Media Literacy by Design Self-Assessment

Name of the platform: The LEGO Group

Date: September 2024

Purpose of the document:

This document has been designed for online services[1] to demonstrate how their work and products align with the **Best Practice Principles for Media Literacy by Design**. As you engage with this assessment, consider the following key areas:

1. **Proactivity, priority, transparency and accountability;**

2. **User-centric design and timely interventions;**

3. **Monitoring and evaluation**.

Ofcom recently became the UK's online safety regulator following the Online Safety Act 2023 (the Act) becoming law. Ofcom's media literacy work will make an important contribution to the implementation of the changes under the Act, in particular the changes to Ofcom's media literacy duties introduced by the Act. However, this work should not be interpreted as a statement of our policy on other guidance or our codes of practice under the Act or prejudge any further work to develop policy in relation to that Act. Whilst there are close links between the policy areas of media literacy and online safety, they are distinct. Our media literacy work, which includes these principles, is broader in scope than online safety, in terms of both the content and services to which it applies. In addition, as a voluntary initiative we have more discretion in the recommendations we make here than in the online safety codes. Our media literacy work goes beyond requirements specified in the Act to consider what more online services can do to support people to use, understand and create online media and communications in a variety of contexts.

With this in mind, materials submitted here may be repurposed for Ofcom's work under the Act.

We would like you to engage in a reflective process. This self-assessment form invites you to analyse how your organisation approaches media literacy on-platform (as part of the design process or through on-platform interventions).

- We specifically encourage you to identify potential areas for improvement you would like to focus on over the next few months. This approach allows us to better understand how platforms monitor and evaluate media literacy interventions on an ongoing basis, whilst allowing us to further encourage the adoption of the principles.
- We ask that you define what success looks like, and how this will be measured for each piece of work to promote media literacy on-platform. As per principle 11, we ask that you

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[1] Platforms/online services include social media, search, video-sharing and gaming services.

establish media literacy outcomes and media literacy outcome indicators wherever possible.[2]

This self-assessment exercise is also an opportunity to share knowledge with a broader audience. Other services, academics, charities, and the general public can learn from what's currently working well and what challenges exist. We may wish to use some of the self-assessment completed to publish a summary of the work being undertaken by platforms. We would be in touch on the specifics before publication, however, it is worth flagging if there is anything commercially sensitive or confidential in your response at this point. Transparency and knowledge sharing has been a recurrent ask from stakeholders. By fostering open communication and sharing insights, we can collectively enhance our understanding and drive positive change, leading to a collective commitment to media literacy.

In responding to the questions in this document, we encourage you to assess your practices and the extent to which they align with Ofcom's Best Practice Principles for Media Literacy by Design as part of actively contributing to a more informed and media literate society. We want to make knowledge sharing a formal aspiration for online services to ensure that everyone has clarity over the work that is being done and to foster collaboration between stakeholders.

Contact: If you have any questions about the Media Literacy by Design project, please feel free to get in touch with the MSOM team (makingsenseofmedia@ofcom.org.uk).

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[2] Media literacy outcomes are ideally a benefit received by the target audience to be achieved as a result of the work. Media literacy outcome indicators are measurable pieces of evidence that allow users to track the change that has taken place as a result of their intervention.

Proactivity, priority, transparency and accountability

Please provide an example of how your platform already demonstrates adoption of at least one principle in this category. How is success measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

The LEGO Group is committed to being a world-leading provider of products that embed safety by design into digital experiences. To complement this, we are equally committed to empowering and enabling children to become smart, responsible and future-ready digital citizens and have been proactive in developing a broad Digital Empowerment portfolio which offers children and families free online activities for them to enjoy and build digital literacy skills together.

The portfolio includes story-style Build & Talk activities, created for children ages 6-9 years old to support families with a playful way to engage in difficult conversations about digital safety and designed to help parents and carers support children to navigate the online world. In 2023 our Build & Talk campaign delivered over 2.6million engagements globally.

A further example of our proactive approach to media literacy is our playful learning experience, Zero's Quest. This narrative puzzle adventure game is designed to teach 10 – 12 year olds the importance of empathy, and how to 'play well' online.

The game provides learnings centered around life-like situations children may encounter in the online space and provides them with a risk-free training playground to role-play and experiment through free choice. The experience encourages children to reflect on their choices through positive reinforcement with the ultimate outcome of learning how to deal with negative social behaviors or feelings (such as bullying, trolling, fear of missing out ("FOMO"), negative self-worth) and build and promote positive social behavior (promoting kindness, being a positive role model, and standing up to negative behavior in a constructive way).

Since its launch, Zero's Quest (https://kids.lego.com/en-gb/arcade/zeros-quest-9ba26cfcf34b409391f9f2430176d7c9) landing page on kids.LEGO.com has been one of the most popular and top-performing elements of the LEGO Group's Digital Empowerment portfolio. Having promoted it across different jurisdictions on the occasions of Safer Internet Day 2023, World Kindness Day and EU Safer Internet Forum, our data shows the page was viewed more than 16,000 times. We are committed to continuing to monitor reactions to the experience and suggestions for continuing improvement.

The design of Zero Quest and all other digital empowerment skill-building experiences is based on the LEGO Digital Empowerment impact framework, which equips children with six key digital literacy skills through defined learning objectives, enabling them to navigate and thrive in the digital space through innovative play-based learning experiences. These skills are:

1) Digital identity and footprint management - Knowing digital activities leave a permanent trail of data that shapes a child's digital identity and being able to manage it.
2) Balanced use of technology - Being able to control digital consumption by balancing screen time and staying focused.

3) Online security - Knowing the different types of cyber threats and risks and being able to secure private information and assets.
4) Privacy management - Knowing rights regarding private information and data and being able to manage privacy on digital platforms.
5) Critical thinking and media literacy - Knowing not to trust everything and everyone at face value and being able to navigate the landscape of digital information, content, and contacts.
6) Online kindness and managing cyberbullying - Knowing how digital social interactions resemble and differ from physical ones and being able to be a good friend online.

Please provide an example of how your platform can make more progress to further demonstrate further adoption of principles in this category. How will success be measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

In addition to providing stand-alone skill-building experiences on media literacy and digital empowerment, we aim to begin integrating media literacy and empowerment skill-building elements into our commercial product within the coming year. This will allow us to scale impact and skill-building through organic engagement with a broad target group of children and adults, help us create even more positive digital (social) spaces, and support children's general wellbeing.

We will provide updates to Ofcom on our progress in this area.

User-centric design and timely interventions

Please provide an example of how your platform already demonstrates adoption of at least one principle in this category. How is success measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

All our learning experiences and interventions are designed with the end-user in mind and employ Learning through Play as a central element. We tailor each intervention to the selected target age group to ensure age-appropriateness, relevance, playful engagement, and efficient skill-building.

For example, when delivering learning to younger children (e.g. 6-8 years old) we consider engaging more parents and caregivers to support than we might do for older children (e.g. 9-12 years old). Our Build & Talk activities are an excellent example of delivering impact to a younger target audience where we support parents and caregivers in having a meaningful conversation and skill-building with their child in a playful manner. Our Zero's Quest game is more aimed at 9-12 year olds, where gaming is a central and a popular play activity that can be employed to deliver skill-building and undertaken either by the child individually or with their parent or caregiver.

Please provide an example of how your platform can make more progress to further demonstrate further adoption of principles in this category. How will success be measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

We are currently investigating how we might expand our target age group, currently primarily focused on 6-12 year olds and their parents and caregivers, to reach both older and younger children. We recognize the positive value and impact we might provide children by being able to offer them timely interventions at a broader age range.

We will continue to engage Ofcom on this as our thinking develops.

Monitoring and evaluating

Please provide an example of how your platform already demonstrates adoption of at least one principle in this category. How is success measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible?

Our Digital Empowerment campaigns have reached more than 250 million adults globally since 2021 and we experience general high levels of engagement from children and families with our empowerment experiences.

The positive impact of our play experience can be evaluated through a mix of platform data and user studies. We currently aim to evaluate impact on two levels:

1. **Evaluating experience engagement**: **Does the target audience (children, parents, caregivers) find it desirable to engage with the experience?**
   Where age and privacy appropriate, this is evaluated through quantitative indicators such as time spent in experience, engagement rates, number of return visits; as well as qualitative user studies and interviews

2. **Evaluating the effectiveness of the knowledge and skill-building outcomes**: **Does the target audience (children, parents, caregivers) achieve the intended learning objectives for each of the six digital empowerment skills?**
   This is evaluated for select experiences through in-depth user studies measuring indicators of Agency such as Awareness, Understanding, Confidence, Application and Promotion. At the LEGO Group we have developed an indicator framework for Digital Empowerment Agency that we apply systematically to evaluate the learning outcome of our interventions to allow us to optimize the learning experience and outcomes.

Please provide an example of how your platform can make more progress to further demonstrate further adoption of principles in this category. How will success be measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

Going forward we will look to evaluate impact on a third level to further understand the achieved benefit(s) from participating in our Digital Empowerment programmes and experiences.

In particular the aim is to better understand whether children become more adept at navigating the digital space after engaging with the experience and did it influence their wellbeing. Our intention is to apply objective indicators for user behavior and user's subjective feeling of wellbeing may be applied as ultimate measures for the impact of the experience.

We will provide updates to Ofcom on our progress in this area.