



BLACKTHORNS  
COMMUNITY  
PRIMARY ACADEMY

Number 8: 4<sup>th</sup>  
February 2022

## Blackthorns Community Newsletter

### Welcome to our newsletter!

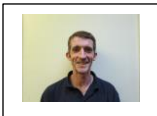
There has been so much going on in our wonderful Academy! The children constantly show good manners, are polite and smile continuously! We are also very fortunate that the year 5 children went on their residential this week to Bowles...more photos and accounts in the next newsletter!

We are also looking forward to celebrating Children's Mental Health Awareness Week next week, 7<sup>th</sup> Feb- 11<sup>th</sup> Feb and also Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February. The focus of Safer Internet Day will be 'All fun and games'. Please see the article below about information for parents and carers for Tik Tok

### COVID update

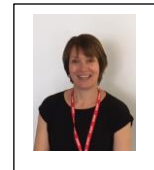
We have been carefully monitoring the rise in cases of COVID amongst staff and pupils in the last few days. It is our priority to make sure the children keep attending school to be educated and we are constantly working to make sure this happens. Please can we remind all to continue to keep safe and sensible when out and about, washing hands, sanitising where possible and catching those sneezes!

### Staff update



It is with great sadness that we say good bye to Mr Davies as our Premises Manager. Mr Davies has been with us for 11 years and has been a superstar on all levels. We will miss him greatly! I'm sure you will wish him all the best in his new role, which he starts after half term. Good luck Mr Davies!

We are also saying goodbye to Mrs Burholt, our Inclusion Lead. Mrs Burholt has been with us for 2 years and has done a superb job for our SEN children and the coordination of the Special Support Centre. I'm sure you will wish her all the best for her new adventures, which she starts after the Easter break. Good luck Mrs Burholt!



### Gentle reminders

Please can we remind all parents and carers not to drive up Blackthorns Close as pedestrians and residents are crossing the road frequently.

Can we also remind parents and carers to try to keep to the one way system around the entry and exit points in our Academy.

### **Dates for your diary:**

21st—25th February: Half term

28th February: INSET

30th March Zoolab Visit KS1 (Information nearer the time)

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one app of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about TIKTOK

**AGE RESTRICTION 13+**

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-synching 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.

### EXPLICIT SONGS

TikTok primarily revolves around videos of users lip-synching 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.

### TIKTOK FAME

The app has created its own celebrities. Cheryl 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 launch their careers. While most aspiring stars hoping to be 'the next big thing' will find it difficult, some may in turn prompt them to go to even more drastic lengths to get noticed.

### HAZARDOUS VISIBILITY

Connecting with others is simple on TikTok – 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, TikTok is designed to be 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 mean 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 £88 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 18s' accounts to 'private'. Keeping it that way is the safest solution: it means only users who your child approves can watch their videos. The 'duet' (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 18s. 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

Parvati 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.





**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

SOURCES: TikTok app

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

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**Healthy Eating**

We try to encourage healthy eating as much as possible in school and ask for your support by ensuring that KS2 children bring a healthy snack for break times (KS1 are offered fruit each day) and if your child brings a packed lunch that it is healthy and well balanced.

All children should bring a water bottle for the class room and an additional drink with a packed lunch.

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