spoke, sang and danced beautifully. They shone with their many talents.





# In other news...

## KS2 Christmas Choir at Tesco



Pupils from Westlea KS2 Choir spread Christmas Cheer at Tesco. These talented pupils sang Christmas carols and songs to cheer up the shoppers.

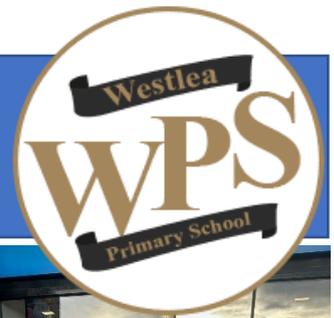
They displayed confidence and enjoyment. Thank you to Tesco for providing hot chocolate and cookies.

Thank you also to the family members, carers and friends that came to support.



# In other news...

## Community news



A community and caring spirit runs strong in this Y6 pupil. Amelia has been making Christmas bracelets for a number of years. The proceeds of which are then used to buy gifts for families at Christmas.

This year, she has raised **£2537.21**.

Her family are very supportive of Amelia's fund raising and through these efforts, they will really make a magical Christmas for many families.

Well done and thank you, Amelia!



**My name is Amelia and I am 10 years old.**

I seen on the news, it's sad to see, that some people aren't as lucky as you and me.

I wanted to help and spread some Christmas joy, so I can sponsor a child and buy them a toy!

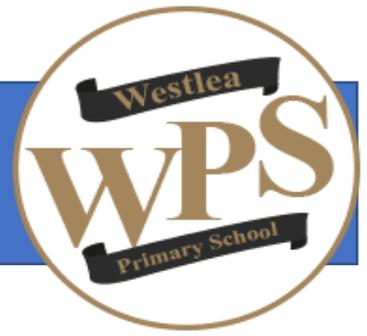


All proceeds will be going towards sponsoring children at Sunderland baby bank, to help give them the Christmas they deserve, from babies to teenagers. Donations also welcome. Thank you Amelia





In other news...  
 Community news  
 Christmas sporting camp



**CHRISTMAS**  
**INDOOR**  
**TENNIS Camp**

**FUN & FOOD**  
 Holiday activities with healthy food  
 Durham County Council

**FREE TO ALL CHILDREN RECEIVING BENEFITS RELATED  
 FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December & Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December  
 Monday 29<sup>th</sup> December & Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> December  
**10AM - 2PM**

**@ PETERLEE LEISURE CENTRE - MAIN SPORTS HALL**

**FREE PACKED LUNCH**

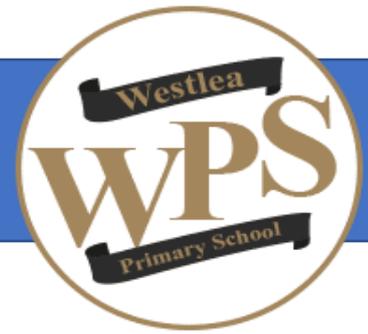
Tennis Games Lots of Fun

**PAID PLACES AVAILABLE CONTACT STEPHEN: 07447081203 OR INFO.SHGTENNIS@GMAIL.COM**



# In other news...

## Christmas support



### Mental Health & Emotional Support

for children, young people & families in County Durham

This is a great starting point to help you access support

If Christmas is a hard time for you, it's important to remember that you are not alone.



**KOOTH** | [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

Free, safe and anonymous support around mental wellbeing for 11 years +

**CAMHS - Single Point of Access** | 03001 239 296 [www.tewv.nhs.uk](http://www.tewv.nhs.uk)

Community mental health teams for children (0-18 years)

**Emotional Health & Resilience Team** | 03000 263 532

Emotional health, advice and guidance for 5-19 years

**NHS 111** | [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Get medical help near you or advice on your nearest walk-in centres

**TEWV Crisis line** | NHS 111 Option 2 | [www.tewv.nhs.uk](http://www.tewv.nhs.uk)

24 hour service for young people experiencing a mental health crisis

**Children's Social Care First Contact** 03000 267 979

[www.durham.gov.uk/FirstContact](http://www.durham.gov.uk/FirstContact)

Report a concern about a child's welfare

**Childline** | 0800 1111 | [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem

**Early Help Triage Line Professionals Only** | 03000 267979 (option 4)

Early Help Triage can support professionals to identify appropriate support options based on family's needs

**Mind** | 0300 123 3393 | [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Provides information and signposting around mental health, including where to get help and treatment options

**Samaritans** | 116 123 | [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

The Samaritans offer a safe space to talk in your own time and way about what is important to you

### Public Health Christmas Rainbow Guide

During the Christmas period, some of our mental health and emotional support services take a short seasonal break. To help ensure continued wellbeing, we've shared a copy of the Christmas Support Guide, along with a link to the Durham County Council resource page. These resources offer practical, empowering ideas to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people throughout the festive season. [Mental health support for children, young people and families - Durham County Council](#)

**Young Minds** | 0808 802 5544 | [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Helping young people around isolation and gaining support around mental health

**The Mix** | 0808 808 4994 | [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

Free, confidential support for under 25 via online, social or mobile

**PAPYRUS** | 0800 068 4141 | [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Confidential support and advice for young people with thoughts of suicide

**Shout** | Text SHOUT to 85258 | [giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)

Confidential 24/7 crisis text support when you need immediate assistance

**BEAT Youthline** | 0808 801 0711 | [www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

Provides support for children and young people with an eating disorder

Remember your **local school** and **GPs** are **available to help**.

**You are not alone**, we can get through this **together**.

**County Durham**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

**Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys**   
NHS Foundation Trust

**County Durham**  
**Care Partnership**

**Durham**  
County Council



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IN-GAME CHAT

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has been accelerated by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

### DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT

There are a number of ways that gamers commonly chat with one another online. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat: a group voice conversation that console users can have with anyone on the same platform. This tends to be more commonly used by players who already know each other. Finally, many gamers – especially on PC – will chat via a third-party app such as Discord.

### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to all players to use. Many games default to making it an opt-in function, but some don't, meaning a child could start seeing messages within the game from people they're playing with, regardless of whether they know those individuals or not. While most strangers won't necessarily have ill intent, there are some who may behave inappropriately when chatting to a child – intentionally or otherwise.

### DANGER OF GROOMING

It's been reported that some young gamers have encountered older players online who pretend to be a lower age to manipulate children, sending gifts in exchange for chatting and sending photos. Just as on any messaging platform, it's good to advise young people to avoid speaking to strangers; emphasise that they shouldn't accept gifts from anyone online that they don't know.

### BULLYING AND ABUSE

While some in-game chat can turn toxic because of how a match plays out, others turn that way because of people who engage in trolling – in essence, behaving in an offensive and abusive way simply to cause pain or get a rise out of whoever they're talking to. These 'trolls' often lean on racial slurs, anti-LGBT sentiment and other hateful rhetoric; they normally feel most confident preying on younger, more impressionable gamers.

### POTENTIAL FOR PRIVATE CHAT

If a player would like a re-match with a stranger after meeting them in the game, they can send a friend request, or use the party chat together in the future. For the most part, this is harmless – but it might lead to messages being exchanged in private. This could then escalate to the sharing of private information, and potentially attempts to manipulate or scam younger players.

### COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE

Certain games are very competitive, and players can sometimes get upset if they feel a teammate is underperforming, an opponent won unfairly, or they're just a bad loser. This can lead to unpleasant messages that stray away from playful 'trash talk' and wander into the territory of bullying. Some players have been known to get incredibly abusive in situations like this, and the impact of this on a young gamer's emotional wellbeing could be severe.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT

In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows children to play without risk of contact from strangers – but it will need to be done in each individual game. Text chat appears in the corner of the screen in many titles, so it's normally easy to take a quick glance and see what's being said. With voice chat, explain to children what behaviour is inappropriate, so they can spot the dangers themselves.

### REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS

Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag an account as potentially harmful. This normally leads to the account not being matched with yours in the future and, if that person's conduct breaks any of the game's rules, they may be banned from playing entirely. This is done within the game itself, so each title has a slightly different process, but these tend to be designed for simplicity.

### CONSIDER OTHER CHAT OPTIONS

If a child wants to play with people they know, consider using party chat or a third-party service like Discord. This allows everyone involved to chat on a private server and even enjoy each other's company while playing different games. It's also far more secure, as anyone looking to join will need to request and be granted access – normally by whoever is hosting the chat.

### COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Make sure children understand the differences between being competitive and being abusive. Talk about what constitutes unusual or inappropriate behaviour from strangers online. Be clear that if anything ever concerns or worries them, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Empower children to identify the risks of in-game chat for themselves and reassure them they won't get in trouble for seeking help if anything goes wrong.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Editor in Chief of GGRecon and has been working in the games media industry for five years. He's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his work has been published at sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at [nationalcollege.com/guides/in-game-chat](https://nationalcollege.com/guides/in-game-chat)