



TikTok Information Technologies UK Limited
Kaleidoscope Building
4 Lindsey Street
EC1A 9HP

Dame Caroline Dinenage MP,
Chair, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee,
House of Commons,
London
SW1A 0AA

28th May 2026

Dear Caroline,

Thank you again for inviting TikTok to appear in front of your Committee last month. As discussed with the Clerks, I'm following up on some of the issues where Members asked for further information in writing.

We are proud of the role TikTok has in supporting the UK media ecosystem by driving discovery, whether of shows to watch or talent to scout. This includes helping drive new audiences to traditional broadcasters, such as our Spotlight tools, developed to enable broadcasters to identify content created around their programmes and link it to their own platforms. This was used very successfully by the BBC during the Traitors, and was described by Fiona Campbell, Controller, Youth Audience, BBC iPlayer as "*a window onto the future of television*".¹ TikTok has also been hugely important at finding the next generation of talent, including within the kids TV space, for example, [Shini Muthukrishan](#), who started out making posts on TikTok which led to her role as a Blue Peter Presenter, or [Hannah Lowther](#), who went from filming herself dancing in the isles during her shifts at Tesco's to being given an audition for the Heathers musical leading to a now successful West End career.

While the Committee's questions during the oral evidence session focused almost exclusively on safety (a topic also covered by both other Committees with direct remits in this area, such as the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee), TikTok remains keen to engage with the Committee on these important topics which are material to the lifeblood of the UK's creative and cultural sectors.

Red vs Blue

Vicky Foxcroft requested further information on the timeline related to the so-called 'Red vs Blue' case. As mentioned at the Committee, the [BBC has described this as a 'phantom trend'](#) i.e. something that appeared to have been a hoax with no intended real-world activity. However, to be clear, even though the veracity of content posted online could not be determined, we still took

¹ Remarks made to panel at Content London, May 2025

this risk very seriously and took urgent action to combat any encouragement, or suggestion of encouragement to violence.

We originally received outreach from the police on 15th February noting a small number of posts they had identified on our platform. Many of these were crudely edited posts based on screenshots, often taken from other platforms such as Snapchat. We immediately began work to identify and remove content, including deploying tools to find similar content.

On February 19th we began to receive media enquiries on the issue, resulting in media stories increasing over the following days. This was coupled with the Met Police alerting parents to the activity online, though not naming any specific platforms. As of 19th February, when significant media coverage began, the number of violative videos we had identified was fewer than 10 and user interest was very low, with fewer than 50 searches for the term "school wars" and no prevalence of this kind of content in For You Page Feeds.

As a result of the increase in media coverage, we saw a significant increase in both the creation of this type of content and searches for it. Following this increased prevalence, we established a dedicated group within our Trust and Safety team on 19th February that triggered a number of measures we utilise in high-risk scenarios. This includes blocking or banning over 500 relevant search terms.

At its peak, searches for the content had increased by around 3500% compared to before the media coverage occurred. As a result of the interventions we made, we managed to reduce this number swiftly. By the end of the escalation period, on 12th March we had identified and removed nearly 2000 posts related to the trend and banned over 70 accounts for violating our community guidelines.

It is worth noting that, as with many such events, the type of content we saw on the platform evolved over time. Actual posts containing encouragement to violence remained relatively low-scale. Most of the content being reviewed by our teams during the full escalation period was potential 'counter speech' (for example, people warning others not to take part) or users calling out the original videos as a hoax. This kind of content often requires complex judgements to determine whether they are genuine warnings or attempts to further promote an issue.

Creator fund

Damien Hinds asked about the criteria for our Creator Rewards Programme (CRP) and how and when people are paid out of the programme.

There are several criteria that make someone eligible for the programme, including a requirement for the creator to have over 10k followers and have at least 100k views in the past 30 days. Users must also be over 18 and to meet criteria that ensure they are in good standing and unlikely to breach our Community Guidelines. Content posted must also be 'high quality' content that is original and meets our rules. The content cannot include, for example, content copied from other users, sponsored content or content reproduced from other creators with minor changes.

How creators are paid out of the fund is based on a complex and commercially sensitive formula. This assesses metrics such as watch duration (how much of a piece of content is viewed), originality and audience engagement. During the exchange with Mr Hinds he asked specifically what counted as a 'watch' and its role in assessing payouts. Whilst for some metrics a 'watch' can be counted based only on a partial viewing of the content, for the CRP it is not as binary as simply assessing whether a piece of content is watched or not. Instead, the system considers both duration of video has been watched and 'video completion' (i.e. watched all the way through) as part of the formula. Further information can be found [here](#).

Parental controls

Members asked about the number of under 18 users whose accounts are linked under our family pairing tools.

We have previously disclosed to Ofcom [here](#). Please note that this disclosure is based on mid-2023 data and so does not represent an up-to-date assessment.

It is also important to highlight, as discussed during the hearing, that it would be incorrect to assume that these figures represent an accurate picture of how parents manage their children's screen time. Research we have conducted showed that parents have a high awareness of TikTok's family pairing tools, and that many who do not use them choose not to do so because they use alternative tools, such as those built into mobile devices. Of those that don't use any form of family pairing, other research conducted by TikTok suggests that almost half (45%) do not view them as being necessary for their child and a further 39% say they manage usage via other techniques. Ofcom research suggests that 81% of parents use at least one form of parental control to manage their teens online activity.

It may also be helpful to know that we have recently funded research, from the [University of East London](#), examining how families use the parental control tools offered by a wide range of online platforms. Professor Julia Davidson and her team will be speaking with parents across the UK to understand their relationship with the parental controls provided by many online platforms. We understand that the team anticipates publishing their work later this year.

In TikTok's view, it is important that we continue to develop the best-in-class family pairing tools, and we continue to explore information and control we can give to parents. It is ultimately, however, up to individual parents how they choose to engage in the different tools available to them and their child.

Under-age removals

Vicky Foxcroft asked about the number of under 13s removed from our platform as a percentage of our total UK users. We have previously [disclosed to Ofcom](#) data for 2023 showing that underage removals accounted for just over 1% of our active user base.

Mechanisms for preventing Under 13s on our platform

As noted during the Committee, TikTok also remains the only major platform to regularly and transparently [publish](#) how many under 13 users we remove on a quarterly basis. We believe that this information is an important part of enabling policymakers to understand our platform's work to prevent underage users. Other platforms being required to publish this data would also provide policymakers with the ability to compare these efforts across the sector.

TikTok takes a comprehensive approach to age assurance so we can provide teens with the safest and most age-appropriate experience. We use a multi-layered approach to privacy preserving age assurance, which we believe is one of the most effective ways to determine the age of our user base. This approach includes, among other things, technology that considers signals from the user to estimate their age. For example, we will look at the age profile of the content they view, or if they reference an upcoming birthday in a comment. We leverage pre-existing data, rather than demanding new information, to limit the amount of data requested in line with data protection principles.

In the UK, we have also deployed extensive and robust age assurance measures aimed at addressing underage access to and use of the platform, including the "safe for minors by default". Under this approach, all users, regardless of the age provided at sign-up, are prevented from accessing age restricted content unless and until our age estimation technology has assessed that they are over 18.

Furthermore, to ensure that teens are old enough to be on the platform and are in the right experience for their age, we use technology to predict whether a person falls within a certain age range. If it doesn't match the date of birth provided at sign up, a moderator can review the account.

We also train our moderation teams to be alert to signs that an account may be used by a child under the age of 13. If they're reviewing content for another reason but suspect an account belongs to an underage user, they can send it to our specialised review team with deeper expertise on age assurance. Since judging age can be complex, our teams are instructed to err on the side of caution when making enforcement decisions. When in doubt, we will remove an account we suspect may be under 13.

Users who appeal against a ban based on our assessment of their age can provide us with further evidence by use of facial recognition checks provided by Yoti, provision of credit card authorisation or providing us with a form of Government ID.

News prominence and Ofcom

You asked about any discussions we have had with Ofcom about prominence of news content. In 2025 we met with Ofcom to provide an overview of our thoughts on this topic as part of a wider conversation during Ofcom's PSB review and have also engaged in a roundtable they held. More widely, and as also briefly noted in the Committee session, we have developed close

partnerships with a number of broadcasters and other media institutions to ensure that they can be confident of utilising the discovery elements of our platform.

Since then, our primary focus has been engaging directly with publishers to build tools to support their journalists. This includes new features, such as 'Article Link' which enables news publishers to embed links to articles within TikTok video posts, helping to drive traffic to their websites. Feedback from these institutions has been positive, and we have seen a number of UK news media organisations grow rapidly on our platform.

While we do take steps to ensure that when users are looking for news content they will see credible, authoritative news sources, we do remain concerned that seeking to apply traditional definitions of prominence for Public Service Broadcasters to a platforms like ours (where most content is accessed via a recommended feed) would cause significant complexity and likely have a negative impact on other media institutions, such as newspapers who are successfully developing ways of engaging on our platform.

10pm winddown feature

Finally, you asked for additional information on our 10pm winddown feature, which is on by default for all users under 18. This feature was initially rolled out for under 16s. During that time, 98% of users chose to keep the feature switched on. As a result, we have subsequently rolled it out to all over 18s.

I hope the above provides you with the materials requested and thank you again for your time at the Committee session.

Yours sincerely,



Giles Derrington

Head of Public Affairs UK, TikTok