



# Safeguarding and Wellbeing Bulletin December 2021

We are continually working to support students in feeling well and safe at school, to enable them to "live life to the full". Within school, Mrs Hughes, Mr Anderson and Miss Lambert make up the safeguarding team and are available, alongside the Year Leaders and Student Support, to offer support and guidance when needed. We also have a superb relationships with the NHS Wellbeing in Mind Team who work in school each week, the Police School Liaison Officer (PC Boyle) and Change Direction youth mentoring. A wide range of topics are covered in PSHE lessons during both tutor time and timetabled RS / PSHE lesson, to support students in keeping safe.

## Online Safety

During the holidays, students' use of social media often increases as they may have more spare time. Whilst social media and gaming can be a fantastic way to connect with people, it also has its dangers. This bulletin aims to look at some key online safety guidance, relating to some of the most popular apps and online dangers.

Content covered: Instagram messaging; CEOP; Report Harmful Content; TikTok; SnapChat



# Instagram

## Instagram Direct Messages

Instagram has set up a new setting which enables users to block messages from unknown senders. This is a great new feature which will support young people staying safe on the app.

1. Tap the **profile icon** in the bottom right-hand corner in the app
2. Then tap the **menu icon** (three horizontal lines) at the top-right corner and select **settings**.
3. Go to **privacy** and then choose **messages**.
4. To stop direct messages from unknown people, tap the **others on Instagram** option and then **don't receive requests** option.

## CEOP

(Child Exploitation & Online Protection)



The role of CEOP is to keep children safe from grooming and abuse online. They are there to help, give advice to parents, carers and young people, and you can also make a report to them directly. There is also a wealth of information on their [Thinkuknow website](https://www.thinkuknow.org).

Some of the things that young people have reported to CEOP include:

- *Someone I met in an online game keeps trying to talk to me privately*
- *Someone online is putting pressure on me to do things I don't want to do*
- *Someone online was talking to me about sex and it made me feel uncomfortable*
- *Someone online kept asking me to meet them face-to-face and I feel pressured by them*
- *Someone I don't know is asking me to live-stream and do things I don't want to do*
- *I shared a nude image with someone online and they are threatening me*

CEOP can be contacted via their report button on [www.ceop.police.uk](https://www.ceop.police.uk) or via the 'click CEOP' button if you see it online.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to popular songs or soundbites (often for comic purposes), enhanced with filters, effects and text. Designed with young people in mind, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity in 2019 and has featured near the top of download charts ever since. It now has around a billion users worldwide.

## AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Most videos appearing on a child's feed are light-hearted and amusing. However, some clips have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, themes of suicide and self-harm, or young teens acting in a sexually suggestive way. The sheer volume of uploads is impossible to moderate entirely – and since TikTok Jump's introduction in mid-2021, users can view third-party content outside the app.

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CENSORED

## EXPLICIT SONGS

TikTok primarily revolves around videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to music. Inevitably, some featured songs will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the app's young user-base, there is a risk that children may view older users' videos and then be inclined to imitate any explicit language or suggestive actions.

W&H\*!

## TIKTOK FAME

The app has created its own celebrities: Charli D'Amelio and Lil Nas X, for example, were catapulted to fame by exposure on TikTok – leading to many more teens attempting to go viral and become "TikTok famous". While most aspiring stars hoping to be 'the next big thing' will find it difficult, setbacks may in turn prompt them to go to even more drastic lengths to get noticed.



## HAZARDOUS VISIBILITY

Connecting with others is simple on TikTok – including commenting on and reacting to users' videos, following their profile and downloading their content. The majority of these interactions are harmless, but – because of its abundance of teen users – TikTok has experienced problems with predators contacting young people.

## ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social media platforms, TikTok can be extremely addictive. It can be hugely entertaining – but that also makes it hard to put down. As well as the punchy nature of the short video format, the app's ability to keep users intrigued about what's coming next means it's easy for a 5-minute visit to turn into a 45-minute stay.

## IN-APP SPENDING

There's an in-app option to purchase 'TikTok coins', which are then converted into digital rewards for sending to content creators that a user likes. Prices range from 99p to an eye-watering £99 bundle. TikTok is also connected with Shopify, which allows users to buy products through the app.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE CONTENT

Assuming your child is above TikTok's age limit, talk to them about what they've viewed on the app. Ask their opinion on what's appropriate and what isn't. Explain why they shouldn't give out personal details or upload videos which reveal information like their school or home address. In the long run, teaching them to think critically about what they see on TikTok could help them to become social-media savvy.

### MAINTAIN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The default setting for all under 16s' accounts is 'private'. Keeping it that way is the safest solution: it means only users who your child approves can watch their videos. The 'Stitch' (which lets users splice clips from other people's videos into their own) and 'Duet' (where you build on another user's content by recording your own video alongside their original) features are now only available to over 16s. This might clash with your child's ambitions of social media stardom, but it will fortify their account against predators.

### LEARN ABOUT REPORTING AND BLOCKING

With the correct privacy settings applied, TikTok is a relatively safe space. However, in case something does slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report inappropriate content and get them to come to you about anything upsetting that they've seen. TikTok allows users to report anyone breaching its guidelines, while you can also block individual users through their profile.

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

'Family Pairing' lets parents and carers link their own TikTok account to their child's. Through your mobile, you can control your child's safety settings remotely – including limiting screen time, managing their ability to exchange messages (and with whom) and blocking a lot of age-inappropriate content. TikTok's Safety Centre also provides resources for parents and carers to support online safety among families. These resources can be found on their website.

### USE RESTRICTED MODE

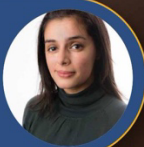
In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' section, you can filter out inappropriate content (specific content creators or hashtags, for instance) using 'Restricted Mode'. This can then be locked with a PIN. You should note, though, that the algorithm moderating content isn't totally dependable – so it's wise to stay aware of what your child is watching.

### MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child to manage their time on it in the 'Digital Wellbeing' section. Under 'Screen Time Management', you can limit the daily permitted time on the app (in increments ranging from 40 minutes to two hours). This preference can also be locked behind a PIN. That way, your child can get their regular dose of TikTok without wasting the whole day.

## Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



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SOURCES: www.tiktok.com



www.nationalonlinesafety.com



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# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing app which also allows users to chat with friends via text or audio. Users can share images and videos with specific friends, or through a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) visible to their entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose during the pandemic, with many young people utilising it to connect with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivalling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.

## CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects on the app with people they know, they may still receive friend requests from strangers. Snapchat's links with apps such as Wink and Hoop have increased this possibility. Accepting a request means that children are then disclosing personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features. This could allow predators to gain their trust for sinister purposes.

## EXCESSIVE USE

There are many features that are attractive to users and keep them excited about the app. Snap streaks encourage users to send snaps daily, Spotlight Challenges give users to the chance to obtain money and online fame, and the Spotlight feature's scroll of videos makes it easy for children to spend hours watching content.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat are not suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's Discover function lets users swipe through snippets of news stories and trending articles that often include adult content. There is currently no way to turn off this feature.

## SEXTING

Sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse. While these pictures *do* disappear – and the sender is notified if it has been screenshotted first – users have found alternative methods to save images, such as taking pictures with a separate device.

## DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE

Snapchat's filters and lenses are a popular way for users to enhance their 'selfie game'. Although many are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' filters on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Comparing themselves unfavourably against other Snapchat users could threaten a child's confidence or sense of self-worth.

## VISIBLE LOCATION

My Places lets users check in and search for popular spots nearby – such as restaurants, parks or shopping centres – and recommend them to their friends. The potential issue with a young person consistently checking into locations on Snapchat is that it allows other users in their friends list (even people they have only ever met online) to see where they currently are and where they regularly go.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add function helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this feature could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).

### CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

Talk to your child about what is and isn't wise to share on Snapchat (e.g. don't post explicit images or videos, or display identifiable details like their school uniform). Remind them that once something is online, the creator loses control over where it might end up – and who with. Additionally, Snapchat's 'Spotlight' feature has a #challenge like TikTok's: it's vital that your child understands the potentially harmful consequences of taking part in these challenges.

### CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

Snapchat has recently announced that it is rolling out a new safety feature: users will receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

### KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Your child can send Snaps directly to friends, but Stories are visible to everyone they have added, unless they change the settings. If they use SnapMaps, their location is visible unless 'Ghost Mode' is enabled (again via settings). It's prudent to emphasise the importance of not adding people they don't know in real life. This is particularly important with the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchatters to see the places your child regularly visits and checks in: strangers, bullies and groomers could use this information to engage in conversation and arrange to meet in person.

### TALK ABOUT SEXTING

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it is important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sending, receiving or sharing explicit images, as well as the possible emotional impact. Emphasise that your child should never feel pressured into sexting – and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.

### BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger *does* connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and choose report or block. There are options to state why they are reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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Source: Statista; Mind Social; media and young people; mental health | UKrii | i.e. - Children's Commissioners Report | [https://www.reporterschat.com/en-US/](https://www.reporterschat.com/en-US/https://www.reporterschat.com/en-US/) | <https://www.independent.co.uk> | <https://marketplace.com/forked/index.php?tab=shop> | <https://www.bbc.com/news/health> | <https://www.commissioners.gov.uk> | (2020) Young People and Sexting - Attitudes and Behaviours: Research Findings from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia.



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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# REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

## Report Harmful Online Content

'Report Harmful Content', provided by UK Safer Internet Centre and operated by the SWGfL, is a national reporting centre that has been designed to assist everyone in reporting harmful content online. 'Our aim is to empower anyone who has come across harmful content online to report it by providing up to date information on community standards and direct links to the correct reporting facilities across multiple platforms.' The reporting centre offers advice and support including the following types of online harm:

- Threats
- Impersonation
- Bullying or harassment
- Self-harm or suicide content
- Online abuse
- Violent content
- Unwanted sexual advances
- Pornographic content

Find out more at: [reportharmfulcontent.com](http://reportharmfulcontent.com)

## Nude Images

Students in all year groups are taught about online safety and consent, at an age-appropriate level within PSHE. The sending of indecent images is covered within this content. Earlier this year, the NSPCC released a new online tool through their service for young people, Childline. The **Report Remove Tool** has been created in conjunction with the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). The tool allows those under 18 to report nude images or videos of themselves. The IWF will then work to have the image removed from the internet. More information can be found here:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/infoadvice/bullying-abusesafety/online-mobilesafety/remove-nude-imageshared-online/>



## Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

Christmas is a very positive time for many, but a really tricky season for others. These are some suggested organisations who can provide support and help over the festive season if it is needed:



### Kooth

Kooth has multiple functions. Their team of accredited counsellors are available to provide support via their online chat function, whatever the issues are on a person's mind. They have a messaging service as some people prefer this to the chat function, as well as message boards and an online magazine. This service is available 365 days per year. [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

### Childline

Childline is a service run by the NSPCC and helps those under 19 with any issues that they face. Trained counsellors can be accessed via their website chat ([www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)) or phone (0800 1111).

childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME



### Shout

Shout is available to support in a crisis, for those feeling stressed, anxious or overwhelmed by something. It is a text service which can be reached on 85258.

## Key Safeguarding Contacts:

Mrs Hughes (Designated Safeguarding Lead): [z.hughes@bhs.hlt.academy](mailto:z.hughes@bhs.hlt.academy)

Mr Anderson (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead): [r.anderson@bhs.hlt.academy](mailto:r.anderson@bhs.hlt.academy)

Miss Lambert: (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead): [s.lambert@bhs.hlt.academy](mailto:s.lambert@bhs.hlt.academy)

Further information can be found on the school website.

