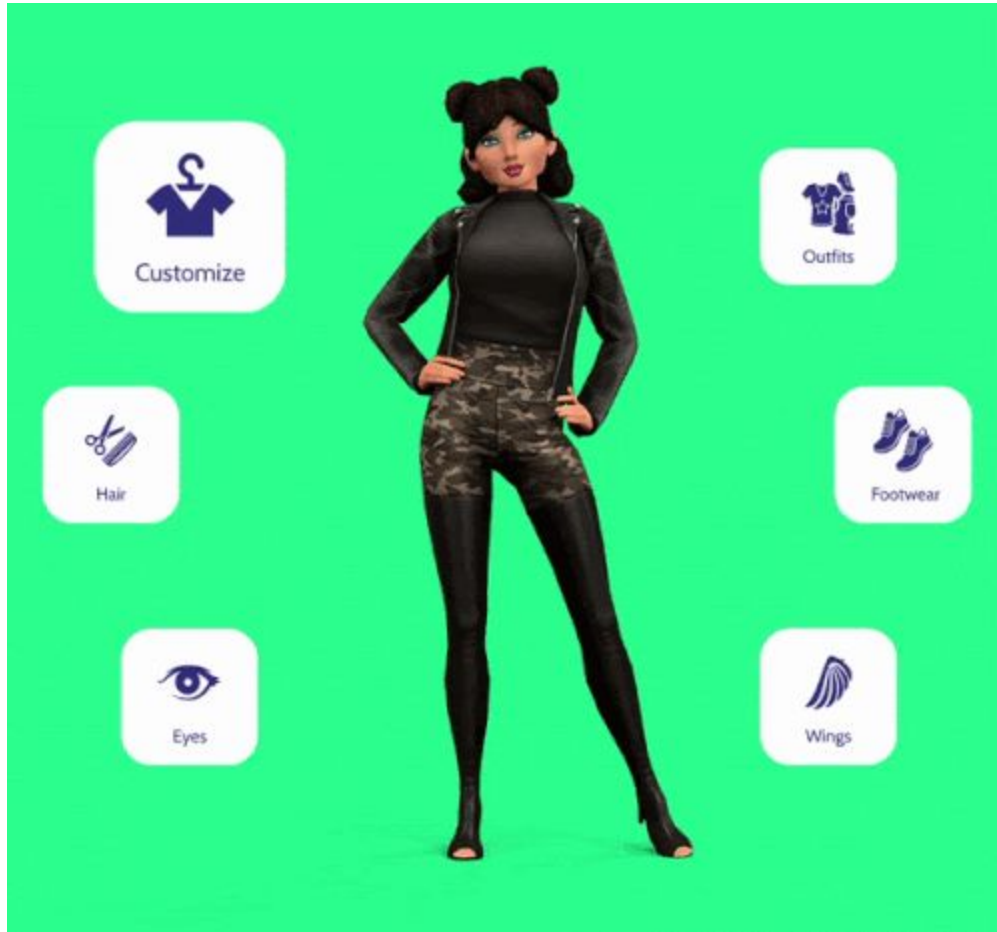# Avakin Life Information

We have been alerted to the risk of potential grooming and abuse on the Avakin Life platform.

The major risk is that users can easily access children and young people online via private and public chats.

Over **2 million people** are using the platform with **500,000** using it every day.

Once a user has kitted out their character, they can embark on 'endless adventures' in what the company says is 'a world with no limits'.

Here's what we know…

What is Avakin Life?

Avakin Life is a virtual 3D gaming world where users create their own character, or Avatar, before choosing their outfits and interacting with users at different in-game locations. The premise of the game is to encourage social interaction.

The game can be downloaded on iOS, Android and Amazon Devices,

- **Apple Age Rating** – 12+

- **Google Play Age Rating** – Parental Guidance

- **Amazon Age Rating** – Guidance Suggested

What are the key functions?

- The platform uses **real money, real people and real places**

- Users visit different venues (shopping mall, theme park and more) which each have a designated public chat, where users can 'whisper' or chat privately in the venue

- Users can buy and gift items to dress themselves or flirt with other users

- They can also 'interact' by high fiving or sending kisses

Key Risks

- Testing found that users under 13 would see a message saying they were not eligible to play, but they could still enter the game, if they lied about their age to bypass the age verification process
- The platform uses public chat rooms, live events and one to one conversations to facilitate interaction
- The game was initially designed for users aged 17+ but now allows children aged 13+

- Despite a fun design, it isn't suitable for children due to the suggestive nature of chats, actions and 'meet-ups'

- There is evidence that the platform has been used to groom young children internationally

So what should you as a parent, teacher or safeguarding professional be aware of?

- **Anyone** can start a conversation with a user

- Direct messages are called 'whispering' when two users are in the same venue

- Users can communicate privately at any time, if they are friends

- The clothes options for Avatars can create sexualised characters

- There are references to drugs and alcohol

- New users are awarded coins for in-app purchases

- Users can buy each other online 'gifts' such as outfits and even apartments which may facilitate online grooming

- Linking other social media accounts such as Facebook and an email address also earns more coins