



UK Plans Consultation on Social Media Ban for Under-16s

Description

The UK government has started a consultation about banning social media for people under 16. This is part of various actions aimed at protecting young people's wellbeing.

As part of this new plan, England's education inspectorate, Ofsted, will check phone use policies in schools. Ministers hope that most schools will be "phone-free" in the future. Australia introduced the world's first social media ban for young people in December 2025, which has made the UK consider similar actions.

Some experts and children's charities are concerned about this idea. However, many, including over 60 Labour MPs and the mother of a murdered teenager, support the ban. Esther Ghey, Brianna Ghey's mother, believes that social media limited her daughter's real-world social interactions.

Technology Secretary Liz Kendall announced that a three-month consultation will collect opinions from parents, young people, and organisations to assess the ban's potential effectiveness. The consultation will also explore stricter age checks on social media platforms and ways to reduce compulsive use.

Despite many expressing support for the ban, others, including the NSPCC, warn that it may not solve the underlying problems. They argue it could create a false sense of safety and push children towards other online dangers instead. The government is also facing pressure from the House of Lords regarding this proposed ban.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Consultation** /ˌkɒn.səl'teɪ.jən/ (noun): A meeting to discuss something or to seek advice.
2. **Inspectorate** /ɪn'spektərɪt/ (noun): An organization that inspects and evaluates.
3. **Compulsive** /kəm'pʌl.sɪv/ (adjective): Resulting from an irresistible urge often harmful.
4. **Underlying** /ˌʌn.də'laɪ.ɪŋ/ (adjective): Existing beneath or the basic cause of something.
5. **Effectiveness** /ɪ'fektɪv.nəs/ (noun): The degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result.
6. **Dangers** /'deɪn.dʒərz/ (noun): The possibility of suffering harm or injury.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice



1. What is the main objective of the UK government starting a consultation about banning social media for people under 16?

- Option: Protecting young people's wellbeing
- Option: Promoting social media use among young people
- Option: Increasing social media usage
- Option: Encouraging online interactions

2. Which organization will check phone use policies in schools as part of the new plan in England?

- Option: Ofgem
- Option: Ofsted
- Option: Ofcom
- Option: Offa

3. When did Australia introduce the world's first social media ban for young people?

- Option: December 2025
- Option: January 2020
- Option: November 2018
- Option: March 2016

4. Who expressed support for the social media ban, including over 60 Labour MPs and the mother of a murdered teenager?

- Option: Esther Ghey
- Option: NSPCC
- Option: Liz Kendall
- Option: Ofsted

5. What does the consultation led by Technology Secretary Liz Kendall aim to assess?

- Option: Effectiveness of stricter age checks
- Option: Potential drawbacks of the social media ban
- Option: Opinions of children only
- Option: Usage of online platforms

6. Who warned that the social media ban might not solve the underlying problems?

- Option: NSPCC
- Option: Esther Ghey
- Option: Ofsted
- Option: House of Lords



True-False

- 7. The UK government started a consultation to consider banning social media for people under 18.
- 8. The proposed ban includes plans to reduce compulsive use of social media.
- 9. The mother of Brianna Ghey supports the ban on social media for young people.
- 10. Ofsted will focus on assessing the academic performance of schools during the consultation.
- 11. The House of Lords is pressuring the government to implement the social media ban.
- 12. The consultation will not involve collecting opinions from parents.

Gap-Fill

- 14. The consultation led by Technology Secretary Liz Kendall will collect opinions from parents, young people, and organizations over a period of _____ months.
- 15. Some experts and children's charities are concerned that the social media ban may not solve the _____ problems.
- 16. Despite support for the ban, the NSPCC warns that it might create a false sense of safety and push children toward other online _____ instead.
- 17. Australia introduced the world's first social media ban for young people in the month of _____ 2025.
- 18. Many believe that social media limited Brianna Ghey's real-world _____ interactions.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Protecting young people's wellbeing 2. Ofsted 3. December 2025 4. Esther Ghey
5. Effectiveness of stricter age checks 6. NSPCC

True-False: 7. False 8. True 9. True 10. False 11. True 12. False

Gap-Fill: 14. three



15. underlying 16. dangers 17. December 18. social

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL3

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1. ban
2. ESL learning
3. esl news
4. Level 3
5. social media
6. under 16s

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