

Dangerous Online Chat Room

Omegle Safeguarding Alert

We have previously reported on dangerous online platform called Omegle and the risks it poses to children and young people who visit it. Following a [recent press release](#) and concerns from parents, carers, and safeguarding professionals, we have decided to release further information and guidance.



What is Omegle?

Omegle is a free anonymous online chatroom where users are randomly paired with strangers to chat via video call or instant messaging. It is popular, despite no longer having its own app, and is primarily accessed on a web browser. Videos showcasing Omegle chats have popped up on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which have added to its popularity with children and young people.

We consider Omegle to be a highly dangerous platform because:

- **No account sign up required** – users can join a chat immediately and are automatically paired with a complete stranger.
- **No age verification** – it says users must be 13+ with 'parental permission and supervision' but does not check this at any point.

- **No effective moderation** – it claims to use ‘AI and human moderators’, but there is little to no evidence or clarity that this is implemented.
- **No reporting or blocking features** – users are unable to report inappropriate behaviour, and offending users can continue to use Omegle freely.

While Omegle claims to take the ‘safety and well-being’ of their users seriously, they also state that “*predators have been known to use Omegle*”. Despite this, very little action has been taken to implement safeguarding measures. **This creates an environment for harmful actions such as grooming, sexual exploitation, manipulation, and abuse to take place without moderation or intervention.**

Why would a child or young person use Omegle?

Living in a digital world that erases distance between online strangers, the thought of being able to talk to anyone from anywhere might be exciting to a child or young person. They may also be curious about negative reports in the press and might want to check the platform out for themselves, to see if the reports are true.

What are the risks?

In the last year, there have been [multiple cases](#) of grooming, sexual exploitation, and indecent exposure [involving children](#) as young as 10. Our online safety experts were exposed to sexual advances within seconds of testing the platform. The following risks are very real threats that any user could be exposed to:

- **Seeing distressing, violent, or highly sexualised imagery without warning.**
- **Grooming by strangers who ‘trick’ them into performing inappropriate actions.**
- **Exposure to blackmail, sextortion, and threats which could be upsetting or scary.**

- Pressure to remove clothing, reveal personal information, or send sexual images.
- Malicious links or spam that could make them vulnerable to hackers or scammers.
- Catfishing or cyberbullying, which could cause emotional or mental duress or fear.
- Intimate images or videos being recorded without their consent or knowledge.

Red Flags to watch out for

- Sudden mention of a friend you have not heard of who does not attend school.
- Appearing withdrawn, isolated, upset, nervous, moody, or secretive.
- Long periods of screentime video chatting online in a private place.
- Being overly protective of their device

Next steps and further advice

- **Go over online safety.** Talk to the young person in your care about staying safe online and how to protect themselves.
- **Discuss responses and action plans.** Ask them what they would do if someone made them uncomfortable or worried, and talk through any cracks in the plan.
- **Don't mention the platform when discussing.** Rather than mentioning Omegle, talk about online chat platforms and ask what their friends are using.
- **Remind them of the dangers of talking to strangers.** By ensuring they recognise how dangerous they are, you help them make more informed online decisions.

- **Use online safety filters to prevent access.** Web browsers, internet providers, and more have parent filters available that can restrict access to specific websites.
- **Stay calm if a problem arises.** If a child or young person in your care has fallen victim to an online danger, remain calm and reassure them.

If a child or young person in your care has lost control of an image or video:

- Submit a report to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP).
- Contact IWF to have the image or video removed where possible online.

If your child or young person has been groomed or you have concerns about their immediate safety, contact emergency services on 999 without delay.