

P-04-630 Facebook Regulations for Looked after Children

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government:

To update the "IRO Handbook: Statutory guidance for independent reviewing officers and local authorities on their functions in relation to case management and review for looked after children" to prevent children under the age of 13 being set up with Facebook accounts;

That concerns relating to social media be discussed as part of the Statutory Review;

That reporting provisions be made to the Welsh Government;

That the current guidance that "computer use should be monitored from time to time" be upgraded to a statutory requirement on (at least) a weekly basis.

Additional Information

When individuals set up Facebook accounts, they are asked to certify that they are 13 or over by entering a date of birth. If the date of birth shows them to be younger they are prevented from continuing.

Concerns have been raised by David Cameron, NSPCC, Police and other organisations relating to underage children accessing Facebook.

Despite the above local authorities are knowingly allowing vulnerable children as young as 9 to be set up on Facebook and access other social media

- age falsified
- privacy setting are not set
- children posting contact details
- advertising whereabouts

- sexting
- friends are not age appropriate or known by the carers/family
- Like status friends and 1,000's of followers can result in postings of a crude/sexual nature

Risks

- Fake profiles
- Illegal/harmful content or advice
- Bullying, stalking, internet grooming, content sharing
- Information privacy – personal data collection from children
- Marketing of illegal and age restricted products, gambling, dating, food and drinks.

Lead petitioner: Christine Williams

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 11