



From INEQE – regarding the live streaming platform TWITCH

This Safeguarding Alert has been published to support parents, carers and safeguarding professionals in protecting children and young people in their care from exposure to explicit sexual content online.

What should I do?

1. If your child is a Twitch, Reddit or TikTok user **remain calm**. They may not have seen the content.
2. Pause and take a few minutes to read, act and share the advice and guidance on this alert.

What we know

It has come to our attention that explicit sexualised content has been broadcast on the popular livestreaming platform, **Twitch**, frequently used by children and young people. The livestream showed a young woman (although we have not yet been able to verify her age) masturbating on camera. The video has since been removed from Twitch for breaking its community guidelines and the user has been banned.

We are concerned that additional posts and articles about the livestream have since emerged on Reddit, Twitter and TikTok. These include Tweets that claim to link to the original broadcast, screenshots from the livestream, TikTok posts and articles discussing the incident and subreddits containing clips from the broadcast.

This is not the first time that sexualised content has been broadcast on Twitch.

We have increasing concerns that users can continue to broadcast inappropriate and harmful content on livestream – there have been multiple reports of similar content being shared. Although this type of

content breaks 'Community Guidelines' on Twitch, banned users can simply get around this by creating new accounts with a different username.

Is Twitch Safe?

What is Twitch?

- Twitch is a popular livestreaming platform with children and young people that launched in 2011. It describes itself as a place "where millions of people come together live every day to chat, interact, and make their own entertainment".
- It currently has over 31 million active daily users and 8.5 million monthly active streamers.
- While it is not used exclusively for gaming, Twitch has become popular for gamers livestreaming themselves playing specific games, such as League of Legends, Fortnite, Minecraft and Apex Legends.

Twitch has an age restriction of age 13 under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian who 'agrees to be bound by' Twitch's Terms of Service if the user is under 18. The platform has safety measures in place, but the effectiveness of these measures has not been formally assessed.

In a report about their first year of being the official regulatory body of video sharing platforms (VSPs) in the UK, Ofcom raised several safety concerns about Twitch and the effectiveness of their safety measures.

Areas of Risks

- **Exposure to explicit sexualised content.** If livestreams are not appropriately rated by the streamer or have not been flagged to the moderation team, then children and young people may be exposed to explicit, sexual or harmful content on Twitch.
- **You do not need to create an account in order to view livestreams.** Children and young people may be able to access mature content if the original live streamer has not labelled their stream as 'Mature'.

- **Bans typically only last for 7 days.** In the case of the user who streamed sexual content, it has been suggested that this ban is indefinite. However, bans from Twitch usually only last 7 days and there are no measures in place that stop the same user from creating a new account.
- **Once an account has been made, the user is able to livestream immediately.** The account user can livestream immediately once the account has been created, as there are no effective age or identity verification processes in place.
- **There are no parental controls.** Parents and carers are not able to enable safety measures on their child or young person's account or monitor what content they are exposed to.