SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE

November 2026 | Middle School | What parents and carers need to know about: Anti-bullying week | Roblox

Helping our children find their voice, speak up and support others

Bullying can have a lasting impact on a child's confidence, friendships and wellbeing. Yet many children stay silent, fearing they won't be believed, that things will get worse or simply not recognising that they are being bullied.

This November, Anti-Bullying Week's theme, **Break the Silence,** reminds us of the importance of helping children recognise bullying, speak up when something isn't right and support others who may be struggling.

Understanding bullying: When is it more than falling out?

Disagreements and friendship difficulties are part of growing up, but bullying is different. It usually involves repeated, deliberately hurtful behaviour and an imbalance of power. This might include name-calling, exclusion, spreading rumours or physical aggression. Bullying can also happen online, through gaming platforms, group chats and messaging apps.

An important message for children: You don't have to decide whether something counts as bullying before asking for help. If someone's behaviour is upsetting you, you deserve to be listened to.

Why might children stay silent?

Telling an adult about bullying isn't always easy. Children may worry that:

- The bullying will get worse if they tell someone.
- They will be called a 'snitch' or 'tell-tale'.
- Adults will take away their phone or stop them playing online.
- Their friends will turn against them.
- Nobody will believe them or take them seriously.

Younger children may also struggle to explain what is happening or find the words to describe how they feel. This is why we need to regularly remind children that asking for help is not telling tales. It is a way of keeping themselves and others safe.

What if your child tells you they are being bullied?

Start by listening and reassuring them that they have done the right thing by speaking up. Avoid suggesting they simply ignore it or retaliate.

Make a note of what has happened, including any repeated incidents, and contact the school to discuss your concerns. Work together on a plan to help your child feel safe and agree how the situation will be followed up.

Keep checking in with your child. Even when the bullying stops, they may need time and reassurance to rebuild their confidence.



The message to remember

Breaking the silence doesn't always mean speaking loudly. Sometimes it means finding the courage to tell one trusted person that something isn't right.

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Roblox: What parents and carers need to know

Roblox is hugely popular with primary-aged children, but it's more than a gaming platform. Children can chat and interact with others, including people they don't know. During 2026, Roblox has introduced new chat safety measures. However, concerns remain about dangerous online networks using platforms like Roblox to target and exploit children.

What's changed with Roblox chat?

Roblox now requires age checks to access chat, generally restricting communication to similar age groups. Younger users have additional restrictions, with some features requiring parental permission.

Parents and carers should understand the different ways children can communicate:

- Game chat: Messages between eligible players within a game, including strangers.
- Direct chat: Private messages between players within games, where permitted.
- Friends and group chat: Individual or group conversations with Roblox friends, where permitted.
- Voice chat: Available to eligible older users following age checks.

Remember: Age checks do not verify someone's identity or guarantee safe interactions.

The Com: A dangerous online network parents and carers should know about

'The Com' (short for 'community') is a dangerous online network that targets and exploits children and vulnerable young people through gaming platforms, social media and messaging apps.

Members may build trust with children before manipulating or blackmailing them into sharing intimate images, harming themselves or carrying out dangerous acts.

How is Roblox involved?

Roblox has been used by people associated with this network, with concerns including:

- Avatar clothing referencing self-harm and harmful online groups.
- Games and chat spaces containing disturbing or inappropriate content.
- Content on other platforms directing children towards Roblox spaces linked to these communities.

The concern isn't just what children might see on Roblox, but who they might meet and where those interactions could lead.



How can children be drawn into harmful online communities?

Online grooming can begin with something as simple as a friendly gaming conversation or someone offering attention and friendship. Over time, children may be encouraged to move conversations to apps such as Discord and WhatsApp, share personal information or keep secrets from their parents and carers.