

Internet Safety Green Paper: Voscur's digest

The Government is changing legislation to ensure the UK is the safest place in the world to be online. It is consulting on its strategy via an [Internet Safety Strategy Green Paper](#).

The Green Paper considers the responsibilities of companies to their users, the use of technical solutions to prevent online harms and the role of government, professionals and parents/carers in supporting users. It includes various proposals around increasing online safety, including:

The introduction of a social media code of practice

This code could dictate how community guidelines are developed, enforced and reviewed; ensure information about the prevention and identification of abuse is easily accessible; shore up reporting mechanisms for inappropriate, bullying or harmful content; and, set tougher standards for developing privacy policies, practices and communications. The consultation also questions which online platforms should have a code of practice.

Transparency reporting

One way of assessing the kinds of harms being experienced – and who is particularly vulnerable – is by analysing reported abuse and inappropriate behaviour. Online platforms could be required to publish or share information about how many complaints they receive, who they are from, and how the issue was dealt with. The consultation questions how much detail is needed about the nature of the abuse, the victim, and what kind of policies and processes should be put in place by the online platforms to both deal with and prevent abuse.

The introduction of a social media levy that would fund better education, training and support around Internet safety

By using funds collected from 'taxing' online platforms, the Government could ensure there is 'greater public awareness of online safety and preventative measures to counter Internet harms'. A centralised pot of money could fund peer-to-peer support networks; education programmes and resources (delivered to children both in and outside schools, to parents - and professionals that work with vulnerable people); online safety awareness campaigns and funding for innovation in safety related products and designs.

Technological solutions to online harms

This could mean enforcing inbuilt protections and safety barriers for hardware (such as smart phones, tablets and games consoles), and applying standardised safety tools to applications and online platforms. This would require UK technology companies, Internet service providers, mobile network operators and smaller firms to come together and provide the solutions to preventing online harm.

Developing digital literacy in children, parents and carers

The Government will ensure that digital literacy forms part of the new, compulsory Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education subjects in schools in England. It will also encourage peer-to-peer support programmes. It questions what role the technology industry should play in supporting digital literacy, and who should receive support and education.

Online dating

There has been significant recent public concern about children and underage young people using dating sites, which has resulted in contact abuse. The consultation seeks views on how best to prevent further incidents.

[Click here to take Voscur's express questionnaire](#)