



Photography of children in schools Guidance 2018

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Introduction

It's important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and are able to have these moments documented via photograph and film. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children when they have been part of a special event or activity. There are many occasions in school where children will be photographed. For example, the annual school photo or those which are taken by teachers to show parents their child's development. The photography of children for a valid reason should not cause concern, however, there are potential risks associated with the photography and filming of children and therefore clear boundaries must be set in order to protect the interest of the children and their families.

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with your schools **acceptable use policy for using photographs**.

Some of the potential risks of photography and filming in schools include:

- Children may be identifiable when a photograph is shared with personal information
- Direct and indirect risks to children and young people when photographs are shared on websites and in publications with personal information
- Inappropriate photographs or recorded images of children
- Inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images

There are key main points we will address when considering the use of photography in our school:

Consent and permission

The consent of parents will be sought before any photos are taken. We provide an annual consent form to all parents asking if they agree to photographs of their child being taken and for what purpose.

If a member of staff is (for any reason) ever in doubt, they will, despite the annual consent form contact the parent to check that their consent still remains.

Children (of appropriate age) should always be consulted about the use of their photograph. This ensures they're aware that the image is taking place and understand what the picture is going to be used for. This could be recorded on a child's permission form.

Professional photographers

In the event of us using professional photographers, we will provide them with our written expectations of their professional conduct. We will make them aware of our

child protection policy and behaviour policy. We will not allow photographers unsupervised access to children.

Reason and purpose

Photos should only be taken by an authorised person (member of staff or agreed professional photographer) who has a suitable reason to take photographs. They may be a parent or relative who has been given prior permission to photograph their child during the school play for example. Any photographs taken in this manner must be agreed with all parents before the use of devices are permitted for use on the school site. Any photographs or videos taken must be used for individual purpose only and not posted onto the internet or distributed without the consent of the child and family whose image is on the photograph or film.

Appropriate images

Our staff will never take images of children which capture them in what are commonly understood as non-public activities like toileting or changing clothes, swimming or which show body parts not usually visible in public settings. Images involving groups should be about the activity, not the individual child. We will only use images of children in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. Some activities, for example swimming, present a much greater risk of potential misuse therefore we will not take images in these circumstances.

Identification of subjects

A child should not be easily identifiable to a person unknown to them because of a photograph or film. Children in vulnerable circumstances such as victims of domestic abuse, fostered or adopted children, or children with parent in the military should not be photographed unless there is clear permission from the relevant parent/carer in order to confirm that use of photography is permitted. (We will always consider any risk implications even if a parent/carer gives clear permission.)

We will not use children's names in photograph captions. If a child is named, we will avoid using their photograph. **Note:** Circumstances may prevail to making it necessary to identify a child via their name and photograph; for example our staff room may have photographs of children with medical conditions/allergies, this allows all staff to know what they might be dealing with if a medical emergency arose. This information will not be shared outside our school.

Photography for public display

If we are permitted to use a child's image on display within our school, or for example, on the school website or within our school newsletter, we will ensure we have the parent/carers permission. If we use a child's image for any of the mentioned mediums, we will ensure there is a clear purpose for the image being there. If a parent who has previously granted permission for the use of their child image asks us to withdraw their child's image, we will do so as soon as is practicable.

We will never accompany a child's photo with personal information about that child which could be used to learn more about the child prior to grooming them for abuse.

Use of Mobile phones

In order for us to ensure the safety of our children, we do not allow the use of mobile phones within our school and staff have specific 'mobile phone safe' areas where they are permitted to use their phone not in the presence of pupils.

Our visitor's policy makes clear that we do not allow visitors to use their mobile phones whilst on our school site unless authorised by the head in which case they will be asked to go to a 'mobile safe zone'.

When we hold special events at school such as school assemblies or school play, we are aware that parents may wish to document their child's success. We will before the event make clear to parents what our expectations are if we do allow the use of mobile phones (or any other device). However, we may choose to change our minds should we believe there is an abuse of trust from any parent(s). We reserve the right to ban the use of photography via mobile phones (or any other device) during the school event but allow a parent to take an individual photo of their child either before or after the event. In any case, we will inform parents prior to the start of the event what rules will be in place on that day.

Storing images securely

Images or video recordings of children will be kept securely and clearly marked so there is no misunderstanding as to why the images are being stored. Hard copies of images will be kept in a locked drawer and electronic images will be in a protected folder with restricted access and clearly marked.

Images will not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

We will avoid using personal equipment or devices to take photos and recordings of children and use only cameras or devices belonging to the school.

Photographing children's injuries

There may be occasions when a child discloses they have received an injury as a result of abuse. It will be natural reaction for staff to want to capture the evidence. However, our staff are aware that parental consent is needed to photograph children and that Children should not be photographed in a state of undress or semi undress, nor should images be taken of body parts usually covered by clothing.

Our staff are all trained annually in Children's safeguarding and all know how to safely gather information from a child in order to allow the Designated safeguarding lead to facilitate further enquiries into the disclosure.

In the event our staff are made aware of an injury or have sight of a child's injury, they will follow our safeguarding procedures and document in written form a detailed account of that injury using body maps to indicate where injuries are noticed. The Designated safeguarding lead will liaise with the social care team and or the police who will be made aware of the injury. The police and or social services will arrange

for an agency other than a member of school staff to take photographs of children's injuries.

In the event of an injury being seen or disclosed to a member of staff

Our staff are highly trained and will:

- Never photograph the injury – instead they will write extensive notes documenting the injury they have seen in great detail. Our staff may also use a body map to further describe the injury they have seen and will be as descriptive as possible.
- Staff are not required to investigate child abuse, nor are they trained to do so. We will gather information and basic first accounts from colleagues and children, (using the TED, tell, explain describe method) where appropriate. This will be documented in written format and will help facilitate police/social services investigations.
- If injuries are seen our designated safeguarding lead will speak to the appropriate agency to arrange for any photographs to be taken.

Designated photographers will usually be:

- a) Police officer, Medical examiner, Forensic examiner, Scenes of crime officer.
- b) Social services may take photographs in some cases.

- We recognise that photographs of injuries may be used as evidence and therefore will and must be treated as such.
- We will document all incidents and injuries in written format and respect the chain of evidence required by other agencies.
- We recognise this evidence may form part of a wider investigation, which may lead to a court case.
- We recognise that we may be called upon in court to provide evidence in a case where a prosecution may seem likely, we will therefore not jeopardise any potential court case by performing duties we are not trained to perform such as photographing children's injuries.
- We will allow the correct agencies to perform the roles which they are highly trained to do. The critical task of evidence gathering requires collaborative working. However, we will recognise when it is time for the appropriate other agencies to take the lead.

This Guidance may be read in conjunction with the following documents:

1. *Keeping children Safe in Education 2020-2021*
2. *What to do if you're worried about a child*
3. *Guidance for safer working practices*

School based policies on:

4. *Acceptable use*

5. *Visitors behavior/Code of conduct*