

Safeguarding News



What is MOMO

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Momo is a form of cyberbullying and targets children on social media. A doll figure with bulging eyes and a creepy grin encourages children to add a contact on messaging service WhatsApp, then hounds them with violent images and dares. It encourages them to self-harm and the ultimate post tells them to take their own lives.

"A 'curse contact' sends a number and tells you to contact them on WhatsApp.

Threats are then made if challenges are not completed which have included the threat of violence and death to other family members.

"There are numerous variations and of course now imitators."

The game is being touted as the next Blue Whale – a dangerous social media game that appeared in 2017 and is linked to at least 130 teen deaths across Russia.

And it's similar to the Doki Doki Literature Club game also linked to teen deaths.

The police believe that the app is being used by hackers to obtain personal information



The momo avatar that is used

Signs to look out for

Advice for parents

It is important that parents are aware of this and you can direct them to The NSPCC which publishes advice and guidance for parents on discussing online safety with their children, as well as Net Aware - the UK's only parental guide to social media and gaming apps."

Staff need to be extra vigilant spotting the warning signs and if they are concerned about a student, contact a member of the academy safeguarding team. Signs and indicators that someone may be involved in a challenge game like Momo can include;

- Become very secretive, especially about what they are doing online
- Are spending a lot of time on the internet and social media
- Are switching screens on their device when approached
- Are withdrawn or angry after using the internet or sending text messages
- Have lots of new phone numbers or email addresses on their devices

For further information or guidance, on any of the topics covered in this newsletter or any Safeguarding concerns please contact a member of your academy safeguarding Team.