



Beeches Road, Birmingham, B42 2PY

0121 729 7310 • enquiry@corearena.academy

Headteacher: Raj Mann

🐦 @COREArenaAcad @COREeducate 📷 @CORE_arena_academy

Sunday 14th November

Subject: Malicious, hurtful, and insulting Tik Tok Videos

Dear Parents,

I am writing to inform you of some concerns regarding social media, specifically the platform Tik Tok. Please read the content below carefully. We would also urge you to take the time to regularly monitor your child's phone, internet devices and any social media accounts that they may have, if they are at the legal age to hold one. This is an important safeguarding exercise that I know all parents and carers will take seriously.

What is TikTok?

TikTok (formerly Musical.ly) is a free social media platform for creating and watching short videos and sharing them with friends and strangers. Clips are often created using short grabs of music and can be enhanced by a range of tools such as filters, animation and special effects. The majority of videos produced are of young people lip-syncing and dancing to popular music but there are also talent videos, comedy skits, challenges and informational clips. According to mobile intelligence firm Sensor Tower, in 2019 TikTok reached 1.5 billion downloads and was the third-most downloaded non-gaming app of the year, behind only WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. The popularity of the app, especially among younger students, is quite staggering.

Parents **must** be vigilant in how their child accesses social media. There have already been several concerns raised regarding the existence of Tik Tok. This is a significant concern for Arena Academy too. Some platform users are using Tik Tok in very negative and sometimes, quite naively, even illegal ways. We have seen that some student users are tagging in and/or are making videos which include staff and student names and even including edited images downloaded from our website. This is completely without the permission of these people, who are in most cases, totally unaware of these videos. Some of this content is malicious, insulting and hurtful.

We are aware of a current 'challenge' circulating on Tik Tok encouraging school students to make dummy accounts and post unpleasant content that vilifies teachers at their school. We are aware of at least three accounts that are currently targeting Arena teachers. This is happening in other Birmingham schools too and the Police are aware and involved.

We categorically object to the use of social media platforms to impersonate, insult, troll, bully or exploit any member of staff at Arena Academy. We will apply our behaviour policy most severely if any investigation discovers that a student has used social media in a way that goes against our school values and high expectations of behaviour & conduct, and/or is illegal, defamatory or against the Equality Act of 2010. **We will also refer the matter to the Police.**

Thank you for your ongoing support in working with teachers and professionals to keep children safe and also in the important work that we all do to ensure that our children behave in a way that is safe, respectful, responsible and lawful. We would ask that you discuss the content of this message with your child.

If you have any information relating to any of the above, then please do not hesitate to contact us on our enquiry email.

Yours sincerely,

Mr R Mann
Headteacher