



An introduction to the Online Safety Act and Protecting Children Online

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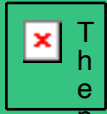
26 October 2025



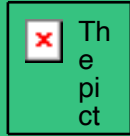
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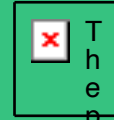
online safety priorities



Stronger governance and accountability for risks to user safety.



Children are protected from harm online, including pornography.



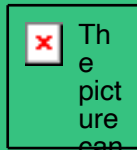
Offenders can't share child sexual abuse content and children don't face unsafe contact.



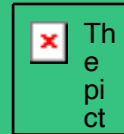
Illegal content – including hate and terror – is taken down quickly.



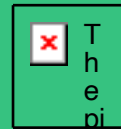
Women and girls face less harm and abuse online.



Online fraud is reduced for people online.



All users – especially children – are empowered to have control over their online experience.



More transparency in how platforms keep users safe.

Protecting Children Online

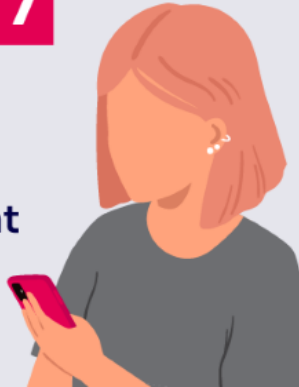


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Protection of Children – why it matters

**Three in five
teenage children
aged 13-17**

(59%) reported
encountering
potentially
harmful content
online over
a four-week
period



Children tell
us that seeing

**violent
content
online is
'unavoidable'**



**Three out of ten
8-12-year-olds**

(31%) that go online have
seen something
that they found
worrying or
nasty



Of those who have seen
online pornography, the

**average age at
which they had
first seen it was 13**

In the last month, 30% of 13-17
year-olds reported
**encountering online
harm** from scrolling through
their feed or via a 'For You' page

Children's voices have been at the heart of the approach in designing the Codes

"I don't feel like I have much control [of my feed], I would feel better if I was scrolling through knowing stuff I don't like won't happen or come up." – Child 11-12



"I think it's a good idea to keep kids under 18 restricted to what they are watching because, a lot of kids see content they shouldn't see from a young age which could scar them or give them the wrong ideas." – Boy 17

"I don't even look up anything or do anything bad on Instagram but I end up in these loopholes of really bad content." – Girl 17



"One time [a] bunch of people decided to make a group chat just to bully me and I never got the option to decline the invite... I wish I'd had the option to decline it and didn't see the messages straight away when I opened my phone." – Girl 15

Children will be better protected from harmful content online

The steps services need to take include **preventing children from encountering the most harmful content** relating to suicide, self-harm, eating disorders and pornography (PPC). Online services must also **act to protect children** from misogynistic, violent, hateful or abusive material, online bullying and dangerous challenges (PC).

The Act specifies that there are 3 kinds of “content that is harmful to children”:

Primary Priority Content (PPC)

- Suicide, self-harm or eating disorder content
- Pornographic content

Priority Content (PC)

- Abuse and hate content
- Bullying content
- Violent content
- Harmful substances content
- Dangerous stunts and challenges content

Non-designated content (NDC)

- Content (not PPC/PC) which presents a material risk of significant harm to an appreciable number of children
- Body image content and depressive content

What happens next?



Providers of services likely to be accessed by children must complete **children's risk assessments** by 24 July



Protection of children Codes are enforceable from 25 July.
All services that allow **pornography** must have HEAA from this date

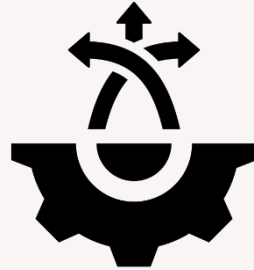


Additional safety measures consultation closes 20 October

Ofcom's age assurance approach is designed to be flexible, tech-neutral and consistent



**Criteria-based
approach**



**Flexible and tech-
neutral**



**Consistent across
our rules &
measures**

Developed through consultation with stakeholders including civil society, industry, the age assurance sector and the UK data protection regulator

What is highly effective age assurance?

Your age assurance process should meet 4 criteria:

Technical Accuracy



Robustness



Reliability



Fairness



...while having regard to:

Accessibility



Interoperability



Non-exhaustive list of methods capable of being highly effective:

- Credit card checks
- Open banking
- Photo-ID matching
- Facial age estimation
- MNO age checks
- Digital identity services
- Email-based age estimation

Keep a written record of how you have complied with your duties

Compliance with both the OS and DP regime should not be considered a trade-off

All age assurance methods involve the processing of personal data.

Follow a 'data protection by design' approach

Consult ICO guidance, including the Commissioner's Opinion on Age Assurance



Q&A

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