

Dear Parents and Carers,

Covid has now been a part of our lives for almost two years but we are still in a particularly difficult period of time which is causing some families enormous financial strain and anxiety. Worrying about whether there is enough for your children to eat is a step too far for anybody. If this is how you are feeling, please, please consider the local food bank. All you need to do is phone the school office on 01736 364087 and Mrs Gill or Mrs Stacey will help organise this for you. Please don't feel anxious about doing this – you know that they are always a friendly and reassuring voice on the end of the phone. They will liaise with the CTIPA Foodbank who provide enormous help and reassurance.

If you are struggling financially and are finding it difficult to feed your family at the moment and cope with the financial pressures of the Christmas season, you can also contact me by phoning the office or emailing me at [head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk) . Please note that all requests and support will be treated in the strictest confidence.

We are pleased that the government has again provided support which means that funding has been made available to schools to issue vouchers over the Christmas holiday. We will be issuing vouchers to the value of £30 per eligible pupil (those who qualify for benefit-related free school meals – not Universal Infant Free School Meals) in the same way as we have previously, using the WONDE platform. These will be delivered via email over the next couple of weeks so please look out for them, including in your Junk email folder.

If you think your child may be eligible for Free School Meals, please see the information later in this newsletter and complete the form on the Cornwall Council website <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/apply-for-free-school-meals-and-pupil-premium/> . If you're not sure if you qualify, but think you might, it really is worth applying to find out for certain as there are benefits for your child beyond free school meals as they would then be eligible for Pupil Premium. Please see [http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/what\\_is\\_pupil\\_premium/172524](http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/what_is_pupil_premium/172524) which has lots more information about this, including our Parent Guide.

If you are finding things difficult at the moment, please don't feel that you need to struggle on alone as there are people available who would be more than willing to try to help.

With the current spike in Covid cases in the school, we have had to make some very difficult decisions this week as you know from the letters sent home today. Decisions like these are not taken lightly and we really appreciate the support that you show us in these difficult times.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the staff at Alverton. They are always incredible but this week has provided new challenges and they have done a phenomenal job in responding to these with resilience, flexibility and good humour.

If your child displays any symptoms of Covid, they must not come into school when we re-open on Thursday and a PCR test should be arranged as soon as possible. Please let us know by emailing the office.

I hope that those families who are well have an enjoyable, Covid-free weekend and that all those who currently have cases in their family are recovering well and feel better every day.

Thank you again,

Martin Higgs  
Headteacher

### **Remember – safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility**

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact Martin Higgs (Designated Safeguarding Lead) at [head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk) or, if it is out of school hours, please contact the Multi Agency Referral Unit on 0300 1231 116;

E-mail: [multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk)

A reminder that there is no entry into the school buildings apart from into the office foyer area and that, when you are on the site, we would ask you to please wear a mask. Thank you.

Hello again - I can only hope that you’re not feeling really ill as you read this because this dreaded Covid seems to have taken us by surprise and reared its head with a vengeance. I’m not sure whether I was being naive or optimistic but I honestly thought we had got most of it behind us. Sadly I was wrong. If you are poorly, I sincerely hope you get well soon. If you aren’t poorly then I hope with equal sincerity that you don’t succumb. And if you’ve had this illness then let’s hope that’s the end of it for you. On the plus side we’re in December now, which means fun and festivities, plus the winter equinox which marks the end of the days getting shorter and the beginning of lengthening days as we head towards the promise of spring. I know it feels like a long time away but it will happen, that’s one of our few certainties and one which always makes me feel better. With equal certainty I’m still here for you should you wish to talk, moan, grumble, weep or complain about any aspect of life that’s making you feel sad, bad, cross or grumpy. I can also make the best cuppa. Take care and my very best wishes, Mrs Daylak xxx

### **Coronavirus symptoms**

The main symptoms are:

**A high temperature** (hot to the touch on chest or back)

**OR**

**A new, continuous cough** (coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours)

**OR**

**A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** (you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything or things smell or taste different to normal)

If you or your child have any **ONE** or more of these you must get a COVID-19 PCR test as soon as possible and stay at home and do not have visitors— only leave home to get the test. Please check the latest Government guidance. **Please ring or email the school office as soon as possible to let us know.**

**If your child tests positive over the weekend please email**  
**[head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk)**

You can book a test online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or phone the NHS test line 119.

### **Go Active After School provision**

Any queries or to book please contact Mr Timmons direct on 07843 126833 or by emailing him on

**[alvertonkidsclub@outlook.com](mailto:alvertonkidsclub@outlook.com)**

## Christmas lunch - Friday 10th December

Bookings for Christmas lunch next Friday have now closed. If you did not return a slip, you must send your child in with a packed lunch from home as there will not be any spare meals available on the day.

## Christmas tree

A huge thank you to Mole Valley Farmers for their kind donation of our beautiful Christmas and thank you to all the children who made a decoration for it.



## FOAS News

### Filled jam jars



We would be very grateful if you could save a clean jam jar, decorate it and fill it with small toys, sweets or similar to bring in to school from Thursday 9th December. Please hand into the school office or to your child's teacher. These will be used for prizes in a draw for the children on Friday 10th December.

### Fill a Jar



### Friday 10th December

### Christmas non-uniform day with an added surprise!

To coincide with Christmas lunch day, FOAS would like to invite all pupils to wear something Christmassy or their favourite clothes on Friday 10th December. If your child could bring a donation (we suggest £1) towards FOAS funds that would be great. For this they will also be entered into a draw to receive one of Alverton's famous fun-filled jars or a delicious treat! Funds raised are for the exciting music room target we are so close to achieving.







## Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust has its own Out of Hours telephone support provided by Support Matters Cornwall. This service operates from 5pm to 9am on weekdays and 24 hours a day at weekends and bank holidays. The service is open to all patients (aged 16+) under the care of the Trust's mental health services. Support can be delivered over the telephone, via text, email or web chat. Call free on **0800 001 4330**.



Family  
Line

0808 802 6666



Download this image onto your phone for **when you might need help**



**Samaritans:** 24h  
Emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.

☎ **116 123**

**Shout:** 24h  
Text service, free on all major networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.

• If you're over 18, text the word **SHOUT**  
• Under 18s, text **YM**

☎ **Text: 85258**

### Cornwall's 24/7 NHS mental health support

Call for free, any time day or night if you are worried about your own or someone else's mental health. The team behind the 24/7 open access telephone service will listen to you and determine how best to help

☎ **0800 038 5300**

### Valued Lives:

Supports people who are experiencing mental or emotional distress in Cornwall. Every day, 5.30pm - midnight.

☎ **01209 901438**

If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger call **999**



🌐 [www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth)

If you're worried about a child:

☎ **0808 800 5000**  
✉ **help@nspcc.org.uk**  
🌐 **www.nspcc.org.uk**

### Penzance CTIPA Foodbank

The CTIPA Foodbank in Penzance provides food for anyone in need. If their support would be helpful to you, just phone Vryan or Adele in the office in confidence on 01736 364087 and they can phone the Foodbank for you who will be able to help.

The Foodbank are extremely busy at the moment and are very grateful for any donations.

citizens  
advice

0344 411 1444

**ON YOUR SIDE  
NO MATTER WHAT**

☎ **0800 58 58 58** 🌐 **THECALMZONE.NET/WEBCHAT**

5PM-MIDNIGHT | FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | ANONYMOUS



"It's alright to ask for help"

**SAMARITANS**

☎ **116 123**

**NATIONAL DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE HELPLINE  
0808 2000 247  
24/7 CONFIDENTIAL  
FREEPHONE**

**AT HOME  
SHOULDN'T  
MEAN  
AT RISK**

#YOUARENOTALONE

FIND SUPPORT AT:  
[gov.uk/domestic-violence](http://gov.uk/domestic-violence)

**WCWAid**

West Cornwall Women's Aid

**01736 367539**

<https://www.wcwaaid.co.uk/helpline>



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to popular songs or soundbites (often for comic purposes), enhanced with filters, effects and text. Designed with young people in mind, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity in 2019 and has featured near the top of download charts ever since. It now has around a billion users worldwide.

## AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Most videos appearing on a child's feed are light-hearted and amusing. However, some clips have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, themes of suicide and self-harm, or young teens acting in a sexually suggestive way. The sheer volume of uploads is impossible to moderate entirely – and since TikTok Jump's introduction in mid-2021, users can view third-party content outside the app.

18

CENSORED

## EXPLICIT SONGS

TikTok primarily revolves around videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to music. Inevitably, some featured songs will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the app's young user-base, there is a risk that children may view older users' videos and then be inclined to imitate any explicit language or suggestive actions.

W&A#

## TIKTOK FAME

The app has created its own celebrities: Charli D'Amelio and Lil Nas X, for example, were catapulted to fame by exposure on TikTok – leading to many more teens attempting to go viral and become 'TikTok famous'. While most aspiring stars hoping to be 'the next big thing' will find it difficult, setbacks may in turn prompt them to go to even more drastic lengths to get noticed.

BEHAR

## HAZARDOUS VISIBILITY

Connecting with others is simple on TikTok – including commenting on and reacting to users' videos, following their profile and downloading their content. The majority of these interactions are harmless, but – because of its abundance of teen users – TikTok has experienced problems with predators contacting young people.

## ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social media, TikTok is designed to be addictive. It can be hugely entertaining – but that also makes it hard to put down. As well as the punchy nature of the short video format, the app's ability to keep users intrigued about what's coming next means it's easy for a 5-minute visit to turn into a 45-minute stay.

## IN-APP SPENDING

There's an in-app option to purchase 'TikTok coins', which are then converted into digital rewards for sending to content creators that a user likes. Prices range from 99p to an eye-watering £99 bundle. TikTok is also connected with Shopify, which allows users to buy products through the app.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE CONTENT

Assuming your child is above TikTok's age limit, talk to them about what they've viewed on the app. Ask their opinion on what's appropriate and what isn't. Explain why they shouldn't give out personal details or upload videos which reveal information like their school or home address. In the long run, teaching them to think critically about what they see on TikTok could help them to become social-media savvy.

### MAINTAIN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The default setting for all under 18s' accounts to 'private'. Keeping it that way is the safest solution: it means only users who your child approves can watch their videos. The 'Stitch' (which lets users splice clips from other people's videos into their own) and 'Duet' (where you build on another user's content by recording your own video alongside their original) features are now only available to over 18s. This might clash with your child's ambitions of social media stardom, but it will fortify their account against predators.

### LEARN ABOUT REPORTING AND BLOCKING

With the correct privacy settings applied, TikTok is a relatively safe space. However, in case something does slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report inappropriate content and get them to come to you about anything upsetting that they've seen. TikTok allows users to report anyone breaching its guidelines, while you can also block individual users through their profile.

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

'Family Pairing' lets parents and carers link their own TikTok account to their child's. Through your mobile, you can control your child's safety settings remotely – including limiting screen time, managing their ability to exchange messages (and with whom) and blocking a lot of age-inappropriate content. TikTok's Safety Centre also provides resources for parents and carers to support online safety among families. These resources can be found on their website.

### USE RESTRICTED MODE

In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' section, you can filter out inappropriate content (specific content creators or hashtags, for instance) using 'Restricted Mode'. This can then be locked with a PIN. You should note, though, that the algorithm moderating content isn't totally dependable – so it's wise to stay aware of what your child is watching.

### MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child to manage their time on it in the 'Digital Wellbeing' section. Under 'Screen Time Management', you can limit the daily permitted time on the app (in increments ranging from 40 minutes to two hours). This preference can also be locked behind a PIN. That way, your child can get their regular dose of TikTok without wasting the whole day.

## Meet Our Expert

Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



**NOS**  
**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

SOURCES: TikTok.cpm



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



@natonlinesafety



/NationalOnlineSafety



@nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 03.11.2021

There is a lot of help and advice available to help you keep your children safe online. Have a look at the Online Safety section of our website for lots of useful information and links [http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/online\\_safety\\_for\\_families/246722](http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/online_safety_for_families/246722). Your child's teacher will also always be happy to talk to you



## Free School Meals / Pupil Premium

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/>

Registering a child as eligible for free school meals (as described below) means that your child receives a free meal every day (though they can, of course, bring a packed lunch should they prefer) but there are additional benefits too. Pupil Premium brings more money into the school to help children achieve and learn. Children in receipt of the Pupil Premium also receive other benefits (eg contributions towards Key Stage 2 camps and funding to use for uniform, music lessons, trips etc). At some times, there are further benefits for these children such as food vouchers during holiday times where these are given. Please see the Pupil Premium Provision Map in the Pupil Premium section of our website [http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/pupil\\_premium/172518](http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/pupil_premium/172518) or speak to Mrs Gill or Mrs Stacey in the office or contact Mrs Wicks who leads our Pupil Premium provision.

The easiest and quickest way to apply for free school meals is online through the Cornwall Council website but, if you are unable to do this, you can call the Free School Meals team on 01872 323298 and a member of the team will call you back to complete the application over the phone.

A child is eligible for free school meals if their parent / carer (or the child themselves) receives any of the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seekers' Allowance (Income-Based) and equal based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) and equal based Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit (GPC)
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) Support
- Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get) as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods

If you are claiming the benefits listed below you are NOT eligible for free school meals, regardless of what other benefits / credits are being claimed:

- Working Tax Credit
- Contribution-Based Job Seeker's Allowance and / or Contribution-Based Employment and Support Allowance

NB All Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative, regardless of what benefits are being claimed. However, some children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 may also have an entitlement to benefits-related free school meals and it is important to apply for these if you think your child may be eligible.

Registering for free school meals / Pupil Premium is confidential. If you think that your child is eligible, we strongly recommend that you contact Cornwall Council as detailed above. Mrs Gill and Mrs Stacey in the office will also be able to help you and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.



WHO DARES WORKS

Invites you to our...

# FREE Community Christmas Party

Pirates Rugby Ground, Penzance (Marquee)

Wednesday 15th December 2021

4pm - 7pm

- Entertainment
- Festive food & drinks
- Decoration making
- Make your own Christmas Card
- Meet Santa
- Plus more festive fun



☎ 01872 300236

✉ [whodaresworks@activeplus.org.uk](mailto:whodaresworks@activeplus.org.uk)

The Who Dares Works project is led by Active Plus and delivered by a group of Social Enterprises based in Cornwall. The project is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund.





## Christmas Active Holiday Club

**20th - 23rd December 2021**

Mounts Bay Academy TR18 7JT



**FREE HOT MEAL  
INCLUDED**

Our Christmas programme promises to deliver massive amounts of fun, play and activity! Our full program will provide children the chance to discover a new range of exciting activities that will be engaging, lots of activity, new games, play, wellbeing and much more.

**10.00am - 2.00pm**

**To Book:** Go to [playwaze.com](https://playwaze.com), create an account for your child and search 'Mounts Bay'

**Contact us at:** [summercamp@mountsbay.org](mailto:summercamp@mountsbay.org)

We are delighted to offer a Christmas Holiday Camp. The programme is designed to support children's social, physical, and wellbeing skills. It is free of charge for Free School Meals (FSM) students. Children can attend as many days as they would like.

**£10 per day  
FSM free**

(Open to KS2, 3 and 4)



playwaze



Department  
for Education

