

Online Safety Newsletter

December 2025



What's new in the UK (important updates)

Online Safety Act: children's protections now in force (July 2025). Platforms must use effective age assurance and configure feeds and features to keep under-18s away from harmful content (e.g., self-harm, eating disorders, pornography), with Ofcom able to enforce and fine companies.

Ofcom's child-safety Codes of Practice are live. Services used by significant numbers of UK children must complete children's risk assessments and implement specific safety measures across social, search and gaming.

Media use trends: Ofcom's latest research shows very high use of games and video among 3–17s, with younger children increasingly encountering social platforms and AI tools, highlighting the need for strong parental guidance.

Hot topics to watch this term

- **Scams and fraud targeting families.** Safer Internet Day 2025 focused on recognising and avoiding online scams; talk to children about suspicious links, fake offers and requests for personal details.
- **Generative AI & deepfakes.** Keep conversations open about AI chatbots and fake media; help children check sources and report anything worrying. Guidance for families is regularly updated by NSPCC and Internet Matters.
- **Gaming safety (Roblox/Minecraft).** Use parental controls, content maturity filters and chat restrictions; keep play in shared spaces and review friend lists.

• App & game watch: quick setup guides

- **Roblox** (ages vary) Do these 5 things:
 - 1. Set a Parent PIN in Settings → Parental Controls to lock safety settings.
 - 2. Choose a content maturity level (e.g., Young/Mild/Moderate/Restricted) to filter experiences.
 - 3. Restrict chat & who can join (Friends-only or No-one).
 - 4. Set spending limits/notifications for Robux.
 - 5. Review friends/activity regularly.
- Tip: Keep accounts on child's real birth year so default protections apply.
- **TikTok** (13+ by design)
 - Use Family Pairing to link your account: - Get post notifications, view teen privacy choices (Duet/Stitch/downloads), and see Manage Topics preferences.
 - - New tools (2025) add Time Away windows and follower-list visibility to support healthy use.
- Also enable:screen-time limits and sleep reminders in the app.
- **YouTube / YouTube Kids** For under-13s, set up a supervised experience and choose Explore, Explore More or Most of YouTube; manage history, autoplay and blocked channels via Family Link/Family Centre.

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• Practical “how-to” (step-by-step)

- **On a tablet/phone:**
- **Turn on SafeSearch** in the browser and **Restricted Mode** on YouTube.
- **Install updates** and use unique passwords with 2-step verification for important accounts. (NCSC guidance endorses strong passwords like “three random words” + 2SV.)
- **Disable in-app chat** for under-10s where possible; use friends-only settings on games.
- **If a scam message appears:**
- Don’t click; screenshot and delete. Discuss why it looked suspicious (odd sender, urgency, link).



Local safeguarding & reporting

- **CEOP Safety Centre** – report online grooming or sexual abuse.
- **NSPCC Helpline (0808 800 5000) / Childline (0800 1111)** – advice and support.
- **School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – contact the DSL for support and incident logging (school policy applies). (General safeguarding practice)
- **Conversation starters for this term**
- “Which game or video made you laugh this week? What would you do if someone you don’t know messaged you there?” (Link to family agreement)
- “What topics do you want to see more/less of in your feeds?” (Relates to TikTok Manage Topics in Family Pairing.)
- “If a friend shares a ‘too-good-to-be-true’ offer online, how could we check it?” (Safer Internet Day theme – scams.)

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/>