



LING MOOR

A PRIORY ACADEMY

E- SAFETY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2019

Children are facing an increasingly complex world when it comes to the technology they are using. In order to support our families with this, we are going to attempt to put together a monthly newsletter (aided by colleagues from the Trust) that shares key information with you about keeping children safe online.

Our message is really a very simple one in that we would encourage all of you to ensure you know what your child is accessing (whether it is appropriate), who they are communicating with (whether this be through messenger or online playing games) and how long they are using technology for. The most recent published advice is that children have at least one hour prior to sleep without a screen. *We highly recommend a good book at this point!*

Another important note is to not ask your children about particular apps that are listed below (as this can cause them to be inquisitive about something that they were not previously aware of) but to keep an eye out for them when you check their devices.

If you do come across any issues regarding the content on the devices your child accesses, please do not hesitate to contact the Academy for support.

Instagram & Snapchat & Messenger

Please do make sure you are able to access and monitor your child's Snapchat, Messenger and Instagram if they are using them. The **minimum age for someone to have access to either of these is 13** so children at Ling Moor should not be using it however we are aware that some are.



This form of communication results in the greatest number of issues in the Academy (thankfully few and far between).

Online gaming

Xbox live and communicating via Playstation Network comes with risk if the children are communicating online with people they do not know. When the children are 'live' we would encourage them to only play games with those people they know. There have been cases of children being groomed through open access to online gaming. Most games now have the opportunity to change the settings so that children's access to in game chat is restricted.

We would also encourage you to look carefully at the age rating of games and apps. The age guidance is there for a reason and some children are being exposed to content that is not age-appropriate.

Momo

A recent online craze that is causing concern is the 'Momo Challenge'. This is a game which challenges players to communicate on social media (mainly WhatsApp) with an unknown user called Momo. Momo challenges the player to complete a series of dangerous tasks and sends the player violent and disturbing images. This game has been linked to cases of children taking their own lives. This has been prominent in a few

countries around the world for a while now and is starting to draw attention in the UK. Please do not mention this to your child to avoid arousing curiosity, but if you hear of any children taking part in this please do inform the Academy.

Holla

This is an app that allows people to live video chat with strangers for a limited amount of time. This is relatively new but there has already been a lot of concerns raised about this. It is an app that is ideal for cyberbullies and predators who can meet people online and chat with them easily. Whilst this app claims it is for 13 years plus, it has been rated as 17 years plus by both Apple and Google.

Monkey

There is also a similar app to Holla called Monkey which is now owned by HOLLA.

Tik-Tok

This is the new name for Music.ly an app. Users can record short videos of themselves, usually with music, and post these easily to a public audience. There are only two privacy settings on the app:

- Private: where one the creator can watch their videos
- Public: anyone on the apps can see the creator's videos

Given most people sign up to Tik-Tok to share videos it is no surprise most users have a public account. The accounts are also set to public by default. The app has been downloaded more than 150 million times globally.

Reasons to be concerned:

- If a user has a public account they can be messaged by anyone including strangers.
- There have been reports of users sharing videos that promote self-harm and other life risking activities as well as sexually suggestive content.
- It is very easy for someone to make an anonymous account and send another user messages which means there is a high risk of bullying.

Blendr

This is an online chat app that encourages users to chat online before meeting to date. It is meant to be for over 18s only, but no age verification is required.

Funimate

This app is very similar to Tik-Tok. Users record themselves doing karaoke and post this to a public forum where anyone can comment. There is an option for a private mode but like Tik-Tok most accounts are public. This app has the same concerns as Tik-Tok. There is also an added concern as users can find adult content via the built in search function.

Yubo

It was previously called Yellow. Known as the teenage version of Tinder. You can add friends by swiping left or right on a picture of them. With add ons this will also lead to the users becoming friends on Snapchat and Instagram. Again no age verification is required with this app.

Live.me

This a live streaming video app. Users can stream themselves live to the world showing what they are up to at any given moment. It also shares the location of the person broadcasting themselves live. It has been linked to cyberbullying with many users being abused through the comments people can make on their videos. Users can also message other users so the bullying continues even when a stream has ended. Users get rewards from other users for their videos. This has led to many users daring the broadcaster to do something in return for a reward. This had led to some users completing life risking activities or sexually suggestive activities in return for rewards and popularity on the app.

Apple

Pleasingly Apple have now improved child controls for their devices. They have now produced guidance on how to use this which you can find here:

<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

