

# ONLINE CHILD SAFETY COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

For UK businesses using social media or online platforms, it is essential to comply with online child safety and privacy rules and codes of practice under the *Online Safety Act*. Otherwise, you risk severe penalties and criminal charges. This checklist will help you identify whether your business is compliant.



**Key Tip:** Treat children's data as **sensitive by default**. If in doubt, choose the safer, privacy-first option.

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## 1. DOES THE LAW APPLY TO YOUR SERVICE?



- ☐ We operate a user-to-user service, search service or adult content service.
- ☐ Our platform, app, or site is likely to be accessed by under-18s.
- ☐ We have documented why child users are or are not expected (**note:** if not, go to Step 4).

## 2. APPLY "HIGHER PROTECTION" BY DESIGN



- ☐ Default settings put privacy and safety first (e.g. geolocation and DMs off).
- ☐ We have considered different age groups (under 13, 13–15, 16–17).
- ☐ Our service avoids nudges or design tricks that push children to share more data.
- ☐ If our service contains adult content, we have put in place processes to restrict users under the age of 18 (**note:** if this step has been implemented, go to Step 6).

## 3. COLLECT AND PROCESS RESPONSIBLY



- ☐ We only collect data that is strictly necessary.
- ☐ Privacy notices are in **plain, child-friendly language** (with visuals where possible).
- ☐ We have a clear retention policy, where children's data is not stored longer than needed.

## 4. ONLINE CONTENT MODERATION



- ☐ We have put in place processes to monitor the content that is published on our platform, app or site.
- ☐ We actively remove any content that is illegal, including content that promotes:
  - harassing
  - stalking; and
  - controlling or coercive behaviour.
- ☐ We actively remove any content that is legal but may be harmful to children, including content that encourages or promotes suicide or self-harm.

## 5. STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE



- ☐ Staff are trained on children's data obligations.
- ☐ Child privacy compliance is managed by a:
  - Senior Manager; or
  - Data Protection Officer.
- ☐ We keep a written record of how "children's best interests" are built into decisions.

## 6. STAY UPDATED



- ☐ We are monitoring ICO updates on:
  - the **Children's Code**; and
  - Online Safety Act guidance.
- ☐ We understand the risks of non-compliance, including:
  - fines; and
  - reputational harm.