

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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**Westbury-on-Severn
CE Primary School**

Thursday 21st January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Please read this letter below, which PC Greg Steer, our School Beat Officer from Gloucestershire Constabulary has advised us to share with all our parents and carers. It is in regard to the appropriate and safe use of TikTok, which none of our children should have access to for safeguarding reasons.

With warmest wishes,

David Crunkhurn
Headteacher

The past year has brought so many significant changes to the way we live our lives. Online learning, working from home and the accompanying challenges of online meetings have impacted on many of us.

Like their parents and carers, many children have increased their time on the internet, which in itself has posed increased challenges for digital parenting.

Throughout this challenging time, Schoolbeat Officers and Police Community Support Officers have worked closely with Head teachers to provide advice and guidance to pupils on how to stay safe online.

*What has become clear to Schoolbeat Officers is that more and more children are highlighting their use of social media, in particular **TikTok**.*

Like many other Social Media platforms, TikTok has an age restriction of 13 years old. Whilst TikTok can be very appealing to younger audiences, many parents and carers are reminding their children that they need to be 13 before having the app.

Some parents and children have reported inappropriate content on the app, others have raised concerns about the risks linked to the messaging function and children keeping profiles open in order to get more comments and shares.

The online world can be an exciting place for children, however, it is not without its risks. It is important that children follow cyber safety advice and utilise age appropriate apps and games, this way we can reduce those risks and make their online experience as safe and fun as it should be.



It's great to take an active interest in your child's life online and we'd encourage you to talk openly with them about the things they do. Remember, the internet is an essential part of young people's lives and provides them with tremendous opportunities.

Useful information for parents and carers and online safety advice/resources can be found on the below sites.

The NSPCC's online Net Aware service provides expert reviews and safety advice on all of the most popular social networks, apps and games young people are using; www.net-aware.org.uk

CEOP's ThinkUKnow website contains resources and advice tailored by age, as well as specific tools for parents and professionals; www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Also, below is the link to a Panorama episode which looked into how safe TikTok really is;

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000p3p9/panorama-is-tiktok-safe>

