



Headteacher:
Mrs H Watts

Tel: 01663 743284
email: head@newmillsschool.co.uk
web: www.newmillsschool.co.uk

Wednesday 15th April 2026

RE: TikTok

Dear Parents/Carers,

Our Safeguarding team has been made aware of an online safety concern and would like to raise awareness to our parents/carers. A member of our school community has been contacted by a stranger via TikTok. This stranger has been sending private messages of a suggestive nature.

TikTok is a highly popular social media platform centred around short-form video content. Although widely known for viral dance trends and lip-syncing challenges, users can watch and share videos on virtually any topic and create them using built-in editing tools like filters, effects, and music. Content can be accessed through the app, website, or via shares on other platforms. Although viewing content doesn't require an account, creating and interacting with posts does. The platform is recommended by experts to be accessed by students ages 16+.

TikTok offers users a direct messaging feature (private messaging), where users can send text messages, emojis, GIFs, and videos to each other within the app. The availability of Direct Messages depends on privacy settings, and users can choose to allow messages from '**Everyone**', '**Friends**', or '**No one**'. We would be recommended that you ensure your child does not have the "Everyone" setting.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers to continue to be vigilant around your child's social media usage and to spend a few minutes checking through your child's phone. If you become concerned about any contact, please contact us via our dedicated Safeguarding email address: safeguarding@newmillsschool.co.uk.

Here are some top tips on how to make TikTok safer for teenagers to use (**bold writing** includes links to access further information): -

1. Use the parental controls and safety features: TikTok has a **Family Pairing feature** to link your account with your teen's, enabling you to manage screen time, restrict content, control direct messaging.
2. Ensure your teen's account is **set to Private** to limit who can view their content and send Direct Messages
3. Consider using a parental control tool like the **Qustodio Parent App** for additional online safety and digital wellbeing support.
4. Teach your teen the importance of protecting their personal information. Emphasise that they should never share details like their real name, age, location, address, or school details in their TikTok profile or videos.
5. Discuss the risks associated with linking external accounts, such as other social media platforms, and review TikTok's **Privacy Policy**, **Terms of Service**, and **Community Guidelines** together.
6. Familiarise yourself with TikTok's features and functions. Discuss with your teen the types of content they are interested in and any concerns you may have about specific trends or creators. Be aware that the algorithm can lead to exposure to mature content, even unintentionally.

7. Set clear screen time limits for TikTok use to prevent excessive scrolling and make use of the platform's in-app **screen time management tool**.
8. Discuss the risks associated with direct messaging and ensure your teen understands how to adjust their **privacy settings**. Encourage your teen to report any inappropriate content or interactions they encounter.
9. Keep up-to-date with TikTok updates and changes to TikTok's policies and guidelines and be aware of emerging trends and challenges that may pose a risk to your teen.

Further support

If you require any support from external agencies, here are some who may be able to offer further support:

Internet Matters – this website provides step-by-step advice to ensure that security settings are in place. It also provides information regarding different platforms and age restrictions.

Snapp-it – a 24-hour helpline which offers advice for people aged 13-25. Young people can access support via the following QR-code.



Kooth – an online mental wellbeing community for children and young people. There is an electronic journal feature to track feelings and emotions, and there are options to join conversations with the Kooth community.

Stem4 – a charity that promotes positive mental health in young people. There is support for parents and young people, and there are a number of free apps available to support with anxiety, depression, self-harm and low self-worth.

Childline – a 24-hour service for young people up to the age of 19. No matter the concern, there are counsellors on hand to offer support.

Many thanks for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emma Adrio".

Emma Adrio
Deputy Headteacher