BJPS Coronavirus: Keeping pupils safe in Zoom lessons

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has listed Zoom as "medium risk" on its advice site Net Aware, created with O2, which offers guidance on the dangers associated with social networks, apps and games. This makes it comparable to Google Hangouts, Skype and WhatsApp.

The site recommends teachers and parents supervise or monitor children using the app "at all times", and that video chats are kept "as secure as possible", to mitigate risks including "zoombombing".

To reflect this, we have requested that all parents stay in the room to monitor while a child is using zoom, they need to be around for their child’s safety.

Following union advice we are using this as a platform to keep our unique and special bond with children alive during lockdown. It will only be used to check in with pupils and to help them cope with the ever increasing time spent at home.

The NSPCC guidance states that:

“Teachers should remain on the line with students throughout the call, and ensure all necessary safety features are in place to prevent unwanted intrusions.”

Therefore;

We have timetabled zoom sessions to ensure that there is never only one teacher in the group with hosts waiting for an additional staff member before admitting any children to the group.

As a host this includes turning off the screen-sharing and chat features and admitting students into the call one at a time.

We also have only one account that all calls are made from registered to school as a business account that we pay for.

The children's commissioner, Anne Longfield, previously issued guidance for teachers on what security settings are available on the app, and how best to use them.

We have put in place the following guidelines for those hosting:

* Lock your classroom  
  If your class has started and all your pupils have arrived, you can lock your virtual classroom, so that no one else can join.
* Use virtual waiting rooms  
  Use this feature to hold potential participants in a separate "waiting room", so you can check who they are before allowing them entry.
* Limit screen sharing  
  Make sure your pupils don’t take control of the screen and prevent them from sharing random content by limiting screen sharing, so only you as the teacher (host) can present to the class.
* Disable private messaging  
  Prevent distractions among your class by stopping private messaging between pupils, so they can’t talk to one another without your knowledge.
* Muting of participants

Participants are muted upon entry until they request to share and the host only can unmute.

Zoom has also issued its own advice on how "to ensure everyone joining an event does so with good intentions".

We are using the following additional advice for those hosting:

* [Set up your own two-factor authentication](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360033559832-Meeting-and-Webinar-Passwords-?zcid=1231)  
  Generate a random meeting ID when scheduling your event and require a password to join.
* [Remove unwanted or disruptive participants](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423-Managing-participants-in-a-meeting?zcid=1231)  
  From the participants menu, you can hover over a person's name, and several options will appear – including "remove". We are also removing any participants if their names are unknown.
* [Disable video](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423?zcid=1231)  
  Hosts can turn someone’s video off. This will allow you to block unwanted, distracting or inappropriate gestures on video.
* [Put people on hold](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362813-Attendee-On-Hold#h_87d70d90-5b0e-46b8-b7b0-b51e3c9fd699?zcid=1231)  
  You can put everyone else on hold, and the attendees’ video and audio connections will be disabled momentarily. Click on someone’s video thumbnail and select "start attendee on hold" to activate this feature. Click "take off hold" in the participants' list when you’re ready to have them back.
* [Mute participants](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/203435537-Mute-All-And-Unmute-All?zcid=1231)  
  Hosts can block unwanted, distracting or inappropriate noise from other participants by muting them. You can also enable "mute upon entry" in your settings.
* [Turn off file transfer](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/209605493-In-Meeting-File-Transfer?zcid=1231)  
  In-meeting file transfer allows people to share files through the chat. Toggle this off to keep the chat from getting bombarded with unsolicited content.

Staff guidance is as follows:

* Create an account using your school email and use your teacher name e.g. Mr or Mrs Smith
* Join at the time of your meeting
* The host will unmute you to be able to address the children
* We do not expect that zoom is the most suitable way to measure the welfare of a child but may help to create a picture of that child. Any concerns should be shared with one of the DSLs although we feel it is important to mention that you are no more accountable than when in the classroom with the child. Safeguarding is always a concern that should be passed on.
* Training will be provided for anyone who needs additional training

The above measures go beyond the recommended safeguarding measures and also take into account Union guidance and should therefore alleviate staff concerns about their and the children’s safety.

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For Parents and Children

1. By accepting the Zoom meeting ID and joining the meeting, with parental responsibility, you agree to the terms set out in this document.

2. Zoom is only to be accessed by a device in a communal family space.

3. It should ideally be supervised by adult to deal with any technical difficulties.

4. Attendees should be dressed appropriately.

5. The meeting ID is to remain confidential and not to be shared to anyone that it was not designated to.

6. Recording, photos or screenshots of the Zoom meeting are not allowed by participants.

7. The Zoom meeting will be recorded by the hosting teacher and stored online with the school GDPR and ICT policy.

8. The Zoom meeting will be locked by teacher 5 minutes after the start time so that it can only be accessed by authorised participants. Unfortunately, anyone arriving late to the meeting will not be able to gain access even with meeting ID.

9. For participants some Zoom facilities will be disabled by the host teacher. This includes but is not limited to the screen record function, chat and screen share.

10. Lastly the same behaviour expectations that are set within a classroom apply to the Zoom meeting and the teacher retains the right to terminate a pupil’s participation.