

## Alarm over misogyny and violence among boys

An article in *The Times* explores concerns about increasing misogynistic attitudes and sexual misconduct among teenage boys, linking the issue to online influences such as pornography, social media and the "manosphere". The discussion follows public criticism of recent youth rehabilitation sentences imposed on boys convicted of serious sexual offences. Former safeguarding minister Jess Phillips argues that exposure to harmful online content is shaping behaviour and language towards women and girls, while teaching unions have also reported growing misogyny in schools. The article calls for earlier intervention, stronger online protections and greater efforts to address harmful attitudes before they escalate into abuse, while raising concerns about confidence in the justice system and the protection of young women.

*The Times*

## Tech executives could face prison under child online safety plans

Ministers plan to impose prison sentences on technology executives if they do not block children from accessing nudity on devices. Upcoming legislation will mandate companies like Google and Apple to prevent minors from sending, viewing, or sharing naked images, aiming to eliminate exposure to pornography and sexual content. Technology firms will have a limited timeframe to comply, with potential sanctions modelled on the Online Safety Act, which entails sentences of up to five years in prison. Some companies have already implemented measures to restrict such content, yet concerns from civil liberties groups about privacy and government control persist.

*The Times*

## Under-16s social media ban sparks mixed response

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer's announcement of a ban on social media for under-16s, expected to come into force next spring after legislation is passed later this year, has met a mixed response from opposition parties, bereaved parents and campaigners. While the Molly Rose Foundation has accused the Prime Minister of taking "the politically expedient option", other bereaved parents have welcomed the ban, while the NSPCC described the announcement as a "watershed moment for child protection, and the Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, said the debate must now shift "from banning children to banning the companies who fail to show that their services protect children's safety and wellbeing". Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch said Sir Keir's proposals are "not perfect", but said that "we can work with them to get it into a better place". The Liberal Democrats described the plans as a "hodgepodge" that won't "keep children safe, nor hold big tech's feet to the fire", while Reform UK leader Nigel Farage described them as "well-intentioned" but "unlikely to work given the mass adoption of VPNs".

*BBC News Daily Mail The I The Times*

## National smartphone ban comes into force on Monday

Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 officially comes into force on Monday - giving the Government's guidance on mobile phones in schools the full force of law, and requiring schools to ensure that pupils do not have access to their mobile phones or other smart devices throughout the school day. Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson said the Government has "been clear that mobile phones have no place in our schools but now we're going further through tougher guidance and stronger enforcement. Mobile phones have no place in schools. No ifs, no buts." Ofsted chief inspector Sir Martyn Oliver also commented, saying his "message to headteachers is you now have all the backing - and the backing of my inspectors - to ban mobile phones in schools immediately. They chip away at children's attention span, distract from learning and can be detrimental to children's wellbeing."

*BBC News Manchester Evening News Mirror.co.uk*

## Age of criminalisation could be raised to 14

A Bar Council expert review is expected this week to recommend that the age of criminal responsibility should be raised from 10 to 14 - arguing that putting younger children into the criminal justice system "undermines public safety" and increases the likelihood of reoffending. Bar Council chair Kirsty Brimelow argues that increasing the age "replaces the ineffective criminalisation of young children with interventions that evidence shows are more likely to change behaviour, protect the public and reduce future victims".

*The Observer*