

Brampton Cortonwood Infant School



A Guide to TikTok

E-Safety

Part of the James Montgomery Academy Trust



A guide to keeping safe when on TikTok

From musical.ly to TikTok:

- On 2 August 2018, Musical.ly merged with TikTok to create a 'bigger and better short-video community'.
- Musical.ly users moved automatically to TikTok.
- TikTok was the world's most downloaded app in the first quarter of 2018, with a million downloads. It has more than 500 million users globally.

What exactly is TikTok?

- TikTok users can make their own short videos on the mobile app, and often like to have music accompany their videos. The users have creative control over the videos.
- Other TikTok users can 'react' to videos they see by filming their responses alongside the original video; or 'duet' by making a video alongside another video.

How TikTok works:

- People aged 13 and over can download the app which has a 12+ rating in app stores - though, as, with other age-restricted platforms, parents need to ensure their children are the appropriate age to use TikTok.
- After downloading the TikTok app, users can start creating their own videos or watch content created by other users.
- The content runs across all kinds of subject matter - pets, arts, comedy, sports, food, travel, music, and games. Users can ♥ the content they enjoy to see similar videos.
- Users can also participate in hashtag challenges by clicking the 'Discover' button, with new challenges added every week.
- Creating and editing videos is simple, with different effects, filters and stickers to choose from.
- Users can easily share videos on other social media platforms, such as Instagram or Facebook, and users can build up followings and reputations.

What to do before starting to use the app

- Users should read the TikTok's Community Guidelines.

Are there privacy settings?

- The app has come under fire for a lack of privacy settings in the past but users now have privacy options, including the ability to make their accounts private; choosing who can comment on or download their videos, and who can duet with them. Users can also block other users. Messaging on TikTok has always been private and messages can only be sent between friends.
- Recently, TikTok introduced a new feature that lets users filter comments by using up to 30 words that they can choose themselves. By activating this, users can make sure no one can post comments under videos using words they find unpleasant or harmful.

- All of these options can be found on the top right of the screen (three dots) inside the 'Privacy and Settings'.
- You can look at TikTok's safety videos to learn more: @tiktoktips

What about screen time?

- Parents can help children manage their screen time by selecting how much time they would like their child spend on TikTok (40, 60, 90, 120 minutes per day). This feature is password-protected; when users reach their limit they have to enter a password to continue. Parents can set the password to be in total control of screentime.
- TikTok has another account setting, 'restricted viewing mode', which can be used as parental control. Once enabled, this setting will limit the appearance of content that might not be appropriate for all audiences. As with the above feature, this setting can be activated via a password.

What's the best way to help children stay safe on TikTok?

- The best way to keep your child safe is to be as informed about the app as you can, particularly about its safety and digital wellbeing features. Find out what your child uses it for and talk to them about what they enjoy about it.
- There are some practical considerations to bear in mind when discussing TikTok with your child:
 1. Make sure your child is old enough to use the app.
 2. If your child has their account set to 'public', be sure they understand what this really means. The 'private' setting, allowing your child to share their content only with approved followers, may be the safer option. Be sure to discuss with your child whom they allow to follow them. If they're accepting requests from people they don't know, this could expose them to risk. You can make your profile private by clicking on the profile tab in the app, then go to the three-dot menu in the top-right corner, click on 'Privacy and Safety', then toggle 'Private account'.
 3. It's worth making sure that your child knows how to keep their identity secure, by for instance not including any personal information, such as name, address, phone number or age in their profile. Make sure they know not to film videos wearing their school uniform or personalised clothing, and that they shouldn't give out personal information. They should be particularly aware of the location they film in, and not film outside their home, which might mean inadvertently revealing where they live.
 4. Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate content and that they should speak to a trusted adult if they have any concerns about anything on the app. If you or your child want to report a specific video, click on the 'share' icon in the bottom-left corner of the video, then click report and follow the on-screen instructions.
- If you want to report a specific user, you can do this by accessing their profile and then clicking on the three-dot menu in the top-right corner. An option saying 'Report' will come up: follow the on-screen instructions.