



Dear parents/ guardians,

We have become increasingly concerned by the level of discussions/knowledge that children are demonstrating in school about 'Squid Games'. Where this issue has been raised, staff have spoken with children and some parents about the inappropriateness of watching this show. Therefore, I have included some information about 'Squid Game.'

What is Squid Game?

It is a show on Netflix that has become very popular, with increasing numbers of viewers taking to social media to discuss the episodes. The South Korean thriller features scenes of brutal violence and is rated 15. The show follows a group of adults who compete to win innocent-looking playground games, but who are killed if unsuccessful with the tasks.

An unexpected success in terms of viewing figures, Squid Game's popularity has spread far and wide across various online platforms. Lots of content has been created- from memes to apps- that convey the violence of the show, so it is important that parents, carers and educators understand the basis of Squid Game and the potential risks to young people who may be exposed to it.

What are the hazards for children?

Squid Game's 15 rating has not prevented clips and images from the show being uploaded onto social media sites such as Tik Tok. There have been many reports of children who have accounts on these platforms inadvertently viewing gory, explicit scenes from the programme and parents/ carers should be mindful of the prevalence of these uploads. The popularity of the show has also led to various online challenges based on certain scenes, which see people taking part in these seemingly innocent children's games. However, on the show, characters are executed if they fail in the game- and videos of people pretending to kill each other after competing in these challenges are going viral on social media, where they are easily accessible to children. Then children have all been spoken to about the dangers of these games and have been banned from partaking in such games on the playground and our staff monitor this carefully.

What is the Squid Game challenge app?

Squid Game challenge (also known as K-game Challenge) is an app for smartphones and tablets that has been released for Android and iOS, and the 2 systems differ significantly on their age ratings for the app. The iTunes store rates the app as 12+ (advising of "mild /infrequent horror themes), while the PEGI rating for Android is just 3+, which means that very young children might be able to download and play the game – even where parental controls are in place on their device or through Google Play. The game play is frequently interrupted by pop-ups which could easily lead to unwanted purchases or accidental visits to inappropriate sites beyond the app.

What can You do to prevent children from being exposed to this violent content?

- As a parent or carer, keep a watchful eye on the content your children are viewing.
- Speak to them openly about how they are spending time on their devices
- Let them ask questions too
- Ensure parental controls are activated and that age-restricted child profiles are activated on children's devices and on any on- demand services available through the family TV (such as Netflix and Youtube) to prevent inappropriate content being streamed.

If you see or hear your child replicating the challenges from the show or hear them talking about the scenes or the characters from Squid Game, it would be a timely opportunity to discuss with them that the programme is not intended for children as much of the content is inappropriate for their age and that the violence in the series is very realistic and often upsetting.