



# Aston Fields Middle School

Striving for Excellence: Learning for Life

February 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

## Children's Mental Health Week and Safer Internet Day

February has been a busy time in school, recognising both these significant and important annual dates with our pupils. We wanted to ensure you were kept informed about them too and offer further resources which you can access at home to continue to support your children.

### Children's Mental Health Week

During the week of 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> February, we recognised Children's Mental Health Week. This is organised nationally by Place2Be, a children's mental health charity that aims to provide counselling, training and education for children and families as they learn more about the importance of our emotional wellbeing and develop an awareness of how and where to find support when needed.

This year the theme has been **Know Yourself, Grow Yourself**, encouraging the pupils to explore the importance of being self-aware of their feelings, expressing their emotions and understanding how these can affect them. We also discussed the **5 Steps to Wellbeing**: Connect, Keep Learning, Be Active, Take Notice and Give. These were shared in assemblies with all children and other discussions were held in small groups in lessons. As part of our continued effort to support all our children and families, we have attached a guide to the 5 steps to wellbeing that you can share, together with further support on how we can all further protect and improve our mental health.

### Safer Internet Day

This is recognised nationally on 11<sup>th</sup> February, organised by the UK Safer Internet Centre. It is the UK's biggest celebration of online safety and strives to raise awareness of the things young people are seeing and experiencing online, in an ever-changing world.

This year the theme has been **Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online**. During this week, the children have all been presented with the theme in assembly and challenged with the many ways in which scams are presented through emails, messages and their own gaming consoles. There has also been time within lessons for children to learn about the dangers of phishing, online scams and impersonation as well as the importance of keeping their personal details private and who to report worries to.

Below is a link to the UK Safer Internet Centre's website where you can find tips for parents and carers about how to keep our loved ones safe online, as well as the importance of setting parental controls to prevent unwanted purchases, contact and access to harmful content.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2025/tips-for-parents-and-carers>

/continued overleaf



ACE School of  
**CHARACTER**

**Headteacher:** Mrs A. Hales *BSc (Hons), PGCE, NPQH*  
**Deputy Headteacher:** Mrs J. Birrell *BSc (Hons), QTS, SLE*  
**Deputy Headteacher:** Mr G. Hall *BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQSL, SLE*  
**Drummond Road, Bromsgrove, B60 2ET**

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We have also attached a fact sheet about Squid Games and its themes after we have become aware that some children have been accessing this themselves at home. The age restriction is 15 because of the themes of horror and violence and we would encourage you to ensure your parental controls are set to reflect this, so they are protected from any form of unsuitable viewing.

If you need any further advice about parental controls, this page on the NSPCC website has lots of helpful guides and links to different services such as games consoles, Netflix and apps.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>

We hope you will find all these resources helpful as we work together to continue to protect and educate our children to keep themselves and others safe, happy and well. If we can be of any further help with more resources, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Mynott  
Assistant Headteacher  
Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Senior Mental Health Lead



# We're talking mental health.



Following the Five Ways to Wellbeing can protect and improve our mental health.



Good relationships help our brains produce chemicals that make us happy.

They give us a sense of belonging and self-worth.

## CONNECT

- Make a playlist of your favourite songs and share it with a friend.
- Join a club or a team to meet people with similar interests.
- Cook a meal together with friends or family.



### BE ACTIVE

Physical activity is good for our minds and bodies, reducing stress and anxiety and boosting confidence.



### KEEP LEARNING

Learning new things gives you new perspectives on the world around you and opens doors to new opportunities.



### GIVE TO OTHERS

Acts of giving and kindness towards other people or in your community create positive feelings and a sense of reward.



### TAKE NOTICE

Stopping to take in the present moment can give a more balanced outlook on life and help keep us from worrying about the past or future.

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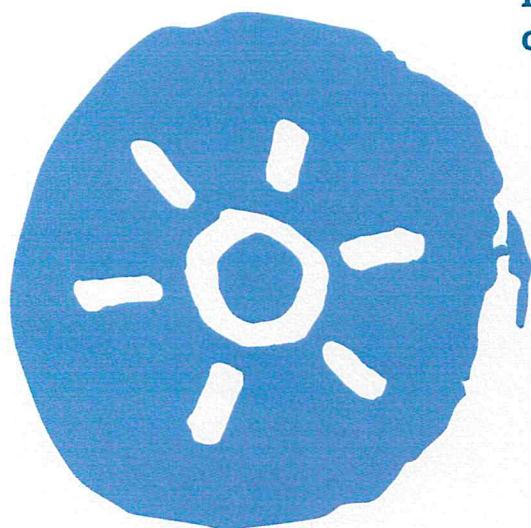
[charliewaller.org](http://charliewaller.org)



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- Where possible, take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Learn a new dance move.
- Have a good stretch.



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- Do a puzzle, word search or Sudoku.
- Learn the numbers 1 to 10 in a different language.
- Take up a new hobby or project.



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## GIVE TO OTHERS

- Complete a household chore that someone else might usually do.
- Do a random act of kindness today.
- Give a word of encouragement or a smile to brighten someone's day.



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## TAKE NOTICE

- Start a happiness jar – write down at least one thing every day that has made you happy and pop it in the jar.
- Look outside and notice any signs that the seasons are changing.
- Take note of one thing that makes you feel calm and relaxed and one that makes you feel excited.



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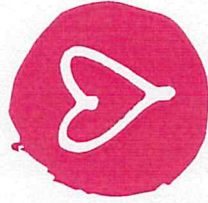
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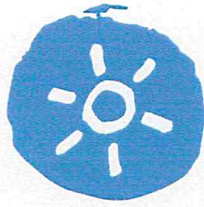
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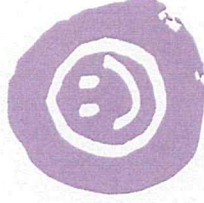
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# What Parents Need to Know about SQUID GAME

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 to young audiences by the nine-episode Netflix-exclusive TV show, Squid Game. The series, rated 15+, 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 in various guises across online platforms, with a heightened risk of children and young people potentially viewing unsuitable content. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers understand exactly what Squid Game is all about.

## 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.

## 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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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