



Temple Meadow  
Primary School  
Growing together, learning together

## Temple Meadow Primary School

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Our Ref: GS/CH

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

### Online Safety (Whole School)

Dear Parents and Carers,

Safer Internet Day takes place in February of each year. Pupils in all classes have taken part in specific learning linked to 'together for a better internet' and have completed a range of different outcomes to demonstrate their understanding of how to remain safe online. As part of this, I am also asking for the support of all Parents/Carers to ensure that all online activity is supervised and that you are aware of any passwords and/or PIN numbers set up by your child.

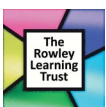
Within our protective behaviours culture at Temple Meadow, we instil in pupils that they 'have the right to feel safe all of the time' and 'can talk to anyone about anything, no matter how awful or small'. As part of this, we use a network hand, which identifies key trusted adults that children can share worries or concerns with. This promotes and models healthy, respectful relationships with others both in person and online.

We appreciate that online games and mobile phones can be a great way for children and young people to keep busy and stay in touch with friends and family, but it's imperative that they play and communicate safely. Please do consider the age ratings of games they play, as well as messaging and contact functions on the games and ensure that they are clear what to do if they feel worried or unsafe at any time.

We appreciate your ongoing support with this.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Smith**  
**Assistant Headteacher**



Artsmark  
Silver Award  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England



Leading Parent  
Partnership Award

2018-2021



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# MYLOL

AGE RESTRICTION  
13-19

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### FLIMSY AGE GATES

Although MyLOL states it is exclusively aimed at users aged between 13 and 19, there is no credible age verification system to prevent a younger child – or an older adult – from signing up to the platform. Coupled with the fact that it's impossible to establish a user's true identity on MyLOL, this raises a serious concern that the site could be used for grooming.

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

MyLOL maintains that it monitors all uploaded images for nudity or sexual content. It also claims to be able to detect suspicious keywords. However, there have been numerous reports of explicit content being found on the platform, with users often posting provocative, semi-nude pictures of themselves and engaging in flirty or sexually explicit conversation.

### POTENTIAL CYBER-BULLYING

MyLOL lets users 'vote' on other people based solely on their appearance, much in the same vein as the now-defunct site Hot or Not. This feature could easily lead to distress and bullying, especially if a young person's profile pics receive an unfavourable response. Various reviews of MyLOL have noted that bullying frequently becomes an issue in the platform's chat groups and private messages.

### IN-APP SPENDING

MyLOL is free to join and use, but it also offers paid-for memberships. Users who have paid money get their profile promoted at the top of the site and in search results. They can also earn additional credits for increased engagement with the platform – such as sharing, replying to messages and voting. At the time of writing, the monthly membership fee was \$9.95 (just under £8).

### DATA COLLECTION

According to its privacy policy, MyLOL collects user data including email addresses, contact details and interests. While the company says it is committed to protecting users' privacy, the small print states that information may be shared externally. MyLOL claims to follow procedures to keep data secure, but does not specify what these procedures are, or whether such information is encrypted.

### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

MyLOL makes it easy to connect with strangers. In fact, the site's rewards feature encourages users to send private messages to people they don't know. There have been several media stories of adults posing as teens on MyLOL to connect with minors, which could lead to extremely dangerous situations, such as a young person meeting up with someone who has been posing under a false identity.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### DISCUSS ONLINE DATING

It's vital to talk to your child about the possible dangers of platforms like MyLOL – particularly the threat of online predators. Remind them of the risks of sharing intimate images and information with strangers and emphasise that most people don't realise they're being 'catfished' until it's too late – it really isn't wise for a young person to meet up with someone they've only spoken to online.

### EXPLAIN PRIVACY RISKS

Before your child begins using a service such as MyLOL, it's important that they understand the potential pitfalls of giving out their personal data on this type of platform. Explain to them, for example, that they shouldn't divulge any personally identifying information to people who they don't know, as scammers can be quite convincing when attempting to steal someone's identity.

### RESTRICT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child has access to a bank card or other payment method, they may be enticed into signing up for MyLOL's premium features. Having their profile boosted and receiving more attention could be especially tempting if their friends also use the site. You could consider altering their device's settings to disable internet purchases, or at the very least keeping an eye on their online spending.

### SET UP LOCATION ALERTS

If you're worried that your child may be planning to meet up with someone they've met on MyLOL, you could consider utilising GPS or WiFi location tracking technology to follow their whereabouts in real time. You can even set up a virtual boundary or 'fence' and opt to receive an alert to your phone if your child enters or exits a specified area.

## Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid *The Inquirer*, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



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