

Our ref: SG/LMA/LFo

14<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

**Re: A Safer Guide to Live Streaming Apps**

We have been provided with the pages below regarding online safety around live streaming apps and would like to share these with you, particularly as we head into the Christmas holiday season.

Please take time to read this information and share it with your children. A copy of this notice will also be uploaded to our Safeguarding webpage on the School's website for your future and ongoing reference.

As always, should you have any concerns about your child's social media usage please feel free to contact us or report to the police on 101.

With kind regards,



**Mr L Martin**

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# The **h<sup>2</sup>b**<sup>®</sup> safer guide to Live Streaming Apps

You can now broadcast from anywhere in the world, to anywhere in the world for free using the device in your back pocket.

Do you know the difference between live.ly and live.me? Read on and keep children in your care safer online.



## Instagram

Instagram launched its 'live' feature in the UK in January 2017. Users can broadcast live to their followers through their Instagram Story, viewers can then react with comments **displaying words or emojis**. **Once you have finished broadcasting, videos can then also be saved to your 'story', which allows them to be viewed for 24 hours once broadcast.** You can also join in and be part of other user's broadcasts.

### **What should parents/carers be aware of?**

- The minimum age to use Instagram is 13, however there are younger users on the platform.
- There are currently no monetisation features on Instagram Live, however viewers can comment and like the broadcast.
- Instagram Live settings are linked to the Instagram Story settings, including who can see your Story, who can share your story and if message replies are allowed or not.

### **Safety Settings**

- **Setting your profile to 'private' means that users have to be approved before they can see your live stream.**
- You are able to report a user's Story for inappropriate content such as Self Injury, Bullying, Nudity, Violence and more.

# Periscope

Periscope is a live-streaming app owned by Twitter, producing a way to broadcast live from your phone. With the tagline 'Explore the world through the eyes of somebody else', it led the way for international live-streaming and left competitors scrambling to keep up.

For example, users can log in and instantly view the Thanksgiving Parade in New York and then swipe to join an African Safari. Twitter makes news instantaneous and Periscope takes you there.

When users are broadcasting, they are able to see comments and likes from their viewers. It is important to note that all broadcasts are public by default, although you can broadcast privately to a selected group of users.

## **What should parents/carers be aware of?**

- **The minimum age to use periscope is 13. However there is no age verification when you sign up and so users can simply enter a different birthday.**
- Viewers can send 'Super Hearts' to broadcasters. Super Hearts are in-app purchases and when sent, the broadcaster will receive 70% of the cash value, which broadcasters can withdraw monthly.
- Due to the monetisation of Periscope, there is an incentive for broadcaster's behaviour to be dictated by the paying audience. If the young person broadcasting wants more super-hearts, they may be pressured into inappropriate behaviour.
- Incidentally, viewers are also exposed to inappropriate content. While it is possible to report content for Sexual Content, Violence or Self Harm, you have to view the video in order to do so.

## **Safety Settings**

- The automatic broadcasting privacy setting is 'Public'. You can change this by tapping 'Public' at the top of the screen and choosing a group. You can create groups with only your friends and family in them to control who sees your broadcast.
- **Users can find you on periscope with your e-mail address, you can disable this function in 'Settings'.**
- Users can moderate comments and therefore hide inappropriate messages.





Musical.ly can be downloaded for free on a smart phone and is used for creating and sharing short videos, first introduced in 2014. It is popular with users who want to sing along or lip-sync with their favourite songs.

#### What should parents/carers be aware of?

- The minimum age limit for using Musical.ly is 13.
- When an account is first created, it is public until you change your privacy settings.

#### Safety Settings

Safety settings can be added on both Apple and Android devices. By going to the settings menu and choosing the settings you wish to change such as;

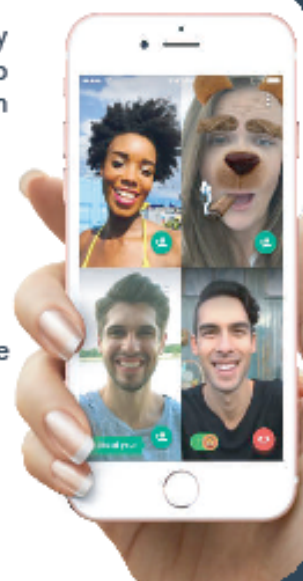
- *'Only friends can direct.ly me'* – This means that only people who you have said you know can send you messages.
- *'Hide Location Info'* – Any posts will not share your location to followers.
- *'Private account'* – this means that people can't follow you without your approval, without approval they cannot see the videos posted from your account.



The Live.ly app was launched in 2016, as an addition to the already popular app Musical.ly. The app allows users to broadcast clips of up to 15 seconds to viewers all over the globe, from their own bedroom and has the potential for global reach for the live broadcaster.

#### Safety Settings

- It is **not possible** to **privatise your account on Live.ly**.
- You can choose who sends live comments during a broadcast – while is it automatically set to everyone at default you can change it to 'people I follow' or 'none'.
- Users are required to be 13 years old and above in order to use the app, and although there are age verification measures upon signing up, it is relatively easy to enter a fake name or age to enable yourself to sign up to the app.





Twitch is a site used by gamers where they can live-stream the game that they're playing, along with a video feed of themselves. Users can follow broadcasters for free, or else subscribe to the channel for a fee. Gamers can get paid from streaming.

#### **What should parents/carers be aware of?**

- Whilst it may seem harmless, many of the games being played have violent content, e.g. Call of Duty, which has a rating of 18+.
- There is a chat room that runs alongside the gaming. While it does have moderators, content can only be moderated after it is posted.
- There is advertising that runs alongside the site.
- Twitch Prime – as Twitch is owned by Amazon, it has a prime feature which comes free with an Amazon Prime account. With a Twitch Prime account you will get access to extra features and ad-free viewing.
- Twitch's Terms of Service state that if you are between the ages of 13 and 18, you may only use Twitch under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian.
- **There isn't a filter for child-friendly channels but many channels are known for being appropriate for all audiences.**
- Watch a channel for about 15 to 20 minutes on different occasions to get a sense of whether it is appropriate for your child or not.
- Whisper is a way of chatting privately with other users, you can limit who can whisper to you (see below).
- While Twitch is largely a Gaming site, there is a section called 'IRL' (In Real Life) where broadcasters will often do things for money, this can involve alcohol and other content which may not be suitable for younger children.

#### **Safety Settings**

- There is a report button beside the user's stream, however you can only report a user once you are logged in.
- Certain words can be set as blocked in the chat, for example swear words.
- In Settings, you can Block Messages, Whispers and Invites from strangers.



Live.Me is a live streaming app where users can post videos in real time. Viewers can leave comments and gifts on other users videos. Users can be found by name or by nearby location.

#### **What should parents/carers be aware of?**

- Initially when downloading Live.me, it states that users should be over 17 years of age. Despite this when downloading the app those under 17 can easily sign up for an account, even using their real age. All that is needed is a phone number or a social media account to be able to sign up. The 17 age limit is not enforced anywhere on their sites.
- Live.me is a virtual world of likes and gifts where easers could easily instruct children, to act inappropriately in return for these gifts.
- Users have limited control over who can view their posts.
- Safety settings are not clearly obvious on the menu.
- Live.Me uses geo-location so it shares the broadcaster's exact location.

#### **Safety Settings**

- Live.me website says that if a user wants to report inappropriate or offensive content that they should take a screenshot and e-mail it to them.
- There is an option to hide information about yourself, such as birthday school, interests, work and location.
- Account owners can block certain users from commenting on their broadcasts





**Facebook Live** was launched in 2016, and any person, public figure or page can go live and broadcast directly from their device to those watching. The videos can show up in the newsfeed of their friends and followers – depending on the broadcaster’s privacy settings.

#### **What should parents/carers be aware of?**

- As with any live streaming app, live content cannot be moderated and is often at the hands of the person broadcasting.
- The video remains on your Facebook stream after it has ended.
- The privacy settings make it possible to stream to just friends and family using pre-set lists.
- Like any post, the broadcast can be shared on Facebook by whoever is watching.

#### **Safety Settings**

- When streaming a video the broadcaster is prompted to write a description and select an audience. This audience can be ‘public, ‘friends’ ‘friends except...’.



YouTube Live is intended as an additional way to help content creators interact with their audience. Broadcasters can earn revenue by enabling ads, using Superchat or sponsorship.

#### **What should parents/carers be aware of?**

- As with any live stream content is live and therefore hard to moderate, so it is important to be aware that their content may be inappropriate for all audiences.
- To be able to use YouTube live on mobile a channel must have over 25 subscribers

#### **Safety Settings**

- You can remove or flag comments on a live stream, individual users can be blocked or put in time out.
- A moderator can be assigned to manage the chat when there is a large audience.
- Live streams can be set to Public, Unlisted or Private.



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