

Friday 16th December 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Online Safety Newsletter – December 2021

What parents and carers need to know about Age-Inappropriate content

According to research carried out by the British Board of Film Classification, last year 60% of children had to talk to their parents after viewing something online that had left them feeling uncomfortable, scared or confused. One in seven (13%) teens said that it is a daily occurrence to watch something online that they later wished they hadn't.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, more than half of the content reported by children featured either violence, hate speech or explicit sexual material. Social media often acts as a gateway to this material: trending topics tend to be seen whether they were searched for or not.

Please view the attached guide from National Online Safety that examines this and other sources of inappropriate online content.

TikTok and Family Pairing

Although we know that the majority of our children do not access TikTok in any form and that only a fraction of those that do would have their own account, we wanted you to be aware of the following information so that you are ready for the time when your child might have their own TikTok account. (Please remember that the minimum age for TikTok is still 13.)

TikTok have recently improved their settings to limit the functionality available to under 16s. This includes: setting all new accounts for under 16s to private, turning off 'Suggest your account to others', and removing the ability to send direct messages (DMs).

As with any age-related feature, this relies upon the age being set correctly. If your child does have their own TikTok account, please take the time to check these settings.

TikTok also have a feature called Family Sharing that allows parents to link their account to their child's account and give the parent control over the settings of the child's account.

For information on how to enable Family Pairing, visit TikTok's website:

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide/>

For more information on TikTok in general, please see the attached National Online Safety Guide.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Stevens

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