

Film Use in School

With the growing use of ICT in schools, films have become more popular as a valuable resource for schools to use throughout the curriculum. They can help bring past events to life, in history for example, and can be used as a stimulus for children's writing. However, we need to make sure that the films shown are suitable for our children and are used in the correct context.

Under the Children Act 1989, teachers have a duty of care towards their pupils, traditionally referred to as 'in loco parentis' i.e. 'in place of a parent'. Legally, while not bound by parental responsibility, teachers must behave as any reasonable parent would do in promoting the welfare and safety of children in their care.

Our school places a great emphasis on safeguarding children and wants to ensure that children are protected from unsuitable materials.

Ratings Guidance

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) classifies films as: U: Universal-Suitable for all. A U film should be suitable for audiences aged four years and over. However, it is impossible to predict what might upset a particular child.

PG: Parental Guidance Suitable for general viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for younger children. A PG film should not disturb a child aged around eight or older. Parents should consider whether the content might upset younger, or more sensitive children. A PG film will not contain any theme which is inappropriate for a child. PG works may help to explore challenging issues such as bullying, bereavement or racism.

In our school, we recognise the value that film has in children's education and want to ensure the safeguarding of children. We recognise that children have very different personalities, backgrounds and experiences, and will often react to a given scene in very different ways.

As a guiding principle, partial extracts of U films may be shown across the school. Suitable extracts from PG films may also be shown to children across the whole school. With the Headteacher's permission and discretion, whole films with a U, or PG classification, may be shown.

Whilst teachers may use clips from a variety of films through the internet (all previewed) complete films above a 'U' classification will not be shown without first seeking approval. However, it is important that the teacher has determined it is suitable and appropriate for the children and that they are able to justify their reasoning behind their choice.

It is important to make sure that any children watching are not likely to suffer any ill effects as a result of seeing the film. If teachers are unsure about a film they should seek advice from colleagues or the school leadership team, or seek parental advice for individual children.

If there is any doubt regarding this, then it would be safer not to show the film. The BBFC (www.bbfc.co.uk) provides teachers and parents with clear, concise, specially tailored information

about films, video games and classification, helping them make informed choices about what is suitable for children. An annual licence to cover the screening of films for use in school and to respect the copyright of the owners of the film is provided by the DfE.

Teacher's Guidance

Complete films should only be shown in relation to learning, even during celebrations or at the end of term- these films must be related to units of work and teachers should ensure lessons are drawn from these. A maximum of two, full films can be shown throughout the course of the academic year, and any more are subject to the headteacher's discretion.

Film should not be used as part of any behaviour policy or during wet-pay or lunch times. As indicated above, the showing of complete films is subject to permission from the headteacher.

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