

STV Safeguarding News

Issue 1: Autumn Term 1 2021

At St Vincent's VC Academy, we have high expectations regarding the well-being of our children. All staff members have a responsibility to address issues that may arise concerning the well-being, welfare and safety of every one of our children. We welcome you to come in to school if you would like to discuss any changes your child may be going through at home. We can also provide support for any parents / carers who are struggling with home life or personal issues.

Our Child Protection Policy and other Safeguarding Policies can be found on our school website: stvhull.org

Our Safeguarding team are Mrs Joanne Bell, Ms Philippa Donnelly and Mrs Lucy Windeler.

Tel. 01482 342645

Keeping children safe online

The children learn about keeping safe online in school through the curriculum however, some of our children are using social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok. These, as well as others, enable strangers to interact with your child which can lead to negative experiences. These sites can also have an impact on your child's emotional health. As a parent, you should be asking to look at what they are accessing and checking their activity.

Current Issues:

YouTube:

There are some children in school who are talking about inappropriate videos that they have viewed at home on YouTube. Please ensure that you are vigilant with the content that your child/ren access online. Further guidance for setting parental restrictions can be found in the attached leaflet

Squid Game: **NETFLIX**

Squid Game is a Korean drama series on Netflix that has become one of the most popular topics on the internet for its unique plot. The show mimics children's games however it ends with participants being violently killed if they lose.

There have been some concerning reports recently about children and young people 'playing' Squid Game whilst at school. Squid Game is also being viewed via other platforms such as YouTube and Tik-Tok, and given the popularity of the games in the show, developers have made various mini-games based on Squid Game on Roblox and other gaming platforms.

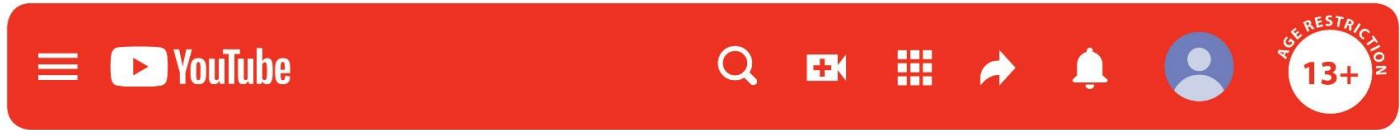
Squid Game is highly inappropriate and should not be watched by the children. Please be extra vigilant in monitoring what your child/ren watch on Netflix. Further guidance for setting parental restrictions can be found in the attached leaflet.

Collection of children at home times and walking home

We need to be informed if someone other than the child's parents or family members will be collecting your child. Please phone the school office on 01482 342645 to inform us. If we have not had permission from yourselves to allow the child to go with another adult, we will keep the child at school and call you.

We ask that all parents/carers come onto the school playground so that we can see who is collecting them. If you need your child/children to walk home without an adult, we advise that this is limited to children in Years 5 and 6 and the school must be informed and a permission form completed. Please ensure they walk with a friend or in a group. I am sure you will appreciate that it is paramount that your child/children are going home safely and we thank you for cooperating with us.

We would also like to remind you that smoking is prohibited at the school gates and on the school playground.



YouTube is an online platform - owned by Google - where anyone can upload & watch video content. All different types of information, advice & entertainment are uploaded & billions of people tune in to watch, rate & comment on it. As a parent, it's important you understand exactly what content your children might be seeing.

What parents need to know about YOUTUBE

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT EASY TO ACCESS

Any child with a Gmail account can sign into YouTube & access videos. Some content is flagged 'age-restricted', but the platform relies on self-verification, meaning kids can get around the rules with a fake date of birth. This could enable access to vulgar, violent & dangerous videos.

USERS CAN PRIVATELY CONTACT YOUR CHILD

When your child is signed-in to YouTube with their Gmail account, there are various ways they can send & receive messages. This could be via the messages icon, or via the 'About' tab. There is scope here for users who your child does not know to make contact.

YOUTUBE SUGGESTS RELATED CONTENT

YouTube will often 'auto play' videos based on your child's viewing habits. The aim is to show related & appropriate content. But the problem is: it's possible your child will be exposed to inappropriate content that isn't accurately related.

'CHALLENGE VIDEOS' CAN GO TOO FAR

Challenge videos refer to a stunt you're encouraged to recreate & film. Many challenge videos can be harmless & for a good cause, like the Ice Bucket Challenge. But some are dangerous & even life threatening, such as the Bird Box Challenge.



SHARING VIDEOS RISKS YOUR CHILD'S PRIVACY

If your child has a Google account, they can upload their own videos. To do this, they must create a personal profile page known as a 'YouTube Channel'. The videos uploaded here can be viewed, commented on & shared by anyone. This could put your child's privacy at risk.

Tips To Protect Your Child

APPLY 'RESTRICTED MODE'

Restricted mode helps to hide any mature or unpleasant videos from your children. It uses YouTube's own automated system & looks at what other users flag as inappropriate content. It must be enabled in the settings menu on each individual device.

CHANGE WHO CAN SEE VIDEOS

You can change who can view your child's content in the settings. Options include Public (available to all), Private (only available to people you share it with & cannot be shared) or Unlisted (available to people you share it with & can be shared further).

BLOCK CONCERNING USERS

To help protect your child from cyber-bullies, harassment or persistent offensive comments, you can 'block' individual users. Doing so hides your child's videos from the user & stops the user being able to contact your child in any way.

CUSTOMISE THEIR EXPERIENCE

Influence & control what your child watches using features such as Playlists (your videos play continuously rather than videos YouTube recommends) & Subscriptions (you choose channels your child can watch). It's also good to turn off auto play by toggling the blue button alongside the 'Up Next' title when viewing a video.

CREATE A 'FAMILY' GOOGLE ACCOUNT

Create a Google account to be used by the whole family. This will allow you to monitor exactly what your child is watching, uploading & sharing. Plus, your child's YouTube page will display their recently watched videos, searches, recommended videos & suggested channels.

GET YOUR OWN ACCOUNT

Create your own account so you can explore features yourself. Learn how to flag inappropriate videos, how to moderate comments & how to block users. This will help you feel more confident when providing advice & guidance to your children.

BE MINDFUL OF CYBERBULLYING

Once your child has posted a video, a worldwide audience can see it. Strangers may choose to comment on the video, both positively & negatively. So, be careful to check comments & any other interactions your child is making through the platform.

GET TO KNOW POPULAR CHANNELS

It's good to know which channels are most popular with your children. Some of the most popular channels right now are: PewDiePie, NigaHiga, Zoella, KSI, JennaMarbles, Markiplier, Smosh, ThatcherJoe & Casper Lee.

DON'T ASSUME YOUR CHILD IS TOO YOUNG

YouTube and YouTube Kids are quickly becoming the chosen viewing platforms for children between the ages of 3-15 & it's likely this trend will only increase. It's also possible children will become familiar with the platform at a younger & younger age. So it's important to understand the positives & negatives of the platform.



Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.

SOURCES: <https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/1350409>, <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/6401182>, <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802272?hl=en-GB>, <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/7354993?hl=en-GB>, <https://www.youtube.com/intl/en-GB/yt/about/policies/#community-guidelines>, https://www.zfcm.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/134907/Children-and-Parents-Media-Use-and-Attitudes-2018.pdf, <https://www.raisingdigitalmatties.com/youtube-parenting/>, <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/youtube/>, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/jan/16/youtube-bans-dangerous-pranks-after-bird-box-challenge>



What parents need to know about NETFLIX



18+
The account holder must be 18 or older.

Launched in 1997, Netflix is now one of the world's leading online streaming services, providing users with unlimited access to a huge selection of TV shows and films. It's available on any internet-connected device that supports the Netflix app, from smart TVs and games consoles to tablets and smartphones, and is becoming increasingly popular with a younger audience. This is unsurprising given consumer attitudes are changing more towards video-on-demand (VoD) services. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers understand exactly what Netflix is about.

Inappropriate content

Netflix hosts and produces content for all ages. It has a wide variety of films and TV programmes for young children, teens and adults and its extensive catalogue can provide hours of entertainment. Children can search for almost anything but if they share the same account as an adult, it can also open them up to viewing material that is adult themed or inappropriate. Netflix doesn't check who's watching so children could access films or TV shows that contain violence, nudity or foul language.



Risk of hacking

With millions of users in over 190 countries, Netflix is often targeted by hackers and phishing scams which try to illicit usernames and passwords to gain access to accounts. If successful, hackers can steal payment details or try to sell your data on the dark web, providing others with the opportunity to profit. Given Netflix doesn't provide 2-factor authentication, it's important to ensure your login details remain secure.



Binge-watching

With the ability to access Netflix on almost any device, it can be easy to fall into 'binge-watching' TV series, with users finding it difficult to turn it off without knowing what happens next. The autoplay function also means that the next episode usually plays within seconds of the last ending and the Netflix algorithms mean that recommended programmes are very often similar to those you've just watched. This can easily lead to spending hours in front of the TV through the day or staying up through the night, potentially affecting sleep, mood and the ability to concentrate the next day.



Screen addiction

In addition to binge-watching, the fact that Netflix is available on almost any device with an internet connection means that parents may find it difficult to prize children away from a screen. With a huge collection of children's TV programmes and the latest film titles, children could start watching on the TV, continue on the tablet and finish on their games console. Increased screen time means that they may spend less time learning, playing outside, find it difficult to sleep or communicate less with family and friends.



Netflix party

Netflix Party is a free extension on Google Chrome that gives users the ability to watch a film or TV show online simultaneously with friends or family in different locations. It also provides the ability to chat to each other during the stream. Users can create a party and send a link to people they want to invite however the link can be copied and distributed further, meaning children could potentially be open to a group chat with people they don't know. It should be noted that Netflix Party isn't an official Netflix product and needs to be downloaded separately to the app.



Safety tips for parents & carers

Create a Netflix Kids experience profile

One of the biggest advantages of Netflix is the ability to control what content your children can watch. Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile means that children only have access to TV shows and movies which have been carefully selected for kids. The look and feel of the app is simpler and children can't access any account settings.



Set maturity ratings & block content

If your child is a little older, parents can create a separate profile to their own and set a maturity rating that means children will see only TV shows and movies that fit that rating. The three categories of rating for the UK are kids (all, U, PG), teens (12, Guidance, Teen) and adult (15, 18, mature, adult). You can also block specific TV shows and movies from individual profiles which means they don't show up in the browse or search results.



Have an open & honest conversation

Parents can review the TV shows and films that have been watched on each profile under their account. If your child seems upset or shocked by something they have seen or if you are concerned about anything they've viewed, try to talk to them about it and have an open and honest conversation to help understand any concerns.



Switch off autoplay

Netflix has two autoplay features that can be switched on and off across different accounts and takes effect across all devices. Parents can disable the ability for consecutive episodes to play automatically and for previews to play when browsing. Both can help to limit the amount of time children spend on the app.



Lock your profile

It's important to keep your own account secure so that children can't freely switch between profiles and potentially access more adult-themed content or change access levels. Parents can set up a Profile Lock PIN which means only they can access their own Netflix account.



Set screen time limits

Although switching off autoplay will help to stem programmes playing continuously, children can just as easily choose to play the next episode themselves. Whilst Netflix has no options to help limit viewing time, many devices now allow parents to set screen time restrictions, so you can switch off the app automatically when you think they've had enough.



Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.



Create a strong password & always log out.

Given that Netflix doesn't use 2-factor authentication, the need for a unique username and strong password is even more important. Try to use a different password to ones you've used before and use a mixture of numbers, letters (uppercase and lowercase) and symbols, with a minimum of 8 characters. Always log out when not using your account so that if your device is lost or stolen, your account remains inaccessible.

