

May 25th 2022

Dear Parent/Carers,

“due to an increase in misuse of social media”

I am writing to make you aware of some concerns that are affecting all schools nationally at the moment regarding the social media platform TikTok. While we appreciate that this can be an entertaining app, when used in an appropriate way, TikTok can also be used to cause upset and have a negative impact on the well-being of those on the receiving end of inappropriate videos/content.

What is TikTok?

TikTok is a free social media platform for creating and watching short videos and sharing them with friends and strangers. **TikTok is for users over the age of 13 only.** Clips are often created using short grabs of music and can be enhanced by a range of tools such as filters, animation, and special effects.

Due to an increased misuse of social media, it has come to our attention that a very small minority of our pupils are using TikTok in very negative ways, which is in breach of TikTok's community standards. Some content that does go against these community standards can be classed as illegal. Some of the content is malicious, insulting, and hurtful. As a result, we are investigating each video to identify the perpetrators and work with TikTok (and the police if necessary) to get the videos removed.

We are asking for your support in this matter. We ask that you take the time to regularly monitor your child's phone, internet devices and any social media accounts that they may have, if they are at the legal age to hold one. Pupils should be encouraged not to interact in any way with any accounts or videos which contains malicious, hurtful or inappropriate content so that they are not linked to any inappropriate behaviour. Any pupil found to be making inappropriate videos or comments publicly online which go against the school values or in any way breach the Equality Act 2010 will be subject to consequences that fall under the school's behaviour policy. If necessary, we may have to refer the matter to the police.

If you would like more information on TikTok, the following information is available:

Childnet and Net Aware have both produced an excellent guides for parents/carers. They cover how to ensure TikTok accounts are set up as safely as possible:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/tiktok-an-updated-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

TikTok also now has a feature called Family Safety Mode: This is an in-app feature designed for parents to help keep their kids safe whilst using TikTok. The Family Safety Mode allows the parent to link their TikTok app to up to three children to manage screen time, turn on restricted mode which prevents children from viewing inappropriate content and lastly, parents can set restrictions on who can engage with children's comments. For example, you can restrict whether or not comments are allowed on their video. Parents will not be able to monitor a child's profile when these features are switched on and both the parent and child must consent to use this feature before use.

Be sure to update the TikTok app to ensure you are kept up-to-date with the latest features.

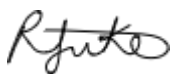
How to report inappropriate content on the TikTok app?

You can report content that doesn't follow TikTok's community guidelines within the app. Please follow this link for more advice: https://support.tiktok.com/en/?ht_kb=report-inappropriate-content

You can also delete 'followers' by choosing the fan you'd like to remove and selecting 'Block' from the menu of options.

Thank you for your continued support in working with us to keep children safe and for the important work that we all do to ensure that our children behave in a way that is respectful, kind, safe, responsible and within the limits of the law. Please discuss the content of this letter with your child and let us know if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs R Jukes
Interim Head of School