



# Oakfield Schools

31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one app of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

## What Parents Need to Know about SQUID GAME

**AGE RESTRICTION**  
**15+**  
Suitable only for 15 years and over.

With themes of horror and violence, it's important for parents and carers to understand the potential risks posed for young audiences by the viral TV show, Squid Game. The nine-episode Netflix-exclusive TV show is rated 15+ and is about a world where contestants who are deeply in debt play children's games in order to win cash prizes. The losers, however, are violently killed. The show's popularity has meant it has spread across online platforms, and there is a great risk of young people being exposed to unsuitable scenes, meaning parents and carers have to be vigilant when allowing children to use devices.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some might argue that Squid Game contains content that might not even be suitable for older teens, let alone young children. Characters are brutally tortured and killed through stabbings or getting shot as a result of rules developed and enforced by a masked game master. The show also features sexual content and threats of sexual violence, as well as a strong theme of gambling that runs throughout the whole show.

### APPEAL TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Whilst the content is very much adult-themed, some features of the show seem to appeal to young children at face-value. The name "Squid Game" may be interpreted as a programme aimed at children rather than adults. The content itself, such as the bright and childish aesthetics, may also appeal to young children, particularly as there's a focus on playground games to go with it.

### SIMILAR CONTENT SUGGESTIONS

When using social media and streaming sites, content is recommended based on what is the user has consumed i.e. what they have watched or searched for. Therefore, there is a greater chance of your child being exposed to similar violent or horror-themed content on social media after watching a show like Squid Game.

### VIRAL SPIN-OFFS

As well as Netflix, Squid Game has grown in notoriety and prevalence on other platforms, like TikTok and YouTube, with clips of the show going viral. On YouTube Kids, a number of successful channels have taken advantage of the Squid Game trend, creating content such as "How to Draw Squid Game Characters" videos. Its popularity has also led to the creation of app games that put the player in the role of a contestant who is killed if they lose a game.

### SCENE RE-ENACTMENTS

Squid Game's pervasive presence on social media has encouraged many content creators to re-enact scenes from the show, which has led to reports of children wanting to also imitate those scenes displayed on social media at home and in school. Much of this content stems from the "Red Light, Green Light" game from the first episode, where contestants attempt to make it past a giant animatronic girl before she shoots them. episode, where contestants attempt to make it past a giant animatronic girl before she shoots them.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Netflix has easily accessible built-in parental controls that allow you to set up a profile for your child with a specific age rating, block them from watching certain shows and even lock their account so it can't be accessed by anyone else. Netflix also allows you to access your child's viewing history to make sure they're not watching anything inappropriate for their age.

### MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

Squid game has become a social media craze and it's possible your child will see some content related to the show on various platforms. Therefore, it's important to be aware of which websites your child has visited on their smartphone, tablet or laptop, and to also keep an eye out for which accounts they are following on social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok.

### MONITOR BEHAVIOUR

Due to the viral nature of the show, even if your child has not seen Squid Game, it's important to keep an eye on their behaviour. There have been reports from schools of children "playing Squid Game" in the playground and acting aggressively towards the losers as a way to replicate the consequences of losing in the TV show. Viewing content that makes your child feel uncomfortable could also cause them to feel distressed or distracted, so it's important you can easily spot the signs.

### CHECK AGE RATINGS

Age ratings on TV shows and films are a way to gauge what is suitable for audiences of different ages. If you are unsure about the content your child is watching, check the age rating to see if the TV show or film is deemed suitable for their age group. If not, try watching the show yourself or talking to other parents who have seen it before to get a better understanding of why it's been rated a certain way.

### HAVE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Making sure your child is comfortable telling you about what they see online can go a long way to ensuring you are kept in the loop about their online use. Showing an interest in what your child is doing online gives you the opportunity to discuss what is and is not appropriate for their age group, and how they might recognise their own feelings towards content they see.

### WATCH THE SHOW

If you're trying to figure out whether you should let your child watch Squid Game, it might be a good idea to watch the show yourself first. Doing so will allow you to get a better understanding of the show's content and themes, as well as help you decide if this is something you'd feel comfortable with your child being exposed to.

### Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced and highly respected freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The INQUIRER, Carly now works as the news editor for Computer Shopper and IT Pro and writes for a number of publications including Forbes, Techradar, Tes, The Metro, uSwitch and WIRED.

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#WakeUpWednesday

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The theme that underpins our newsletter this week is one of safeguarding our pupils and children. It comes following a period where it is evident that more children are accessing the internet, streaming services, films or computer games that are having a negative impact on theirs, or others, wellbeing.

A difficult read? YES

An important read? MOST DEFINITELY

### **Squid Game issues in school**

Squid Games is a television show originally aired on Netflix. It is **age related** as appropriate for **15+** because of the horror and violence it contained. There are also many short clips of Squid Games that have appeared on You Tube, especially You Tube shorts. Some of these are overdubbed with inappropriate and foul, racist or sexist language. These are being accessed by children who are bringing this language into school.

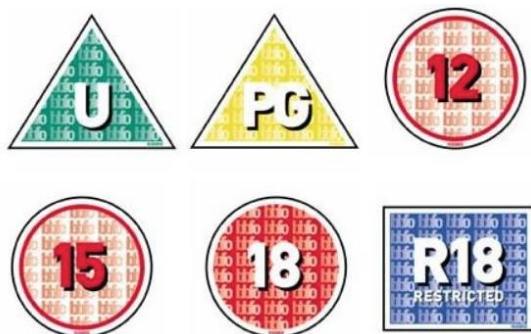
We find it concerning that primary age children have had access to media that they are not old enough to understand; for some children the language that they are hearing is becoming normalised in their everyday vocabulary. Over the last week, we have had three examples of this – two related to Squid Games, and one to song lyrics. To summarise:

- Racial and racist language used. This originated from an overdubbed clip from Squid Games seen on You tube shorts. It caused great upset and anger.
- The repetition of the lyrics from a rap song that included sexualised language. Again, this was accessed via a streaming service and You Tube. Again, it caused shock and anger in the household where it was repeated.
- Older children re-enacting scenes from Squid Games in front of younger children. Neither group fall within the age range of the target audience.

In each of these cases, it has led to follow up conversations that parents have found difficult and/or upsetting. It also can lead to conversations with other agencies.

None of the events described above are acceptable, they are not events we would like our own children to be witness to at such a young age. They are also not appropriate in a setting that caters for children aged up to 11 years old. Parents, like schools, have a duty to protect children. We will ask again to make sure that your child, through parental controls, age restrictions, firewalls and conversations, only access content that is age appropriate. This includes children's mobile phones and tablets, as well as household computers and televisions.

Thank you for your understanding and actions to support children's welfare.



| Diary Dates for 2024-2025                                         |                                                    |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| New / amended events added are highlighted in yellow after week 1 |                                                    |                                     |
| KS1 = Year 1 & 2 / KS2 = Junior school                            |                                                    |                                     |
| Date                                                              | Event                                              | Time                                |
| w/b 03/02/25                                                      | Year 6 parents' evenings (face to face)            |                                     |
| 11/02/25                                                          | Year 6 Family learning (English)                   | 9.00-10.30                          |
| 12/02/25                                                          | Year 5 Family learning (English)                   | 9.00-10.30                          |
| 13/02/25                                                          | Year 4 Family learning (English)                   | 9.00-10.30                          |
| 14/02/25                                                          | Year 3 Family learning (English)                   | 9.00-10.30                          |
| 17/02/25                                                          | Reception Family learning (English)                | 9.15-10.15                          |
| 18/02/25                                                          | Year 1 Family learning (English)                   | 1P- 9.15-10.15-<br>1CR- 10.30-11.30 |
| 19/02/25                                                          | Year 2 Family learning (English)                   | 2M 9.15-10.15<br>2C- 10.30-11.30    |
| 21/02/25                                                          | INSET DAY – CHILDREN NOT AT SCHOOL                 |                                     |
| 22/02/25                                                          | Spring Half Term                                   |                                     |
| 12/3/24                                                           | Year One visit to Cromer Church                    |                                     |
|                                                                   | Spring 2 Term Start                                |                                     |
| 04/03/25                                                          | Year 4 trip – Discovery museum                     |                                     |
| 06/03/25                                                          | World Book Day- Witches, Wizards and Muggles theme |                                     |
| 21/3/24                                                           | Comic Relief                                       |                                     |
| 23/03/25                                                          | Friends of Oakfield - Quiz night Gold medal        | 19.00                               |
| w/b 07/04/25                                                      | Year R – 5 Parents' evenings (face to face)        |                                     |
| 11/04/25                                                          | Year 5 trip – Centre for Life                      |                                     |
|                                                                   | Easter Holidays                                    |                                     |
|                                                                   | Start of Summer 1 term                             |                                     |
| 30/04/25                                                          | Year 4 trip – Jarrow Hall                          |                                     |
| 05/05/25                                                          | Spring Bank Holiday                                |                                     |
| w/b 12/05/25                                                      | SATS week                                          |                                     |
| w/b 19/05/25                                                      | Sports Week                                        |                                     |
| 19/05/25                                                          | Year 3 Trip - Segedunum                            |                                     |
| 23/5/25                                                           | INSET DAY – CHILDREN NOT AT SCHOOL                 |                                     |
|                                                                   | Whit Half Term                                     |                                     |
|                                                                   | Start of Summer 2 term                             |                                     |
| 3/6/25                                                            | Year 1 trip to Gibside                             |                                     |
| 5/6/25                                                            | Year 2 trip to Washington Wetlands                 |                                     |
| June 2025 (TBC)                                                   | Year 1 / 2 phonics check                           | All week                            |
| 17/06/25                                                          | Summer Fayre                                       | 14.00 – 17.00                       |
| 2-3/ 07/25                                                        | Transition days                                    |                                     |
| 10/7/25                                                           | Reception trip to Wallington Hall                  |                                     |
| 10/7/25                                                           | Year 3 trip – Oriental Museum                      |                                     |
| 11/07/25                                                          | Reports out to parents                             |                                     |
| 15/07/25                                                          | Year 6 leavers concert                             | 17.30                               |
| 16-17/07/25                                                       | Infant Summer Picnics                              | tbc                                 |
| 17/07/25                                                          | Last day of term                                   |                                     |
| 18/07/25                                                          | Occasional day – School closed                     |                                     |

| 2024 - 2025 Term Dates |                                                          |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Term                   | Dates                                                    |
| Autumn 1               | 04/09/24 – 25/10/24                                      |
| Autumn 2               | 04/11/24 – 20/12/24                                      |
| Spring 1               | 06/01/25 – 20/02/25                                      |
| Spring 2               | 03/03/25 – 11/04/25                                      |
| Summer 1               | 28/04/25 – 23/05/25                                      |
| Summer 2               | 02/06/25 – 17/07/25                                      |
| PD days for the year   | 02/09/24<br>03/09/24<br>25/10/24<br>21/02/25<br>23/05/25 |

| PE Days    |                                    |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| Reception  | Tuesday and Friday                 |
| Year One   | Monday and Thursday                |
| Year Two   | Wednesday and Friday               |
| Year Three | Wednesday and Thursday             |
| Year Four  | Wednesday and Friday               |
| Year Five  | Monday and Wednesday<br>(Swimming) |
| Year Six   | Tuesday and Friday                 |

### Children's Mental Health Week - 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> February

This year Children's Mental Health Week is 3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> February.

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February there will be a Dress To Express Day, where children and staff are invited to wear an outfit that expresses themselves, whether it's their favourite outfit, a splash of colour, a traditional attire that celebrates their culture, or an ensemble that showcases their beloved hobby, we want everyone's creativity to shine. We will be using this day to dedicate raising awareness of children's mental health and will be off our usual timetable.

The week will launch on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February with a live assembly led by Place2be and across the week a range of activities will be undertaken that are age appropriate and engaging. This year's Children's Mental Health Week theme is Know Yourself, Grow Yourself. Place2be have teamed up with Disney and the characters from Inside Out 2 to explore the importance of expressing our emotions, children will love this idea, and it links well with the idea of Zones of Regulation.

### Reminder- World Book Day

The Reading Champions are busy planning our World Book Day event and have chosen the theme of Witches, Wizards and Muggles. This means that children can dress as magical characters or a non-magical person (their own choice). The day is on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March and more information will follow about the activities being planned nearer to the time.

## Safeguarding



Many children and young people enjoy exploring new and exciting genres and themes in the films and TV they consume – and as they grow, the maturity of this content will likely increase with them. However, without proper supervision and safeguarding, youngsters looking for a new title to enjoy – especially in the horror genre – might get a little more than they're ready for.

The emotional and psychological impacts of viewing age-inappropriate content can be severe. It's vital for parents and educators to know how to keep the children in their care as safe as possible while young people explore new, potentially grittier or darker, pieces of media. This free guide breaks down the risks of viewing age-inappropriate content, with a particular focus on horror, and offers expert advice on how to limit youngsters' exposure to material that might upset or disturb them. There's also an accompanying podcast version of this guide, so you can tap into this valuable guidance while you're on the go.

| School year    | Spring     |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |
|----------------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|
|                | Spring 1   |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |
|                | Attendance | % late | Attendance | % late | Attendance | % late | Attendance | % late |
| Junior Overall | 95.5       | 2.22%  | 97.0       | 1.69%  | 96.5       | 1.78%  | 96.2       | 1.89%  |
| Infant Overall | 95.6       | 0.98%  | 96.3       | 1.0%   | 97.0       | 0.92%  | 94.0       | 0.68%  |
| 6              | 93.6       | 1.28%  | 96.0       | 1.25%  | 96.2       | 2.3%   | 98.2       | 2.0%   |
| 5              | 98.2       | 3.0%   | 97.1       | 1.75%  | 97.0       | 2.5%   | 94.5       | 2.26%  |
| 4              | 92.8       | 2.3%   | 97.5       | 2.5%   | 94.2       | 1.1%   | 94.5       | 1.79%  |
| 3              | 97.0       | 2.2%   | 97.6       | 1.55%  | 97.5       | 0.9%   | 97.3       | 1.48%  |
| 2              | 93.1       | 0.95%  | 94.5       | 0.5%   | 97.4       | 0.9%   | 91.7       | 1.19%  |
| 1              | 99.1       | 1.14%  | 98.6       | 1.4%   | 97.5       | 0.32%  | 95.1       | 0.29%  |
| R              | 95.2       | 0.79%  | 96.1       | 1.3%   | 95.8       | 1.9%   | 96.4       | 0.4%   |

Thank you all for continuing to support with our attendance.

Miss Chisholm - Executive Head Teacher

Miss Hartness – Executive Deputy Head

Mr Thompson – Executive Deputy Head