

## A ROUND UP OF THE WEEK AT LAUREL PARK SCHOOL

### Headteacher's Message - Adele Christofi

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we approach the midpoint of this summer term, I'm delighted to share some of the exciting happenings at our school.

The buzz of activity and achievement continues to fill our corridors and classrooms, reminding us of the vibrant learning environment we've cultivated together.

Our Year 11 pupils are now fully immersed in their GCSE exams. I'm incredibly proud of their conduct and dedication, particularly their commitment to attending all exam briefings and warm-ups. This level of engagement speaks volumes about their determination to succeed, and I have no doubt their efforts will pay off.

In our Food Technology department, our Year 10 pupils have been showcasing their culinary prowess. I had the pleasure of witnessing their recent cooking mock, where they presented an array of impressive pasta dishes. The creativity and skill on display were truly remarkable, and I'm eagerly anticipating their final outcomes.

Speaking of culinary adventures, we're grateful to Ms Ezzeldin for securing a generous donation of salmon and organising an after-school cooking lesson for both pupils and staff. This hands-on experience not only enhanced our culinary skills but also fostered a wonderful sense of community within our school.

Our Year 10 Media pupils embarked on an exciting journey to Harry Potter World this Wednesday. This trip offered them a unique opportunity to explore the fascinating world of filmmaking, set design, and special effects. It's experiences like these that bring classroom learning to life and provide invaluable context for their upcoming exams.

In our ongoing efforts to support and engage with our SEND community, we held our first parent/carer SEND coffee morning this week. These events, which we plan to host monthly for the rest of the year, provide a fantastic platform for parents to connect, share experiences, and discuss their wonderful children. We're particularly grateful for the support of SEN\_with\_Elena, a local parent who coordinates various events for both parents and children in our community.

In our ongoing commitment to music and celebrating talent, this week's musical showcase our Steel Pan band showed off their musical excellence. As always there was an excellent atmosphere full of joy with lots of students supporting each other.

As always, these highlights merely scratch the surface of the incredible work happening at Laurel Park every day. I continue to be inspired by the dedication of our pupils, the creativity of our staff, and the support of our parent community. Together, we're creating an environment where every pupil can thrive and reach their full potential.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with our school community.

**Adele Christofi**  
Headteacher

# Headteacher's Award

At the end of each week, form tutors choose one student from their form for the 'Headteacher's Award'. In a special ceremony with Ms Christofi, she shares the 'story behind their success' with the winning recipients. The students also receive a special certificate and pin badge to commemorate the achievement.

Congratulations to the Year 9 and 10 winners from this week who received a great surprise to find out they had won this prestigious award!

## Y9

**Fernanda - Wins for Integrity**, Fernanda has earned the Determination award for her dedication and resilience. She has been working hard to improve her work and attitude towards learning, does the right thing everyday.

**Katie-Nicole - Wins for Determination**, Katie-Nicole is a conscientious and hard working student. She works quietly and independently to the best of her ability. She is a role model to other students.

**Alex - Wins for Excellence**, Alex works hard in all of his lessons. He is determined to achieve highly. He helps out during form time and is very well organised.

**Noblesse - Wins for Ambition**, Noblesse is doing a great job in the form class. She has been invaluable to the teacher, especially with collecting and distributing books. She has also shown significant improvement in being prepared, particularly during equipment checks. Noblesse has promised to stay entirely focused for the remainder of the school term, which is a positive step forward.

## Y10

**Khadija - Wins for Integrity**, Khadija is an all-round outstanding student. Her determination to excel in all learning & pastoral areas of Laurel Park, not to mention her tireless, all-reaching and serving community spirit is why she is a Model if not, the model Student. Khadija is a beacon who tirelessly upholds all LPS Values as well as maturity, passion for all she does and life skills: Amazing punctuality, always has the correct equipment, with a commitment excellent attitude to learning and wholeheartedly, selfless community spirit. She is destined for greatness and by Jove, Khadija deserves all she strives for. Khadija is an example of why we teach!

**Lexi - Wins for Integrity**, Lexi is consistently focused in all her lessons. She is ambitious and wants to do well. Her motivation to achieve means she is working hard and engaging in all learning.

**Dajahna - Wins for Determination**, Dajahna has worked well in Science for most lessons and achieved her highest result yet in one of her tests. She is also helpful in form with TTRP.

**Iqrash- Wins for Excellence**, Excellent student in the form time. Works consistently hard during PSHE and engages well in TTRP. He is well involved in school life. A lot of praise comes along from other subject teachers and he is finishing the year on a high!

**Dea- Wins for Ambition**, Dea has enjoyed a fantastic Year 10. Her attendance & punctuality are exemplary, she is always in perfectly attired school uniform, and she applies herself to the very best of her abilities to everything that she does. She is ambitious to achieve to the best of her abilities, and had the courage and bravery to be firm on her goals and dreams.





**Parent Survey: Your Child's First Smartphone**  
 SWGfL and FOSI are inviting parents and carers to share their experiences of giving their child their first smartphone. Your input will help shape resources to support families during this important digital milestone.  
 Take the survey:  
[swgfl.org.uk/smartphone-survey](https://swgfl.org.uk/smartphone-survey)

A big round of applause to the following students for their outstanding performance on Educake this week:

**You Are amazing!**

Y7: Josie O  
 Y8: Nicole S  
 Y9: Paola K  
 Y10: Dea K  
 Y11: Ore! L



Keep up the great work, everyone! Your hard work and dedication are truly inspiring.

Educake can be accessed here

<https://my.educake.co.uk/login>

Students are regularly set homework on here and have the option to select their own questions too.

## Kung Fu Club

By Mr London

COME ONE  
 COME ALL

This is an exciting opportunity to develop discipline, confidence, and physical fitness through the traditional Chinese martial art of Kung Fu. Kung Fu Club is open to all year groups, with sessions designed to improve focus, coordination, self-control, and self-defense skills in a supportive and engaging environment.

You can feel confident knowing that you will be taught high quality lessons by double award winning 2025 UK Martial Arts Hall of Fame inductee Mr London (Sifu London), who's experience spans over 33 years!

All you need is your PE kit and a bottle of water.  
 Every Monday  
 3.25pm - 4.30pm  
 Venue: Main Hall.



## Year 5 Taster Day - Meridian Angel

This week we welcomed Year 5 students from Meridian Angel to experience lessons at Laurel Park. They had a superb time, experiencing Science experiments, learning about Hieroglyphics in Art and using our bodies to make physical shapes with our body in Drama. A big thank you to all staff involved and a special thank you to Chef Dan and his team for providing a delicious lunch for all.



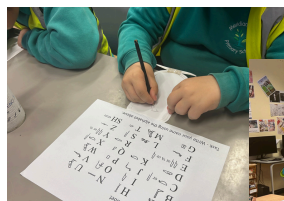
Ethan: I enjoyed using the bunsen burner in Science and using the equipment.



Yeliz: I enjoyed making shapes with my body in drama.



George: The food was delicious.



Jason: I enjoyed how we could burn the magnesium and see how brightly it burned.

## Revision Starts This Week for Years 7, 8 & 9!

As we move into the final half-term of the academic year, our Year 7, 8, and 9 students are beginning a focused programme of 5 weeks of revision across most subjects.

The revision timetable, starting next week, is designed to help students consolidate their learning, build confidence, and prepare for upcoming end-of-year assessments. Alongside the revision pack, teachers are carefully planning lessons to revisit key topics, address common misconceptions, and provide plenty of opportunities for practice and retrieval.

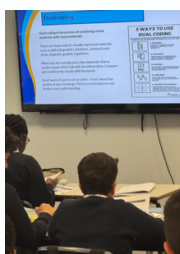
Students have also been introduced to a range of effective revision strategies, including the use of knowledge organisers, self-quizzing, and mind-mapping. These techniques not only support their current studies but also help build lifelong learning habits as they progress through school.

We encourage all students to approach this revision period with positivity and curiosity. Support from home—such as creating quiet study spaces, helping manage revision time, and encouraging healthy routines—can make a big difference.

We're incredibly proud of how hard our Key Stage 3 students have worked this year, and the end of year assessments are a great opportunity to reflect on their progress so far.

If you have any questions about revision or end-of-year assessments, please don't hesitate to contact your child's RSL or subject teacher.

Let's finish the year strong! 🙌



## Trampolining Club is Back!

Join us every Tuesday from 3:15 - 4:00 PM



COME ALONG!



Please remember to bring your LPS PE kit

## Virtual Placement with Lendscape

Date: 30th May 2025

Time: 09:30 - 12:30 PM



We also have an exciting virtual opportunity with Lendscape, a leading FinTech company specialising in software solutions for secured lending. Students will gain exposure to industry experts and learn about secured finance and technology while developing problem-solving skills and teamwork. [\[Click here to find out more\]](#)



# Y7 NATIONAL GALLERY ART TRIP

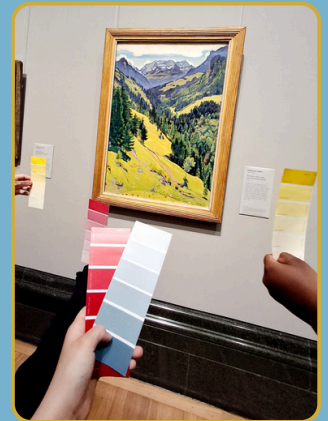


Our Year 7 students recently enjoyed an inspiring art trip to the National Gallery. Before heading into the workshops, we had a bit of time to explore Trafalgar Square, where we took some fantastic photos in front of Nelson's Column and the grand façade of the National Gallery.

The day officially began with a unique colour-matching activity inside the gallery, where students used paint colour palettes to find matching hues in famous portraits. They were especially excited to see the official portraits of King Charles and Queen Camilla before they return to the palace.

In the next workshop, they learned about Dutch paintings and the use of natural pigments. They got hands-on experience mixing pigments from materials like chalk, dried spinach, marigold flowers, paprika, beetroot, pea flower, and spirulina. They experimented with blending these pigments to create their own unique colours, which they named themselves.

Finally, they used these custom colours to add vibrant touches to a large collaborative canvas they had been working on together. The day concluded with some free time to explore the gallery's masterpieces, making it a truly enriching experience for everyone.





# Teaching and Learning



## Printing - Year 10 Graphics

This term, Year 10 Graphics students have been getting creative and hands-on with a range of printing techniques as part of their design curriculum. The unit, focused on developing practical skills and design thinking, has seen students experimenting with methods such as block printing, screen printing, and monoprinting.

Students began by exploring the history of printmaking and its relevance in modern design. They then moved on to designing their own patterns and artwork to apply in various print processes. Students also had the opportunity to work with more advanced tools in the graphics studio, using stencils and screens to create layered prints with bold colors and textures. These techniques not only helped students improve their technical abilities but also encouraged them to think critically about how visual messages are communicated through art and design. It's great to see them engage with traditional methods while applying their own modern twist. Developing these skills will be incredibly useful if they continue into senior design or even pursue creative careers.

With more lessons ahead, the Year 10 Graphics students are set to continue exploring the world of design—one print at a time.



## Why Are Some Countries Rich While Others Remain Poor? Students Explore Uneven Development

Year 10 Geography students are diving into one of the most important and complex topics in Geography: Uneven Development. As part of their global studies curriculum, pupils are learning why the world is so unequal, why some countries are rich and powerful while others struggle with poverty, conflict, and underdevelopment.

Uneven development refers to the stark contrasts between wealth and living standards in different parts of the world. It's a key topic that helps students understand global patterns of income, healthcare, education, and infrastructure. This unit gives students the tools to explore that question critically. There was much debate about the historical and global causes of uneven development which led to questions around colonisation; Many countries that are now poor were once colonies of European powers. Other causes include trade imbalances, where poorer countries export cheap raw materials but import expensive manufactured goods. Some students were surprised to learn how international debt and unfair trade agreements continue to keep poorer nations from developing. Geography also plays a role. Countries that suffer frequent natural disasters like droughts, earthquakes, or floods often find it hard to build stable economies. Conflict is another factor; wars and political instability can destroy infrastructure and drive away investment.

The unit isn't just about identifying problems. Students are also learning about solutions such as fair trade, debt relief, investment in education and healthcare, and global cooperation. Many expressed a newfound interest in global issues and said they felt more empowered to make a difference. With such thoughtful engagement, it's clear these students are not only learning about the world, but beginning to think about how they can help change it.



## Year 8 Students Tackle French Verb Conjugation on the Road to Fluency

Year 8 French students have been hard at work this term mastering one of the most important and sometimes tricky parts of learning a new language: verb conjugation. From regular -er verbs like parler (to speak) to irregular verbs like avoir (to have) and être (to be), students have been building the foundations of French fluency one tense at a time. In class, students have been practicing how to match verbs to the correct subject pronouns je, tu, il/elle, and so on and are now using them to formulate sentences. Using interactive exercises, they've been applying these skills in real conversations and short written texts. As the term continues, students will move on to using verbs in different tenses, such as the past (passé composé) and future, helping them to talk about a wider range of experiences. With solid conjugation skills in place, Year 8 are well on their way to becoming confident French speakers. Vive le français!

## Year 9 Geography Students Explore the Complexities of West Africa

Year 9 Geography students have been diving into the dynamic and diverse region of West Africa. Through maps, case studies, and lively classroom discussions, students have been uncovering what makes this part of the world unique, from its rich natural resources to its complex social and political challenges.

A major focus of the unit has been understanding the region's economy. Students learned that many West African countries rely heavily on agriculture and natural resources. Crops like cocoa, coffee, and cotton play a vital role in supporting livelihoods, especially in countries like Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Additionally, oil and mineral exports are major economic drivers, particularly in Nigeria, one of the region's largest economies. However, teachers have also emphasized the challenges of over-reliance on these industries, especially in areas lacking strong infrastructure or stable governance.

Another important part of the curriculum has been exploring the conflicts that have shaped and continue to affect the region. Students discussed a range of issues, from the historical impact of colonial borders to more recent struggles involving political instability, religious tensions, and resource disputes. These discussions have helped students understand how economic hardship, climate change, and weak government institutions can contribute to unrest.

Doing this topic will help students realise how connected the environment, economy, and politics are, or how much it can affect people's daily lives. They will get a better grasp of global geography but also develop empathy and critical thinking skills that they can apply to understanding the wider world.





# **Important Dates!**



19th May - F1 Motorsports Trip

22nd May -  
Guitar and Drums Showcase 5PM  
Year 8 Armed Forces Cricket Trip

***HALF TERM BREAK***  
***Monday, 26 May - Friday, 30 May 2025***

10<sup>th</sup> June - Culturally Speaking Trip

**11th June – Year 7 Parents Evening 3:45pm – 6:15pm**

16th June –  
Year 10 Mocks Begin  
Culturally Speaking Work Shop

23rd June – KS3 Core Subject Mock Exams Begin

24th June – Year 11 Prom

10th July – Summer Achievement Week

14th July – Sports Day

**15th July – School Trip Day**  
Thorpe Park (Year 9 & 10)  
Whipsnade Zoo (Year 7 & 8)

16th July – Culture Day

18th July – End of Term





# Character Education focus of the week

The vision of Laurel Park School is to develop well rounded students who have the ambition and determination to excel in life whether this be through academic study, vocational training or employment.

Alongside this, we have a commitment to developing character and integrity across the school and wider community. Opportunities are provided outside of the taught curriculum to develop core life skills, preparing our students to be proud global citizens.

Finally, Laurel Park is a school where all members of the community are treated with care and respect, whilst supported both with their well-being and their academic aspirations.

This is achieved through our Core Values of **Integrity, Determination, Excellence** and **Ambition**

Each month we will see a Skill and each week we will try to link this Skill to one of our Values.

## This month's Skill is Teamwork!

*'Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.'*

*-Michael Jordan*

## This week's value is Determination!

### How can Teamwork help us achieve Determination?



- **Support and Motivation:** Team members can encourage and support each other, bolstering individual determination through collective effort.
- **Shared Goals:** In a team, members work together towards a common objective. The determination of each member to reach this goal can drive the entire team to succeed.
- **Overcoming Challenges:** Teams often face obstacles. A determined team will persist through challenges, leveraging the diverse strengths and perspectives of its members to find solutions.

Students will be presented this in assembly each week but please also speak to them at home



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# TRIP TO ROME

Sunday 24th May - Tuesday 26th May 2026

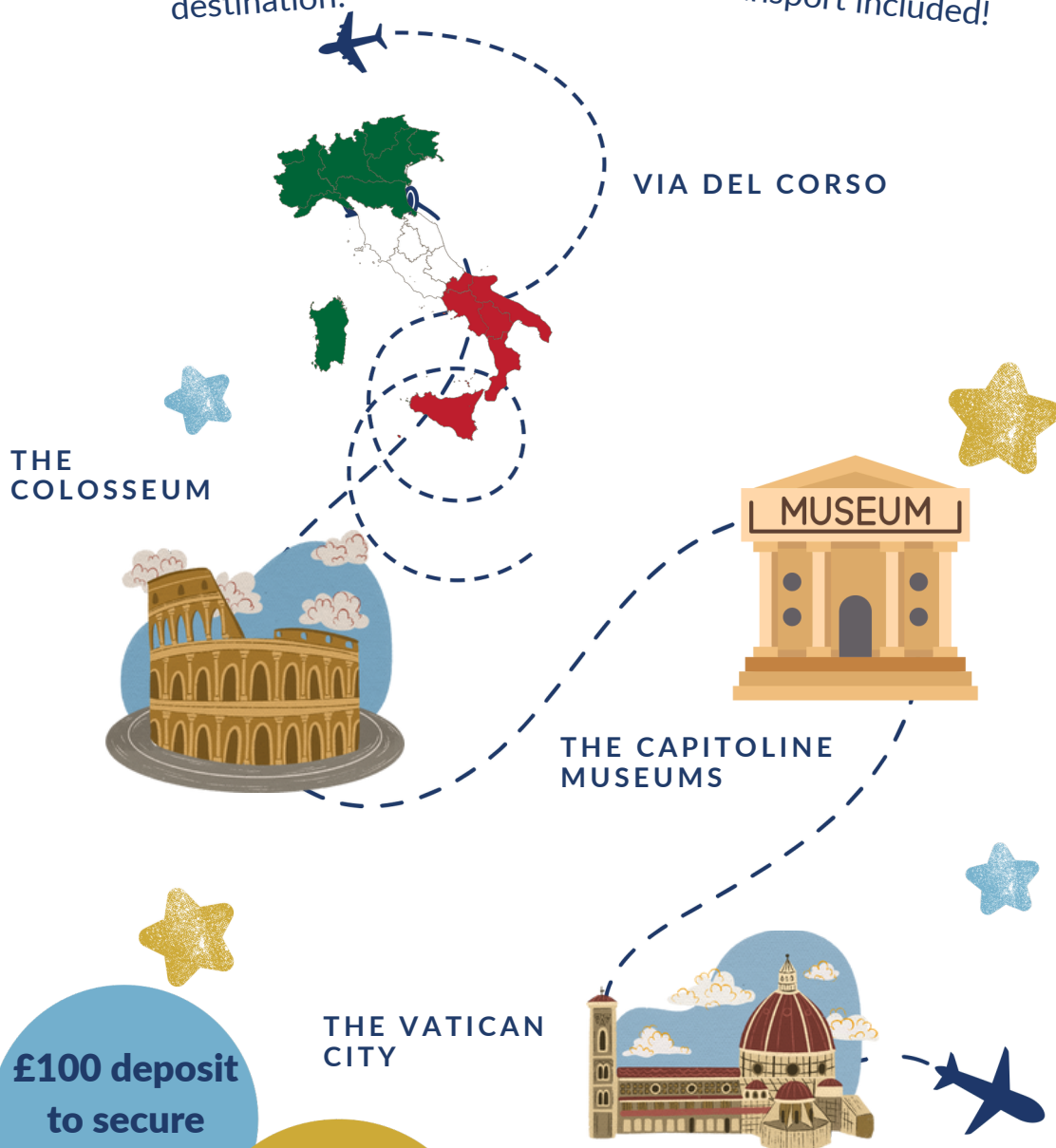
Breakfast and Dinner  
included

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activities

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Accommodation included

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destination!

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your place

£750 total with  
a payment plan  
option



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

### SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

### GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

### ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

### PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

### ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

### HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

### TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

### RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

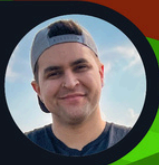
Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

### PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.



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