




October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Warning – Blue Whale Challenge on TicToc

I do hope that you are keeping well during these difficult times.

We know that young people are very much engaged in social media and maybe even more so with the current restrictions that are in place. Currently trending is a social media app

called 'Tic Toc'. The icon looks as follows: 

You can find out more about Tic Toc here:

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-tiktok>

I would like to draw your attention to one of the latest challenges. This is 'The Blue Whale Challenge'. It is a dangerous and inappropriate 'suicide challenge'; every now and again its popularity surges. It can be found across a range of social media apps. The trend is aimed at teenagers and sets 50 challenges over 50 days, with the last task being to commit suicide. This is extremely concerning for us all and in light of this I would like to draw your attention and awareness of how to prevent your child from engaging in a challenge such as this.

I would like to remind you to report anything that you see on any of your household devices that you can see is inappropriate to CEOP - <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Get-help/Reporting-an-incident/>.

Be sure to engage in regular communication with your child about which social media apps that they use and which accounts they have. Find out if they have Tic Toc, whether or not they have come across this challenge or worse still, taken any part in it. This is one of the best ways to address social media interaction and draw attention to your concerns as well as to heighten your child's awareness of the risks and dangers of interacting on social media or taking part in such challenges.

Please warn them to the dangers of the 'The Blue Whale' and the particular dangers of engaging with the Blue Whale Challenge. Remind them that they should be mindful of who, what and how they interact across social media.

Please kindly remember as parent/carers:

- Ensure you know your child's pin/password for their phone and check their devices regularly for inappropriate content.
- Smartphones, Broadband connection and all connected devices within your household are essentially your responsibility even though you have gifted them to your child.
- Talk to your child about how they use technology.
- Ensure your child sticks to social media age restrictions (Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp and Tic Toc – these are only for 13 year olds and above)
- Use parental controls on your home broadband, smartphones and other devices.



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Headteacher: Phil Kelly BA MBA NPQH

- Four C's - **Content**—what is your child being exposed to or sharing? **Contact**—who are they talking to? **Conduct**—is their behaviour appropriate? **Commercialism**—Pop up adverts, marketing/hidden cost/subscriptions/in-app purchases.

I do hope you find this to be a useful reminder of online safety and feel confident that here at Higham Lane School we do everything in our power to help keep all our young people safe. I am more than happy to discuss further any concerns you have about this matter with you.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Dixon
Subject Leader for Computer Science and
Whole School ICT Coordinator

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