



The Blue Whale Challenge

Dear Parent / Guardian,

The Blue Whale challenge is a new online craze that uses social media to encourage vulnerable teenagers to take their lives.

I would like to bring this latest online craze 'The Blue Whale' challenge to your attention. Whilst we have no reason to believe students at ICC are playing this game, there have been reported deaths across Russia and we felt it would be useful to make you aware that this craze is getting a lot of attention on social media sites.

I have provided information on the craze below:

"In previous weeks, there have been many reports on the so called "Blue Whale Challenge". This online phenomenon has claimed to be responsible for up to 130 teenage deaths across Russia. Following this through with thorough research and consultation, it has appeared that the "Blue Whale" may be a perfect example of a media sensationalised story containing fake news and reports.

Despite the reports of many young people committing suicide across Russia over the last six months, none of these cases have actually been found to have any evidence relating to the Blue Whale Challenge.

According to reports, the organisers of the Blue Whale suicide game are using the social media platform Instagram to assign vulnerable members harmful tasks over a 50-day period. Such tasks are performed daily and include self-harming, watching horror movies and waking up at unusual hours, gradually becoming more extreme. The final task requested is for the user to commit suicide.

Although the Russian teenage deaths have not been proven to be directly linked to the game, police have been investigating the challenge as almost all victims were members of the same internet groups.

Schoolgirls Yulia Konstantinova, 15, and Veronika Volkova, 16, fell to their deaths after allegedly playing the Blue Whale game. It has also been revealed that another young girl was critically injured after falling from a fifth floor flat in Siberia. In the majority of deaths, the Russian media have suggested that the social media game had possibly encouraged the girls to take their lives.

Before her death, Yulia Konstantinova left a note saying 'End' and an image of a blue whale on her Instagram page.

When users search the term 'Blue Whale challenge' on Instagram a warning notification will now appear, offering help to the user."

Principal: Mr R Corbett
Crawley Avenue, Crawley,
West Sussex, RH11 0DB
Tel: 01293 420500
Fax: 01293 420501
Email: robcorbett@ifieldcc.co.uk



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Crawley Avenue, Crawley,
West Sussex, RH11 0DB
Tel: 01293 420500
Fax: 01293 420501
Email: robcorbett@ifieldcc.co.uk