

Summer Term 2021

# Safeguarding Newsletter

Welcome to the Kew Riverside summer term safeguarding newsletter. As we approach the end of the academic year, I wanted to keep you informed and reassure you that safeguarding remains our absolute priority.

In this update there is some useful information about the dangers of TikTok and 'edibles'. You will also see details of who the key safeguarding staff are for September.



## TikTok, what are the dangers?

There are concerns over the safety of children using TikTok because of the content they could potentially be exposed to. As the demographic of TikTok has widened, so has the type of content accessible on the platform (as highlighted above).

This means that some of the videos that younger users could view may be inappropriate for their age. Although TikTok will suggest the content that you might enjoy based on your usage, you can also search the general feed which can be home to some explicit content of a sexual or violent nature or include explicit song lyrics.

The interaction on the app (through likes, comments, and shares) can also have a negative effect on a child's mental health. If a child does not receive the desired number of likes or comments on their video, it could harm their confidence and self-esteem, or influence the content that they share on the platform. Instead of being harmless fun, a child could develop feelings of anxiety and engage with inappropriate content for popularity.

Alternatively, if a video shared does not receive a positive reaction, it could leave the child at risk of cyberbullying, leading to a number of [mental health difficulties for children](#). One harmful TikTok trend is 'cringe videos', where a user makes a compilation video of content on the platform that they deem to

be 'uncool'. This can initiate trolling on a large scale and can be shared across other social media platforms, sometimes becoming viral.

TikTok interaction also poses a risk of children being groomed. If your TikTok profile is set to public, anybody can interact with the videos that you post and send you a message to your personal inbox.

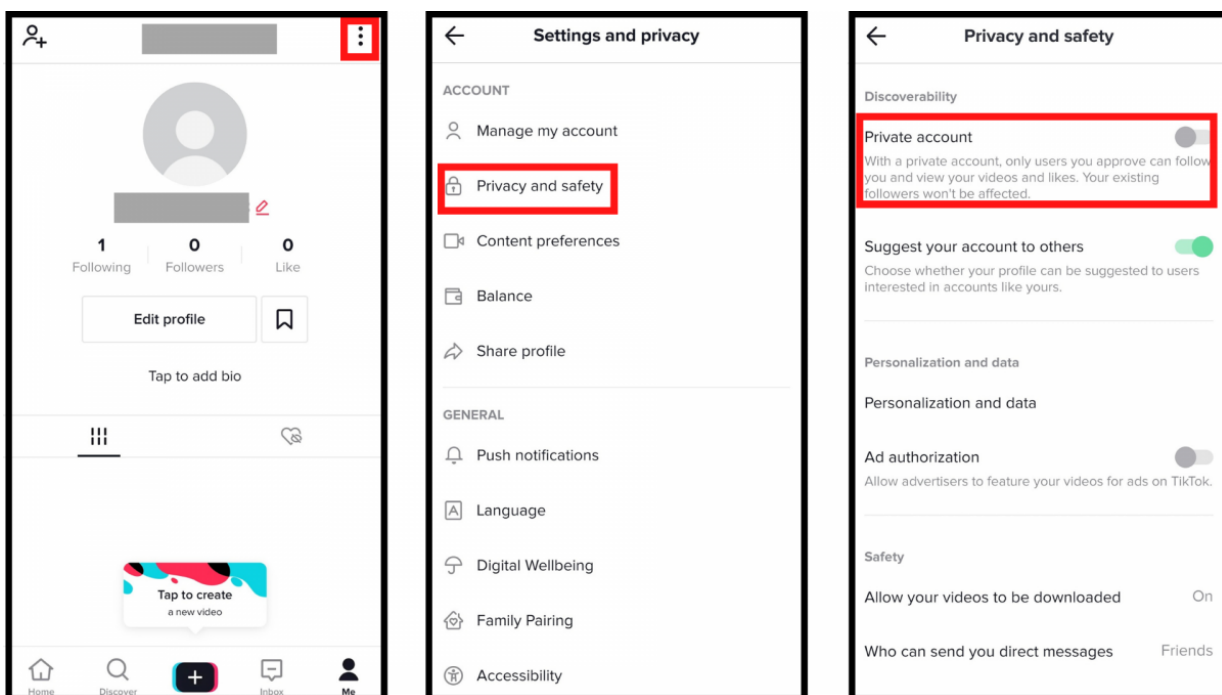
Criminals could leave comments of a violent or sexual nature on any video, including those of children and teenagers. [BBC Trending](#) collected and reported hundreds of comments that were sexually inappropriate that had been left on TikTok videos that children had uploaded.

They found that once reported, although the comments had been removed, the profiles of the perpetrators remained on TikTok. The risk is that the perpetrator could continue to comment on a child's content and encourage children to engage with them through direct messages. This is a way that criminals groom children, which can devastatingly lead to children being exploited. You can familiarise yourself with the signs of child abuse and exploitation [here](#).

Due to the lack of initial monitoring during sign-up to the platform, the risk of criminals targeting children on the app is something that may always remain a concern. TikTok has billions of worldwide users which makes the platform difficult to regulate (as with many social media platforms).

The app was created in China which means that the UK is restricted in its powers in relation to the app's functioning. However, UK authorities continue to monitor use of the app, raising concerns and investigations as appropriate; with most recent concerns being raised about [collection of child data](#).

**The images below detail how to ensure your child's account is private**





## Fortnite

Fortnite appears to remain popular, so we thought we would provide an update for you. Fortnite is PEGI rated 12 for frequent mild violence which means it is not suitable for those under 12 years old. It is important to note that when PEGI rating games PEGI do not take into consideration the communications facilities available. Fortnite has a chat facility which increases risks to children. There are different versions of the games including the free to play Battle Royale game (although there are in-app purchases) where up to 100 players can compete against each other. Due to the nature of the game, your child may be exposed to inappropriate language and/or chatting to strangers.

IT IS IMPORTANT YOUR CHILD KNOWS TO REPORT CONCERNS.

Fortnite does include a number of parental controls. To help make it a safer environment you may consider disabling voice chat, filtering language and setting privacy setting. Try not to store any payment details within the game/device or make sure you have set purchase restrictions. All users can purchase V-Bucks directly through the game which can then be spent in the Fortnite store.

For further information, please visit:

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-fortnite>

## Safeguarding Staffing for September 2021:

Of course, keeping children safe is everybody's responsibility in school but those with key safeguarding duties are as follows:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Liz Strong
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Laura Wrigglesworth and Rachel Roberts
- Mental Health Lead: Ardeep Viridi
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant: Lauren McGarvey
- Designated Governor for Safeguarding: Denise Long
- School Nurse: Pat Fosu
- Educational welfare officer: Julie Miller

## Tell us about your concerns or worries

We are here to help with any worries you or your child may have about their mental health or safety. There are several ways to get in touch:

1. Emailing the class teacher or the school Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) – Liz, Nell and Rachel – on their school email addresses (from September – Liz, Laura and Rachel)
2. Phoning the school and requesting to speak to any class teacher or the DSLs or our school ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant), Lauren.
3. Children can use the 'Ask it Baskets' in their classrooms to post any worries – these are checked regularly by the class teacher.
4. Children can request a 'Time to Talk' slot with Maisie or Rachel (from September Ardeep and Rachel)
5. Contacting SPA – SPA Is our Single Point of Access – a hub that offers advice and support for safeguarding matters. The contact number is 0208 8547 5008. Anyone can call SPA to report a concern or seek advice

