

Introduction:

With the growing use of technology in schools, films and references to digital games have become a popular and valuable resource to engage children across the curriculum. They can help bring past events to life and be a powerful learning resource.

Under the Children Act 1989, school staff have a duty of care towards their pupils. Legally, while not bound by parental responsibility, school staff must behave as any reasonable parent would in promoting the welfare and safety of children in their care. Cholsey Primary School places a great emphasis on safeguarding children and wants to ensure that children are protected from unsuitable materials.

Use of and reference to films, video clips and digital games in school:

In the UK, the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) classifies films and video clips (where applicable) with ratings that are mostly age related¹. Digital games are classified by PAN European Game Information (PEGI), which provides age classifications for digital games. PEGI considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty.² Cholsey Primary School will follow the guidance on classification published by BBFC and PEGI for use of films and digital games in school. When staff are planning lessons that involve resources with a reference to films or digital games, they will check BBFC or PEGI classification (whichever is relevant), to identify if the film or game is age appropriate. If it is not deemed as age appropriate, then the resource cannot be used in a lesson.

¹ *It is important to note that BBFC classifications for cinema releases may differ to those of the same publications when they are released on DVD or for download.*

² *PEGI classifications for digital games may differ to those given, as guidance for Apps of the games on App Stores affiliated to specific device manufacturers, such as Apple or Google Play.*

BBFC classifies films as:

U: Universal

'Suitable for all. A U film should be suitable for audiences aged four years and over, although it is impossible to predict what might upset any particular child.'

PG: Parental Guidance

'General viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children. A PG film should not unsettle a child aged around eight or older. Unaccompanied children of any age may watch, but parents are advised to consider whether the content may upset younger, or more sensitive, children.'

Whilst staff may use clips from a variety of films through the internet (previewed), complete films above a 'U' or 'PG' classification will not ever be shown or recommended.'

Cholsey Primary School recognises the value that films may have in children's education, but also that children have very different backgrounds, experiences and anxieties and may react in different ways to a given scene. As a guiding principal, films classified as 'U' may be shown across the school. Films classified as 'PG' may be shown to children in Key Stage 2, but only with parents and carers being given the option to opt their child out. Where this is the case, the staff member responsible for showing the film (usually the class teacher), will contact the parents/carers to discuss this further and to put actions in place to support the child without excluding them fully from the viewing, if this is deemed appropriate.

Clips from films classified as 'PG' may be shown across the school, once staff have determined that they are suitable and appropriate and can justify how the clip will enhance learning.

Children accessing films and digital games at home

Cholsey Primary School will promote the importance of children not having access to films and digital games which do not have an age appropriate classification. This will be communicated through E-Safety briefings to parents/carers and during lessons on E-Safety in school.

Cholsey Primary School cannot be held responsible for the material parents and carers expose their children to outside of the school setting. However, if it is felt that a child's safeguarding, well-being or social development is being impaired due to them accessing films and digital games that are not age appropriate, this will be communicated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Further support:

<https://www.bbfc.co.uk/>

<https://pegi.info/>

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming-whats-appropriate-for-your-child/>