

Your response

Please refer to the sub-questions or prompts in the [annex](#) to our call for evidence.

Question	Your response
Question 1: Please provide a description introducing your organisation, service or interest in Online Safety.	Mumsnet is a website for parents, with around eight million unique users every month. Based in the UK, we were founded in 2000.
Question 2: Can you provide any evidence relating to the presence or quantity of illegal content on user-to-user and search services? IMPORTANT: Under this question, we are not seeking links to or copies/screenshots of content that is illegal to hold, such as child sexual abuse. Deliberately viewing such images may be a criminal offence and will be reported to the police.	
Question 3: How do you currently assess the risk of harm to individuals in the UK from illegal content presented by your service?	
Question 4: What are your governance, accountability and decision-making structures for user and platform safety?	
Question 5: What can providers of online services do to enhance the clarity and accessibility of terms of service and public policy statements?	
Question 6: How do your terms of service or public policy statements treat illegal content? How are these terms of service maintained and how much resource is dedicated to this?	Mumsnet's terms of use state: You agree that you will not submit any User Content protected by copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret, moral right, or other

intellectual property, personal, contractual, proprietary or other right owned by a third party without the express permission of the owner of the respective right. You are solely liable for any damage resulting from your failure to obtain such permission or from any other harm resulting from User Content that you submit. You represent, warrant, and covenant that you will not submit any User Content that:

Violates or infringes in any way upon the rights of others, including, but not limited to, any copyright, trademark, moral right, or other third party right of any person or entity;
Impersonates another or is unlawful, threatening, abusive, libelous, defamatory, invasive of privacy or publicity rights, obscene, harassing or otherwise objectionable;
Contains a formula, instruction, or advice that could cause harm or injury;
The licensed use by us hereunder would result in us having any obligation or liability to any party.

Mumsnet's [talk guidelines](#) state:

Mumsnet Talk is not a pre-moderated forum. Our policy is to keep intervention to a minimum and let the conversation flow. That said, we're also here to make parents' lives easier, so where necessary, we will use our discretion to delete posts (or ban posters) if it seems to us that doing so is in keeping with this aim.

We do have a few forum rules to make sure we keep Talk a good place to hang out:

No personal attacks

No posts that break the law, including hate speech of any kind

No trolling, misleading or deliberately inflammatory behaviour

No trollhunting

No spamming

The terms of service and talk guidelines are maintained and enforced by a Community team of 14 freelance moderators and two staff members.

<p>Question 7: What can providers of online services do to enhance the transparency, accessibility, ease of use and users' awareness of their reporting and complaints mechanisms?</p>	
<p>Question 8: If your service has <i>reporting or flagging</i> mechanisms in place for illegal content, or users who post illegal content, how are these processes designed and maintained?</p>	<p>Mumsnet is a post-moderated forum, and we ask users to report posts that break our guidelines, using a 'report' button that sits below every individual post:</p>  <p>The screenshot shows a forum post by user 'Ilikecheeseontoast' dated 02/09/2022 at 14:38. The text of the post reads: "It's only his 2nd day, no one should be making such judgements so early! I'm a teacher and I'd give Reception kids a good few weeks to settle into new routines and expectations before speaking to parents about such things! Please don't worry, maybe she's a new teacher?!". Below the text is a row of interaction buttons: "Add message", "Bookmark", "Report" (highlighted with a yellow box), and a three-dot menu.</p> <p>Every report is then considered and actioned by a trained moderator.</p>
<p>Question 9: If your service has a <i>complaints</i> mechanism in place, how are these processes designed and maintained?</p>	
<p>Question 10: What action does your service take in response to <i>reports</i> or <i>complaints</i>?</p>	<p>Answer as per Q8</p>
<p>Question 11: Could improvements be made to content moderation to deliver greater protection for users, without unduly restricting user activity? If so, what?</p>	

<p>Question 12: What automated moderation systems do you have in place around illegal content?</p>	<p>Mumsnet uses AI tools to detect specific words or phrases that indicate a post is breaking our talk guidelines or terms of use. Depending on the content, the tool will either flag for a moderator’s attention and/or auto hide the post until a member of the moderation team has had the chance to look at it and take the necessary action.</p>
<p>Question 13: How do you use human moderators to identify and assess illegal content?</p>	<p>Mumsnet has a team of 14 freelance moderators and two staff members, who are on duty seven days a week. They individually review each user report, respond to flags from AI tools, and proactively monitor the site to identify illegal content or content that breaks our terms of use. We also have a coordinated team of volunteers who monitor the site overnight and are able to hide threads in response to user reports.</p>
<p>Question 14: How are sanctions or restrictions around access (including to both the service and to particular content) applied by providers of online services?</p>	
<p>Question 15: In what instances is illegal content removed from your service?</p>	<p>In all instances as soon as it is identified as such. As is made clear in our terms of use and our talk guidelines, we do not permit illegal content.</p>
<p>Question 16: Do you use other tools to reduce the visibility and impact of illegal content?</p>	<p>As above, we use AI technology to auto hide posts containing specific words or phrases that indicate a post is breaking our talk guidelines or terms of use.</p>
<p>Question 17: What other sanctions or disincentives do you employ against users who post illegal content?</p>	<p>If a user is deliberately sharing illegal content, their post will be deleted and they will be banned from the site and reported to the police.</p>

	<p>If we believe a user has inadvertently or accidentally shared illegal content, we will delete the content, but exercise discretion in terms of a ban. A member of the moderation team will contact the user in question to advise them that they have broken the terms of use and discuss the issue.</p>
<p>Question 18: Are there any functionalities or design features which evidence suggests can effectively prevent harm, and could or should be deployed more widely by industry?</p>	
<p>Question 19: To what extent does your service encompass functionalities or features designed to mitigate the risk or impact of harm from illegal content?</p>	<p>As above, we use AI technology to auto hide posts containing specific words or phrases that indicate a post is breaking our talk guidelines or terms of use.</p>
<p>Question 20: How do you support the safety and wellbeing of your users as regards illegal content?</p>	
<p>Question 21: How do you mitigate any risks posed by the design of algorithms that support the function of your service (e.g. search engines, or social and content recommender systems), with reference to illegal content specifically?</p>	
<p>Question 22: What age assurance and age verification technologies are available to platforms, and what is the impact and cost of using them?</p>	
<p>Question 23: Can you identify factors which might indicate that a service is likely to attract child users?</p>	

<p>Question 24: Does your service use any age assurance or age verification tools or related technologies to verify or estimate the age of users?</p>	<p>We do not use age assurance or age verification tools, although users can choose to share their date of birth if they register. We know from both Google Analytics and our own surveys that the vast majority of our users are over the age of 24.</p> <p>In the rare event that a user volunteers information which lets us know they are under 16, moderators will approach on a case by case basis i.e. if a pregnant 15 year old was seeking support, we would be able to direct her towards a 'real-life' service that might help at the same time as potentially suspending her account.</p>
<p>Question 25: If it is not possible for children to access your service, or a part of it, how do you ensure this?</p>	
<p>Question 26: What information do you have about the age of your users?</p>	<p>As above, we know from both Google Analytics and our own surveys that the vast majority of our users are over the age of 24.</p>
<p>Question 27: For purposes of transparency, what type of information is useful/not useful? Why?</p>	
<p>Question 28: Other than those in this document, are you aware of other measures available for mitigating risk and harm from illegal content?</p>	