



Mowbray Primary School
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Headteacher: Mr Andrew Miller

AM/LH

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Dear Parents/Carers

We have been contacted by many worried parents this morning about the MOMO Challenge which you may be aware of via the BBC news and through Social Media Posts. Large numbers of the children are talking about it in school as well.

The Momo Challenge has been around for some time but has recently resurfaced online. There is a lot of advice available at the moment in relation to it and I have attached an information sheet for you as well as drawing together other information into this newsletter.

Further information for parents / carers can be found at www.nationalonlinesafety.com and <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Momo targets young children on social media platforms. It may be creepy, but police believe it is clear it is being used by hackers to harvest information. Due to this, when talking to your children about being online, don't focus solely on this new challenge as the internet quickly evolves and changes with new challenges arising all of the time.

The Momo doll encourages children to add a contact on messaging service WhatsApp, it then hounds them with violent images and dares including dares in relation to self-harm and suicide. It is starting to appear in YouTube videos such as (but not just) Fortnite and Minecraft where hackers have inserted the video into the middle of seemingly harmless videos.

Police have appealed to parents to not simply focus on Momo, urging them to:

- Ensure they know what their children can access online
- Ensure children understand the importance of not giving personal information to anyone they do not know
- Tell their children no-one has the right to make them do anything they do not want to do
- Use parental controls to keep children safe

A spokesperson for the NSPCC said: "The constantly evolving digital world means a steady influx of new apps and games and can be hard for parents to keep track of.

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"That's why it's important for parents to talk regularly with children about these apps and games and the potential risks they can be exposed to.

"The NSPCC publishes advice and guidance for parents on discussing online safety with their children, as well as Net Aware - the UK's only parental guide to social media and gaming apps." If adults are concerned or have any questions on how to approach the subject with their children, they can contact the **NSPCC Helpline** on **0808 800 5000** or visit the **NSPCC website**.

Children who are worried about their activity on apps or online games can contact **Childline** 24 hours a day, online and over the phone on **0800 1111**.

It is understood the original artwork used by the hackers has been taken from a designer in Japan who has no connection whatsoever with the Momo challenge.

In light of this, and several other social media related incidents which some of our children have encountered over the half term holiday on, we will run additional lessons on Online Safety in general in addition to our normal programme of lessons within the curriculum.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Miller
Headteacher

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