HILLSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rushey Way
Lower Earley, Reading
Berkshire RG6 4HQ

Headteacher: Mr D.Pearman

19th September 2026

Important Online Safety Message: Discord

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have become aware that some of our pupils are using the online messaging platform **Discord** outside of school. We are writing to raise significant concerns about the risks associated with this platform and to urge parents and carers to carefully review whether it is appropriate for their child.

It is important to note that Discord has a minimum age requirement of 13 years old. This means that primary school-aged children should not be using the platform.

Whilst Discord is widely used by teenagers and gamers, it was not designed for young children. The platform can expose users to a range of serious online safety risks, many of which can occur without parents being aware.

Key risks parents should be aware of:

- **Exposure to Inappropriate Content**

Discord contains thousands of public servers and chat groups. Children can be exposed to explicit language, violent content, graphic imagery, hate speech and other material that is not suitable for their age.

- **Contact with Strangers**

Unlike many platforms aimed at younger users, Discord allows children to communicate with people they do not know. In some cases, adults can join servers used by children and initiate conversations without a parent's knowledge.

- **Bullying, Harassment and Grooming Risks**

Direct messaging features can expose children to cyberbullying, intimidation, manipulation and inappropriate contact. Unfortunately, online platforms such as Discord have been used by individuals seeking to exploit or groom young people.

- **Pressure to Share Personal Information**

Children may be encouraged to share personal details, photographs, videos, gaming accounts or information about their school and home life. Once shared online, this information can be difficult or impossible to recover.

- **Scams, Fraud and Malware**

Users are frequently targeted with fake links, free game offers, account giveaways and other scams designed to steal personal information or infect devices with malicious software.

What we are asking parents to do:

We strongly encourage all parents and carers to:

- Check whether their child has a Discord account.
- Remove access to Discord if their child is under the age of 13.
- Regularly monitor their child's online activity and the apps they are using.
- Talk openly about online safety, including the dangers of communicating with strangers online.
- Ensure privacy settings are appropriately configured on all devices and platforms.

Many online safety incidents originate outside of school hours but can have a significant impact on children's wellbeing, friendships and learning. We therefore ask for your support in helping to keep our pupils safe by reviewing your child's use of Discord and other online platforms.

For further information and guidance, please click here.

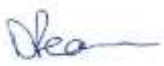
We have also attached a parent information flyer about Discord to help also.

On another online safety note: Concerns have been raised regarding a series called ***The Amazing Digital Circus***, which is currently available on streaming platforms including Netflix. At first glance, the programme may appear to be aimed at young children due to its colourful animation, cartoon-style characters and playful title. However, the content is intended for an older audience and includes themes and scenes that many parents may find unsuitable for primary-aged children. The show carries a 12 rating on Netflix and includes content warnings for violence, language and drug misuse. Some episodes contain scenes that could be upsetting for younger viewers, including depictions of injury, threatening situations and other disturbing imagery presented in an animated format.

Please be aware that this series is rated 12+ and is not suitable for younger viewers.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our children safe online.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Dan Pearman
Headteacher