

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been a really busy half term of learning in school and I think we are all ready for a break! As we come to the end of this half term, I would like to thank all parents for their support, as we continue to navigate through the challenges of this pandemic. Even though we have returned to 'normal' we are still juggling a number of confirmed positive cases of coronavirus within school and this combined with the usual illnesses has meant that staff have had to work extra hard to ensure everything runs smoothly day-to-day- a huge thank you to our amazing team!



We are hopeful that the break for half term, will reduce the number of positive covid cases when we return. Please as always, help to keep our school community safe by booking a PCR test if your child has any symptoms.

As you know teachers are required to set remote learning for children who test positive for Covid, but there is no expectation that children who are unwell should complete the tasks each day. Please contact school to let us know if your child is unwell and will be unable to complete any remote learning.

Harvest Thank You!



Thank you all so much for your generous donations for the Marlene Reid Centre- we were absolutely overwhelmed! We were joined in school by Reverend Wilma who led our Harvest service- our new EYFS children were so sensible and loved singing their song to Year 1 and Year 2 children! We hope you enjoyed watching our EYFS and Year 1 children on Facebook too!

Weather

As it is now well and truly autumn, please make sure that your children bring a coat to school every day. Even when the weather isn't great we try and get the children outside for some fresh air.



New EYFS parents (2022 intake) Open Evening

Do you have a child who is due to start school in September 2022? Choosing your child's school is an important decision. This evening is aimed at giving new parents as much information as possible in order to help them make the right decision. Our Open Evening will take place on **Thursday 28th October 2021 at 6.30pm**. There will be a short presentation at 6.30pm followed by a chance to tour our amazing EYFS base and talk informally to staff. We will be advertising this event locally, but if you or someone you know is interested in attending, they can book a place by contacting the school office.

Holiday School Closure for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

I have had a few parents contact me to ask why we are having a Bank Holiday in December. Schools have been given an additional bank holiday to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of the Queen- the official bank holiday is 3rd June 2022. As this falls within the school holidays, legislation has been passed to reduce the number of school days for 2021-2022 from 190 to 189. This is to enable relevant schools to close for the additional bank holiday (announced on 12th November 2020). The date we have chosen is 3rd December, which is the same day as our feeder high schools who will also be closed on the same day.

Online Safety- Squid Game

There is a lot of conversation in the media about a new Netflix's show called Squid Game. At the end of this newsletter there is some useful information for parents taken from <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>

Term Dates

Following consultation, Leicestershire County Council has now released term dates for the next few years. They are available on our school website or on the LA website: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/popular-now/school-term-dates>



Apply for a School Place – Primary/Secondary

It is fast approaching the time when Year 6 parents need to apply for their secondary school places. To assist you in this, the feeder secondary schools have held open evenings over the last few weeks. The deadline for applying for a Secondary School place is **31st October 2021**.

The deadline for applying for a Primary School place is **15th January 2022**. For both applications, the simplest way is online at: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions>

If you need any further information, please contact the Admissions team on admissions@leics.gov.uk or 0116 305 6684.

I hope that you all have a lovely half term and we look forward to seeing you all on Monday 25th October 2021.

If you have any questions about this or anything else, please telephone school or email office@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk

Regards,

Sylvie Newman
Executive Headteacher

What is Squid Game?

Netflix's Squid Game is set to become the streaming service's most successful show of all time, with huge numbers of viewers taking to social media to discuss each new episode. The South Korean thriller features some scenes of fairly brutal violence and is rated 15 by the BBFC. It follows a group of adults who compete to win innocent-looking playground games, but who are killed if they do not succeed at the tasks.



An unexpected success in terms of viewing figures, Squid Game's popularity is beginning to spread across various online platforms. There has been a slew of content created – ranging from memes to apps – that convey the violence of the show, so it is important for parents, carers and educators to understand the basis of Squid Game and the potential risks to young people who might 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 TikTok, with the #SquidGame hashtag being viewed more than 22.8 billion times. There have been reports of children who have accounts on these platforms inadvertently viewing gory, explicit scenes from the programme, and parents and carers should be mindful of the prevalence of these uploads. The popularity of the programme has also led to online challenges based on various scenes, which see people taking part in seemingly innocent children's games. On the show, however, characters are executed if they fail in the game – and videos of people pretending to kill each other after competing in Squid Game-style contests are going viral on social media, where they are easily accessible to children.

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 two systems differ significantly on their age range for the game. The iTunes Store rates the app as 12+ (advising of "mild/infrequent horror/fear 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 with parental controls activated on their device or through Google Play. The gameplay is frequently interrupted by pop-ups and ads (sometimes appearing while the user is rapidly tapping their screen while attempting to complete the challenge). This could easily lead to unwanted purchases or accidental visits to inappropriate sites beyond the app.

What can trusted adults do?

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

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

