

9th February 2017

To Parents and Guardians of children in Nursery – Year 6

Headmaster: R.W. Bool BA MBA

Dear Parents and Guardians

Developing Technology and 'Apps'

The speed in the development of information and communication technology means that, as parents and teachers, we can often find it hard to keep up with the latest trends, websites and apps that the pupils and those around them are using.

As you know we take very seriously our duty to educate the pupils to use these technologies sensibly, safely and to make the most of the advantages that they offer. However, on occasion, we feel it is important that we draw your attention to platforms we have come across that are being used which we consider may have a significantly negative impact.

Of particular concern to us at the moment is an app called 'Musical.ly'.

What is musical.ly?

[Musical.ly](#) is a popular app for creating 15-second music videos. How it works is that children select snippets of popular songs and record themselves singing, lip-syncing or dancing. Some children skip the music and perform 15-second comedy skits. Once they finish recording, children can add effects/filters and share them on Musical.ly as well as other popular social networks.

To grow their fan base, teens can share their videos anywhere. Musical.ly encourages users to post on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, WhatsApp, and Vine. They can also save their video to their camera roll and post on other online communities. The goal for many users or "musers" is to have a featured video. Featured videos are chosen by Musical.ly and appear on the Featured Feed. These chosen videos garner more likes and fans.

On Musical.ly, all accounts are public by default. This means when children post a video, everyone can see it. Also, anyone can follow them. Most accounts are public. In settings, children can change their account to private. With a private account, only approved followers can see their creations.

The dangers this app poses:

We have become aware that many pupils in the School, mainly in Year 5 and 6, use this app despite the age advice of 13. Whilst we appreciate that it allows the children to have a creative platform and have fun with their friends, there have been several issues that have spilt over into school.

The first is that the app creates a forum for children to message each other. Comments that have been made publically, which others then add fuel to, have led to some upset once in school. There is a risk that this could lead to bullying.

The second issue that has raised concern is that children have been doing 'Live' performances, which can again be seen publically, either dressed in school uniform or in inappropriate clothing.

As you are aware we take great care to teach the children about the dangers of the internet as well as the positives and every year we teach them about staying SMART as well as providing E-safety workshops for Year 5 and 6. We have addressed this in School by talking to the pupils about the threats to their safety that this type of app can pose but it will be very important for parents and families to also monitor and advise their children. We are not saying that the children should not use this app, but simply want to make parents aware of the potential dangers so that you can address these with your child and check how they are using the app and their privacy settings.

We advise all parents to be aware of the apps that their child has on his/her mobile devices and how they are being used. It is important that we are all frequently reinforcing messages about safe and responsible IT use and the potentially serious problems that inappropriate behaviour online can cause. It is also very important that we are teaching the pupils the importance of setting tight security on anything that they post on any social network site.

We very much want to work in collaboration with parents on this crucial element of the education of their children and would be very happy to talk with you about any specific concerns you may have.

Listed below are a few of the many websites that are available giving useful information and advice:

www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.knowthenet.org.uk

Below I have also added some screen shots from The Cyber Safety Lady, which gives further advice about this app.

Is Musical.ly Safe For Kids?

Posted on March 30, 2016 by Leonie Smith • 15 Comments

Updated 1st Sept 2016

What Is It?

Musical.ly 13+ is a free social media music app where users can watch user generated lip sync video, and create video themselves lip-syncing or dancing to music available on the app. It has over 80 millions users. Choose your music, or mix someone else video and create your own short music or audio video using filters and video styles. It is a fun lip-sync style app, where users can mime and dance to music they choose from within the app or create their own music videos.

Users can also live stream to their Musical.ly friends/followers via Musical.ly's add on app Live.ly which is also free and available for download only from the Apple app store.

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Is Musical.ly Safe ...html
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Age Ratings For Musical.ly & Live.ly

Although both apps are listed on iTunes as 12+ Musical.ly's own terms of use as seen below specify you must be at least 13 years of age or ... 18 years of age. It's not clear weather it's 13years or 18years. See Below.

terms of use

e. Eligibility - THE SERVICE IS NOT FOR PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 13 OR FOR ANY USERS PREVIOUSLY SUSPENDED OR REMOVED FROM THE SERVICE BY THE COMPANY. IF YOU ARE UNDER 13 YEARS OF AGE, YOU MUST NOT USE OR ACCESS THE SERVICE AT ANY TIME OR IN ANY MANNER. Furthermore, by using the Service, you affirm that you are at least 18 years of age.

2. The Service

a. Description - Subject to the Company's potential blocking of certain content owned or controlled by the third parties, which blocking you hereby

SAFETY FOR STUDENTS EDUCATORS & PARENTS.

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The Cyber Safety Lady
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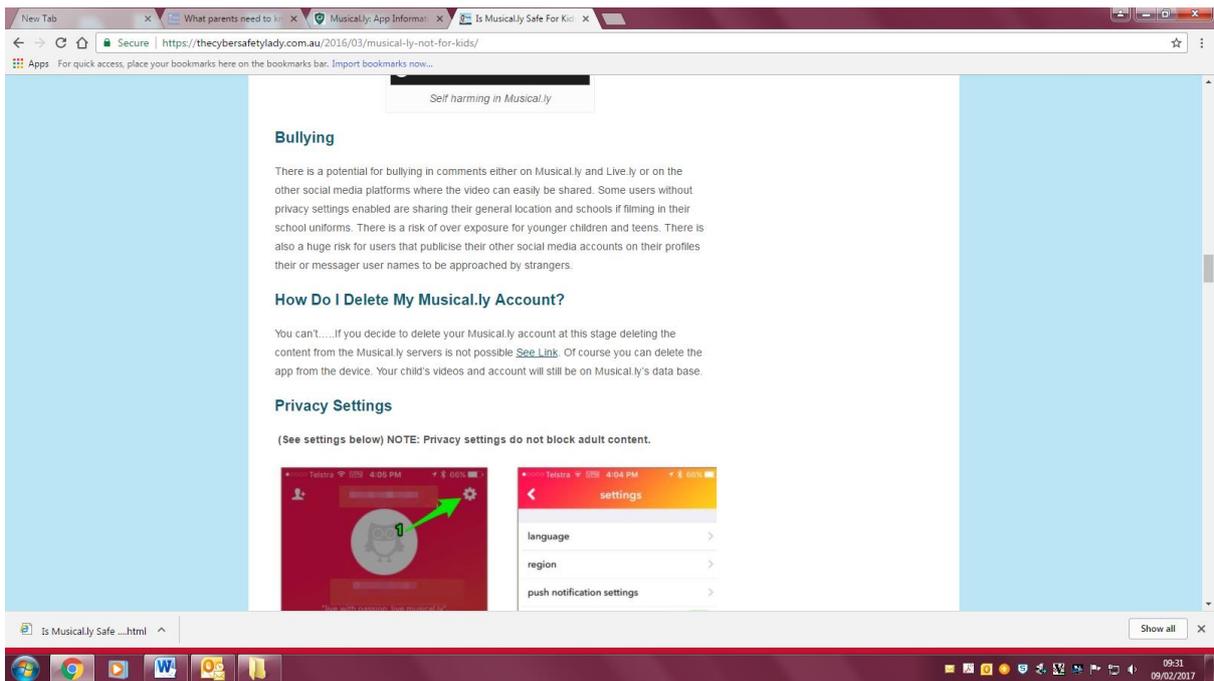
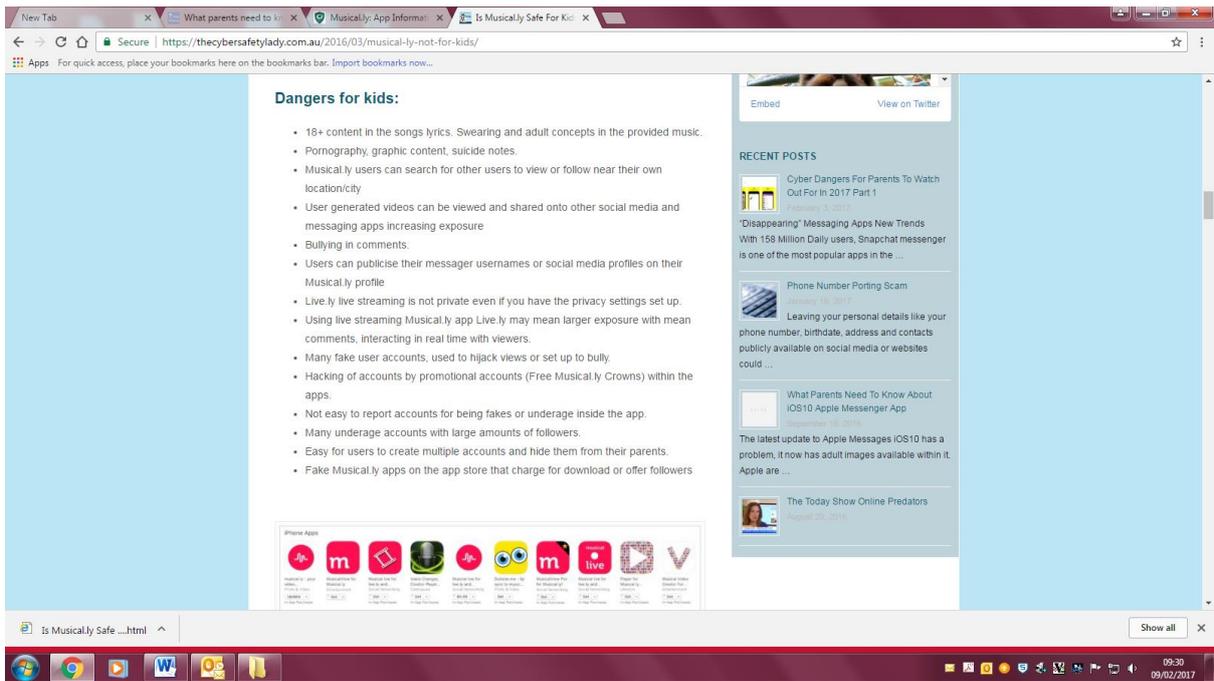
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The Cyber Safety Lady
February 7 at 8:15am

Wrote about this before, more people getting caught up in this Mobile Phone Number porting scam! Top Tip: Don't use your real birthdate on Facebook! Change it now! Scammers need your date of birth and street address to take over your mobile phone number and then hack

Is Musical.ly Safe ...html
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If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

J Shackel

Mrs J. Shackel

Head of Junior School