No name, no email, no account: how Peabody handles kids' privacy

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What Peabody keeps about a child who uses it without an account, what it never asks for, which outside services touch the data, and how to delete it.

A child can use Peabody (peabody.kids) without giving any personal information at all. One tap makes a reader on that browser with a random face and a pen name. Peabody asks for no name, no email, no age, no birthday, no password and no school. Their ideas are deleted once a story has been screened, their stories stay out of the public library, and there are no ads. It's free through the end of 2026.

This post describes what Peabody does today, in plain words. Peabody's privacy policy is still a draft waiting for a lawyer's review, and this post isn't legal advice.

The principle: don't collect what you don't need

A reading app needs surprisingly little to work: what level a child reads at, which words they're practising, and the stories they've read and made. It doesn't need to know who they are. So for a child without an account, Peabody simply doesn't ask. You can see for yourself: open peabody.kids and tap a book.

What Peabody never asks a child for

- Their real name, or anyone else's
- Their age or birthday
- An email address or phone number
- A password or a code to remember
- Their school, town or address
- Photos, or recordings of their voice: nothing is recorded, ever. (A button turns speech into typed words; the browser's recognizer, tried first, may send the sound to the browser maker, and otherwise it stays on the device. No sound reaches Peabody.)

What Peabody keeps for a reader without an account

- Kept: A random face and a pen name, like Laser Kraken · Why: So Peabody has something to call them
- Kept: A sign-in cookie on that browser, for a year · Why: So they're still themselves tomorrow
- Kept: The level they picked by tapping a sentence · Why: To write stories they can read
- Kept: Their stories, and the books they finished · Why: So their shelf is there next time

- Kept: How they did on word warm-ups, checks and questions · Why: To bring missed words back and count sticking ones
- Kept: Their math answers · Why: To pick the next problems

That's the list. Their display name is just the second word of their pen name ("Laser Kraken" is Kraken).

What happens to a child's ideas and stories

- Ideas are deleted once the story has been safety-screened. They're used to write the story and not kept afterwards.
- A story that's blocked, or scarier than the child's setting, isn't kept, whichever way it's caught.
- Their stories never go into the public library. They live on the child's own shelf.
- A story can be read by its number, like peabody.kids/story/1234, once it has passed the screens and if it's gentle or spooky. That page shows the pen name only, and is kept out of search engines. See sharing a story by number.
- Their stories aren't sent for the occasional extra quality review that family accounts get, since there's no grown-up to read it.

Safety settings that can't be loosened

A child without an account gets Peabody's strictest settings, enforced in the database:

- Gentle stories only until 1st grade, and never past "spooky" after that.
- No chat with an AI for a kid without a family account, and no typing to other kids outside the Dungeon Dweller game's online co-op, where every line is screened first for names, numbers, places, links and rude words. Other kids can't follow them.
- They can tell Peabody about a story that upset them. It's hidden for them straight away and goes to Aaron's review queue.

Who else touches the data

Peabody uses four outside services to run, and no others for children's data:

- Anthropic, whose AI model writes and screens the stories. It receives the ideas, the level, the practice words and the mood. For a child without an account, that includes no name.
- Supabase, which stores Peabody's data.
- Vercel, which hosts the site and counts visits without cookies. Identifiers and query strings are stripped from page addresses before they're counted.
- Resend, which sends email to grown-ups with accounts.

Peabody shows no ads and doesn't sell data.

Deleting a reader

- A reader without a name can delete their Peabody in two taps.
- A reader that's never used is removed automatically, and one that sits idle for a long time is removed too.
- Clearing the browser's cookies also ends that reader on that device: Peabody can't find them again, because there's nothing to find them by.

The trade-offs

Privacy by not collecting has costs, and it's fair to name them:

- A new device, a private window or cleared cookies means a new reader. Stories don't follow.
- No grown-up view. Without an account there's no grown-ups' corner, because there's no grown-up attached.

A free grown-up account is there if you want those things. It adds an email login for the grown-up, a PIN for the grown-ups' side, and a page per child. Outside the family, a child in a family account is still only ever their pen name.

What we won't claim

We describe practices, not certifications. We don't claim Peabody is certified or compliant with any particular law; the privacy policy is a draft until a lawyer has read it. If you have a question we haven't answered, the privacy page has the details as they stand today.

Learn more elsewhere

- FTC: protecting your child's privacy online: the US children's privacy law, COPPA, in plain words, and how to get data deleted.
- ICO: Switched on to Privacy: the UK privacy regulator's three steps for parents of 4 to 11 year olds.
- Common Sense privacy evaluations: privacy scores for kids' apps and edtech.

For about seventy more, checked and sorted by who they're for, see where to learn about AI.

Questions parents ask

Does Peabody collect my child's name or email?

No, not for a child using it without an account. One tap makes a reader with a random pen name and face. Peabody asks for no name, email, age, birthday, password or school.

Are my child's stories public?

Stories made without an account never go into the public library. A gentle or spooky story that has passed the safety screens can be read by anyone with its story number, showing the pen name only, and it's kept out of search engines.

Does Peabody have ads or sell data?

No ads, and data is never sold. The only outside services involved are the ones that run Peabody: Anthropic, Supabase, Vercel and Resend.

How do I delete my child's data?

A reader without a name can delete their Peabody in two taps. Readers that are never used, or sit idle for a long time, are removed automatically.

Does Peabody use cookies?

One sign-in cookie keeps a child's reader on that browser. Peabody's visit counting doesn't use cookies.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/kids-privacy-no-account