



# Golborne

HIGH SCHOOL

Dear Parent,

Can I please bring to your attention a concerning social media App that has recently come to light via a primary school in Wigan and request schools consider highlighting the issue with parents .

The app is called IMVU and is a social media app that allows players to generate an avatar and interact, socialise with other users avatars. The avatars do give away the users locations and the avatars appear to be child friendly but also appear quite sexualised in appearance.

As with a lot of social media apps not everyone are who they describe themselves to be and this leaves young people very vulnerable. This app has an age of 13 years and above however children of primary school age have accessed this app.

For further advice and information on Apps and their appropriateness for young people the NSPCC and partners have produced an internet site that can help parents decide what is appropriate for their children [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)

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THEY CAN **achieve**



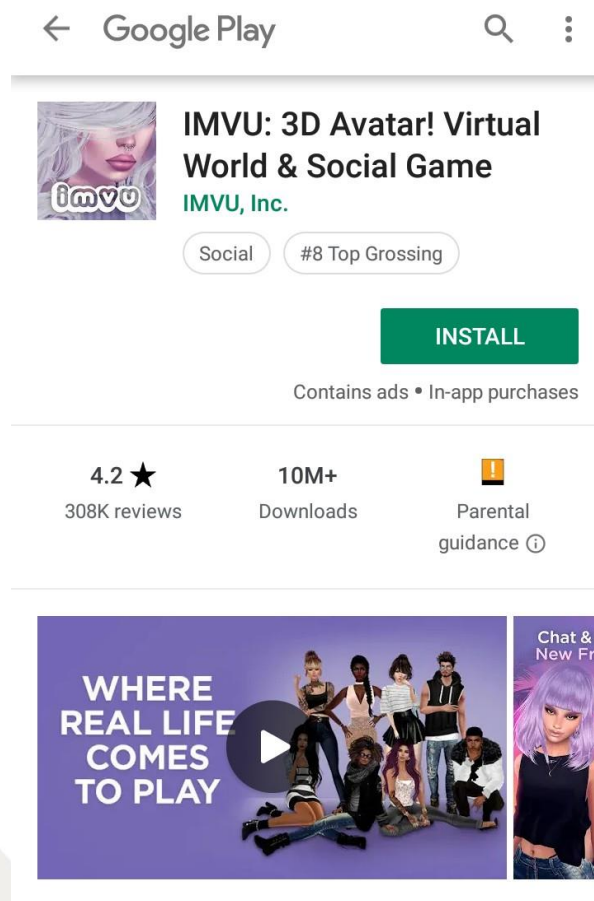


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Unfortunately there are many apps or platforms that potentially can leave children vulnerable, my advice would be that parents should build up their knowledge of social media apps using sites like net-aware and be inquisitive as to what their children have access to on their phones, tablets and computers.

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## **ONLINE SAFETY ADVICE FOR PARENTS**

### **Agree boundaries**

Be clear what your child can and can't do online – where they can use the internet, how much time they can spend online, the sites they can visit and the type of information they can share. Agree with your child when they can have a mobile phone or tablet.

### **Explore together**

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to ask them to tell you about what they do and what sites they like to visit. If they're happy to, ask them to show you. Talk to them about being a good friend online.

### **Put yourself in control**

Install [parental controls](#) on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices. Set up a user account for your child on the main device they use and make sure other accounts in the household are password-protected so that younger children can't access them by accident.

### **Use airplane mode**

Use airplane mode on your devices when your child is using them so they can't make any unapproved purchases or interact with anyone online without your knowledge.

### **Stay involved**

Encourage them to use their tech devices in a communal area like the lounge or kitchen so you can keep an eye on how they're using the internet and also share in their enjoyment.

### **Talk to siblings**

It's also a good idea to talk to any older children about what they're doing online and what they show to younger children. Encourage them to be responsible and help keep their younger siblings safe.

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## Search safely

Use safe search engines such as [Swiggle](#) or [Kids-search](#). You can save time by adding these to your 'Favourites'. Safe search settings can also be activated on [Google](#) and other search engines, as well as [YouTube](#).

## Check if it's suitable

The age ratings that come with games, apps, films and social networks are a good guide to whether they're suitable for your child. For example, the minimum age limit is 13 for several social networking sites, including Facebook and Instagram. Although sites aimed at under-10s like [Moshi Monsters](#) and [Club Penguin](#) also have social networking elements.

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