What's changing on 24th November?

Curfew:

- Students will be able to log in between 07:00 and 20:00.

Out-of-school daily play limit:

- Students will be limited to 20 minutes of games per day outside school hours, including before and after school, at weekends and during school holidays.
- There's no play limit during school hours.
- If a student has a homework Session due, their daily play limit is automatically extended so they can finish it. The curfew still applies.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON SCREENTIME

We understand the concern about children's screen time, and we share it. Many of us are parents and teachers, and we support measures to protect children from excessive or unhelpful screen use, including the social media ban. TTRS isn't a social media platform: there's no chat or messaging. But parents, teachers and MPs are right to ask every provider whether its products keep children on screens for longer than they need. It's a question we put to ourselves regularly.

I created Times Tables Rock Stars when I was a maths teacher, because my students didn't know their times tables well enough and it was holding them back in maths. Children learn number facts best through spaced practice: short sessions, little and often, with breaks in between that give the brain time to embed what they've practised. Long sessions don't help, and we actively discourage them. Every game in TTRS is deliberately short, and our characters remind children to take regular breaks.

Recently we've been working with our school community to decide on some appropriate defaults for these settings and on the 24th November, every school will have a curfew and a daily time limit switched on, as default.

Since I first built it, TTRS has been developed with, by and for teachers. For that reason, both the offline and online versions of TTRS mirror what teachers are doing to boost learning in the classroom: recognising progress, celebrating achievement and making learning enjoyable.

Children work through Rock Status milestones to mark how fluently they recall facts, and a colour-coded heat map shows which facts they know well and which need more practice. One of the achievements children are proudest of is 'going green', when their whole

heatmap turns green because they know their tables well enough to move confidently on to harder maths.

We've deliberately steered away from features designed to keep children playing, such as streaks, random rewards, chat messages, loot boxes or notifications. There's no advertising and schools pay the same subscription however much their students play, so we have no commercial reason to want children on screen for longer.

OUR APPROACH TO REWARDS AND GAME DESIGN

We regularly review our features against the Children's Code. Some of the key principles guiding our approach are:

- **Anonymity:** All students pick a rock avatar name when they first start playing, to replace their real name and keep them anonymous in any games with other students. The default setting for all schools is "Rock Name only" meaning real student names are not visible through the site. Students can take this one step further and switch on "Hide me" which removes them completely from all areas of the site. This is a student-controlled setting (not set by the school) allowing students total control of their visibility.
- **Reminders to take a break:** We have gentle take-a-break reminders, which encourage students to regulate their play. These reminders come directly from our game characters, reinforcing the importance of fun and healthy activity levels.
- **Fair and transparent rewards:** Coin rewards are fixed and stated upfront, and shop items have set prices. There are no loot boxes, randomised rewards, prize wheels or real-money purchases within the student experience. Rock Status is based on demonstrated competence, not chance.
- **No pressure to keep playing:** We don't use streaks, infinite feeds, autoplay or re-engagement notifications. Every game mode has a defined end, which is deliberately very short, and students can leave and return without losing their progress. Characters within the game encourage healthy habits, and reinforce that through the way they engage with children.
- **A safe social environment:** TTRS doesn't have open chat, free-text messaging or direct messaging.
- **Low-pressure practice:** Jamming mode offers untimed practice for students who prefer a more relaxed experience.