

All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Children's Online Safety

Inquiry discussion and next steps

Monday 14th July 2025, online via Microsoft Teams

Members and Parliamentarians:

Gregor Poynton MP (Chair), Lord Bethell (Officer), Lord Russell (Officer), Natasha Irons MP, Jess Asato MP, Damian Hinds MP, Baroness Healy, and Tom Collins MP.

Secretariat:

Bobbie Dennis, Hannah Swirsky (Internet Watch Foundation)

Also in attendance:

Calum Fisher (Office of Gregor Poynton MP), Rachel Roberts (Office of Caroline Voaden), Linden Grigg (Office of Caroline Dinéage), Joshua Coleman (Office of Darren Paffey), and Mike MacLennan (Office of Lord Bethell).

1. Welcome

- 1.1. Gregor Poynton MP (Chair) welcomed attendees to the fifth meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Children's Online Safety.
- 1.2. The Chair reaffirmed the Group's aim to operate in the style of a select committee: setting an inquiry, taking evidence, and producing actionable recommendations.

2. Approval of previous minutes

- 2.1. Attendees noted that the recorded discussion was useful for understanding both perspectives and positions taken. The minutes were approved.

3. Discussion of Inquiry Topic

- 3.1. The group revisited four proposed areas for inquiry, previously circulated:
 - Implementation of the Online Safety Act (OSA)
 - Grooming and Radicalisation
 - Commercialisation of Childhood Online
 - Online Gaming
- 3.2. The Group agreed the proposed topics were strong and that in time, the Group should examine all of the issues.
- 3.3. It was suggested that OSA's implementation should be the primary focus, with a view to assessing its real-world impact, especially on children's online safety.
- 3.4. Many members suggested this be done through the lens of AI and emerging technologies, as these were not fully covered in the OSA but are rapidly evolving and posing new risks. Concerns around AI included:
 - Use in grooming, radicalisation, and extortion.

- Gaps in current regulation (e.g., chatbots, deepfakes, automated targeting).
 - Overlap with the anticipated AI Bill and the opportunity for the APPG to contribute to its development.
- 3.5. Members expressed interest in how tech companies are complying with new obligations under the OSA, including age assurance and app store content standards.
 - 3.6. Online gaming was recognised as an important but under-explored area, with possible links to commercialisation and online harm. It may be better suited to a secondary inquiry or standalone session.
 - 3.7. There was some scepticism about retrospective scrutiny of the OSA if it becomes a distraction from addressing emerging harms.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. The Secretariat (IWF) will draft a Terms of Reference for a proposed inquiry focused on AI and Children's Online Safety.
- 4.2. This will reflect:
 - The interaction between AI, OSA implementation, and future legislative needs.
 - Clear outcomes and session structure.
- 4.3. A draft will be circulated for member feedback.
- 4.4. The Secretariat will also propose a timeline of evidence sessions and explore options for a public launch of the inquiry.

5. AOB

- 5.1. Members agreed the group should aim for impact by producing written outputs and recommendations.
- 5.2. Emphasis was placed on the APPG's potential to shape both regulatory enforcement and future legislative proposals.
- 5.3. It was noted that other bodies are exploring AI from a creative or economic standpoint, but this APPG could uniquely focus on AI and online harm to children.

6. Closing Remarks

- 6.1. Chair thanked members for their contributions and reaffirmed the importance of translating discussion into a focused, impactful inquiry.
- 6.2. Members were encouraged to submit additional input ahead of the Terms of Reference being finalised.
- 6.3. The group will reconvene once the inquiry structure and schedule are confirmed.