



Plaistow Police Station
Barking Road, E13 8HJ

Telephone: 0208 217 3912
Facsimile:
Email: robert.sewell@met.police.uk
www.met.police.uk

Your ref:

Our ref:

Monday 22nd November 2021,

Dear parent/carer,

This letter covers the concerns around the use of TikTok by children.

I would like to share with you that there have been a number of incidents in various schools across Newham whereby school children have been posting malicious information about school staff on social media platforms such as TikTok. On occasions this has included falsely accusing staff of criminal offences involving children.

This is very distressing to staff and their families and behaviour that is not acceptable. Please may I respectfully ask you as parents and carers for us to work together to remind your child that this is a criminal offence under the Malicious Communications Act 1988:

Where a person sends a letter, electronic communication or article of any description which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender is a criminal offence.

If a child writes something about a member of school staff which is false or grossly offensive 'just as a bit of fun' or as a rumour and then posts it on social media – **they do commit a criminal offence.**

The child may then be at risk of permanently excluded and/or prosecution and risk of being criminalised resulting in a criminal record which will have an impact when they apply for a job in the future.

As your safer schools police team, we work hard with your school to avoid school children becoming excluded or criminalised, but sometimes where the level of harm or distressed caused is so severe we have little choice but to follow these routes.

The importance of sharing this communication with you is for us to work together to both educate and engage with you to avoid this situation.

Please speak to your child regarding the sensible use of social media. Please consider also using parental software to restrict to manage what they can access and monitor where appropriate. A guide can be found on line.

Although this letter is focusing on TikTok the content is relevant for other risks social media poses such as your child being at risk of being exploited, bullied, and groomed on line by criminal gangs.

If your child does genuinely suspect of anyone committing criminal offences then they must report this to either a school teacher, or the police. You or your child can also confidentially access ChildLine 0800 1111 or via their website childline.org.uk or report crime anonymously via the Fearless website- Fearless.org

If you would like to speak further about this or seek some support /education around how to safeguard your child on social media please contact us through your school.

Yours sincerely,

Sergeant Rob Sewell BEM 937NE
Newham Safer Schools Team