



# Wessex Gardens Primary and Nursery School

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Dear parents and carers,

I am following up my information poster about the app **TikTok** with some more information. The advice is that the minimum age to use it is 13, and I strongly recommend you adhere to this recommendation. If, however you allow your child to have a TikTok account I am providing some additional safeguarding information.

As with all devices that link to the internet, you must be able to access your child's device whenever you choose. I do advise you download TikTok yourself to see the content. While much of it is very innocent, it can be used as a means of communication with children.

The NSPCC assesses online apps, games and social media. The assessment for TikTok is shown on the diagram below. You can also see their assessment of other apps and games here <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/?page=3>

### NSPCC assessment of risks with TikTok

#### Expert view of the risks...



### Child Safety on TikTok: parent factsheet

#### What are the concerns?

On the surface, nothing. TikTok has a reputation for being unusually free of trolling and danger. But you may have seen news reports or heard concerns about some users harassing children for nude images and videos.

#### What should I look out for?

- User profiles which talk about 'trading' or swapping pictures/videos
- Use of emojis that are commonly considered to be sexually suggestive (such as the aubergine)
- Hashtags, such as #tradefortrade, which clearly suggest the user is looking to trade illicit content
- The lyrical content of some songs – parents have raised concerns that it's not always age-appropriate

Users cannot exchange images and videos via in-app messaging, but once they've made contact they move on to another platform to trade, such as Snapchat.

TikTok has taken steps to remove users who it suspects are soliciting underage users. However, there are still many suggestive profiles and TikTok has committed to almost doubling the number of content moderators it employs to 10,000 to address this.

### **What safety options are available to parents?**

Control who can view your child's videos Set your child's account to 'private' so that your child can control who sees their videos or keep them completely private. Your child will be able to approve or deny people as 'fans', and will only be able to accept messages from followers.

Instructions for this are here: <http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/setting-up-a-private-account>

#### **Remember:**

- Accounts are set to 'public' by default. Public profiles can be viewed by anyone
- Even with a private account, your child's profile information can be seen by all users. Make sure your child doesn't reveal personal information on their public profile

### **Restrict how your child uses the app**

Use TikTok's digital wellbeing feature to control the time your child spends on the app and limit the appearance of content that may not be appropriate:

Digital wellbeing <http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/digital-wellbeing>

Most devices also allow you to set time limits on game play, set age limits for content, and restrict in-app purchases. Check the user instructions for your child's device.

Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate behaviour Your child can use the app to report content that makes them feel uncomfortable, including accounts, videos, comments and chats. You can too. Instructions for this are here:

**Report inappropriate content** <http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/report-inappropriate-content>

You can also block 'fans' at any time: <http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/delete-fans>

#### **Further tips**

- Download and use the app to help you understand it
- Talk to your child about what they're doing online, and make sure they know they can talk to you about anything that upsets them
- Check your bank statements regularly for in-app purchases you're not happy with, and to make sure your child isn't getting around any passwords you've set up.

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