



[Home](#) ▾ [Society and culture](#) ▾ [Online safety](#)
▾ [Parental support for a social media minimum age of 16](#)



[Department for](#)
[Science, Innovation](#)
[& Technology](#)

Transparency data

Parental support for a social media minimum age of 16

Published 1 June 2026

Contents

[Methodology](#)

[Results](#)

[Caveats and limitations](#)

[Background](#)

Methodology

The [‘Growing up in the online world’ consultation](#) ran from 2 March 2026 to 26 May 2026 and sought views on measures to ensure children have enriching and safe digital lives. It was open to the public and could be completed via an online form on GOV.UK. A full-length version of the consultation was available to all respondents, alongside a simplified version aimed at children and young people, and another for parents. This release relates only to responses submitted via the full-length consultation.

Population

Respondents were asked whether they have a parental or caring responsibility for at least one child aged 21 or under (Question 3 of the consultation). Only respondents who answered “Yes” to this question are included in the figures below.

Question routing

Consultation respondents could nominate which chapters of the consultation that they wanted to respond to, and these questions were in ‘Chapter 2: Interventions for safer, more positive experiences.’

Respondents to Chapter 2 were first asked: “Would you support a legal requirement for social media services to have a minimum age of access? (Question 12). Those who answered “Yes” were then asked: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Social media services should have a minimum age of access of at least 16 and should not be accessible to any children under that age” (Question 13).

The figures below show the distribution of responses to Questions 12 and 13 among parents and carers of children aged 21 and under who responded to that question. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Data compilation

The dataset of consultation responses was filtered by the demographic variable indicating parenting or caring responsibilities. The counts of each response option to Questions 12 and 13 were then tabulated and converted to percentages.

Results

Of the parents and carers of children aged 21 and under who responded to Question 12 on the full-length version of the consultation, 89% supported “a legal

requirement for social media services to have a minimum age of access”.

Of these, 96% agreed to some extent that social media services should have a minimum age of access of at least 16 and should not be accessible to any children under that age.

The full breakdown is as follows:

Question 12: “Would you support a legal requirement for social media services to have a minimum age of access?”

Response	Responses	Percentage
Yes	8,443	89%
No	979	10%
Don't know / prefer not to answer	77	1%
Total	9,499	100%

Question 13: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘Social media services should have a minimum age of access of at least 16 and should not be accessible to any children under that age’”

Response	Responses	Percentage
Strongly agree	7,415	88%
Somewhat agree	671	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	40	0%
Somewhat disagree	159	2%
Strongly disagree	156	2%
Don't know / prefer not to answer	3	0%
Total	8,444	100%

Caveats and limitations

Users should note the following when interpreting these results:

Self-selecting sample

The consultation was open to anyone who chose to respond. The results reflect the views of parents and carers who were motivated to take part, and are not representative of parents and carers nationally. As with any open public consultation, respondents may differ systematically from the wider population in their views and characteristics.

Question routing

These questions were only presented to respondents who wanted to respond to Chapter 2: Interventions for safer, more positive experiences. All questions in this section were optional. Finally, Question 13 was only presented to respondents who answered “Yes” to Question 12 (i.e. those who supported a legal requirement for a minimum age of access in principle). The 96% figure therefore relates to the level of agreement with a minimum age of at least 16 among those parents and carers who opted to respond to this Chapter and already supported some form of minimum age requirement. It does not represent the views of all consultation respondents, nor all parents and carers who responded.

Full consultation only

The figures relate only to the full-length version of the consultation, not the streamlined parents’ and children’s consultations.

Status of results

These figures should be treated as provisional. A comprehensive analysis of all consultation responses will be published separately.

Background

On 28 May 2026, the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology referenced figures from the government’s [Growing up in the online world](#) consultation in a media interview. This ad hoc release publishes the underlying data and methodology in the interest of transparency.

[↑ Back to top](#)

Help us improve GOV.UK

To help us improve GOV.UK, we’d like to know more about your visit today. [Please fill in this survey \(opens in a new tab\)](#).

Cancel



Services and information

[Benefits](#)

[Births, death, marriages and care](#)

[Business and self-employed](#)

Government activity

[Departments](#)

[News](#)

[Childcare and parenting](#)

[Citizenship and living in the UK](#)

[Crime, justice and the law](#)

[Disabled people](#)

[Driving and transport](#)

[Education and learning](#)

[Employing people](#)

[Environment and countryside](#)

[Housing and local services](#)

[Money and tax](#)

[Passports, travel and living abroad](#)

[Visas and immigration](#)

[Working, jobs and pensions](#)

[Guidance and regulation](#)

[Research and statistics](#)

[Policy papers and consultations](#)

[Transparency](#)

[How government works](#)

[Get involved](#)

[Help](#) [Privacy](#) [Cookies](#) [Accessibility statement](#) [Contact](#)

[Terms and conditions](#) [Rhestr o Wasanaethau Cymraeg](#)

[Government Digital Service](#)

OGI

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



[© Crown copyright](#)

