

Media Quotes Terry Green on UK Consultation to Improve Children's Relationship With Phones and Social Media

May 4, 2026

London Deputy Managing Partner Terry Green was quoted by *News in the Channel* and *UC Advanced* regarding the UK government's consultation on how to improve children's relationships with mobile phones and social media. The consultation, which opened on March 2 and closes on May 26, includes an amendment to the current Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.

Terry commented: "The age or functionality restrictions imposed by the Government on social media platforms do not necessarily mean an outright ban for under-16s; it can range from an outright ban for under-16s, like Australia, to requirements to impose proactive technologies, similar to some that are already in the Online Safety Act. However, the recent announcement highlights the changes at pace in online safety and the difficulties for social media platforms to keep up with frequent policy changes, given recent policy announcements on AI chatbots just two months ago.

Ofcom already expects major platforms to enforce its minimum age policies through highly effective age verification. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Roblox, Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube have already been asked by Ofcom to enforce its under-13's policy, so the Government may look to extend this to beyond the biggest platforms.

Ofcom's Age-Appropriate Design Code also already requires platforms to have specific functionality restrictions and defaults to keep children safe, such as privacy and profiling defaults, switched-off geolocation and restricted direct messaging functions. The Government may look to enshrine the use of these technologies and restrictions, as well as other guidance into the Online Safety Act, similar to existing obligations to require the use of accredited and proactive technology for child sexual abuse and terrorism prevention. This will allow for stricter enforcement and greater clarity on platform obligations.

Ofcom may also take inspiration from other jurisdictions, such as a greater focus on restricting 'addictive design features' such as infinite scrolling and enhanced parental controls in the European Union, or more restrictive methods such as time and usage management tools, as implemented in

China's TikTok, where under-14 users are restricted to 40 minutes of use per day between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

We will likely see more prescriptive requirements on platform functionalities, as well as greater use of highly effective age verification for restrictions. This will also raise an important point on data privacy and the use of children's data for platforms to consider, amongst all the other changes."

"UK to Impose "some form" of Restrictions for under 16s use of Phones and Social Media," *News in the Channel*, April 29, 2026

"UK to Impose "some form" of Restrictions for under 16s use of Phones and Social Media," *UC Advanced*, April 29, 2026

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