

Pirbright Village Primary School



Photography & Social Media Policy

Contents

1. Aims
2. Consent
3. Minimising Risk
4. Identifying Pupils
5. School Website, Prospectus, X (formally Twitter), Facebook and Other Literature
6. Parental Rights
7. Official School Photos and Videos
8. Use of Image by The Press
9. Appendix 1- Using Photographic Images of Children – Consent Form
10. Use Your Camera and Video Courteously Code

Reviewed	Annually
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Aims

The aim of this policy is to give clear guidelines to users to ensure the acceptable use of images of children within the school environment. We live in an age in which digital technology has vastly increased the use, and potential misuse, of photography. We recognise the importance of keeping children safe at all times and feel that the clear guidelines laid out in this policy will ensure a sensible approach is taken when balancing safety requirements with celebrating children during special times at school. It is important that parents take the time to read our policy to ensure they are making an informed decision when giving consent with regard to this issue.

We have taken the view of Surrey Local Education Authority who, in consultation with Surrey Police, have deemed that the risk of a child being directly targeted for abuse through being identified by a stranger is so small that, provided reasonable steps are taken to ensure an appropriate photograph, and to protect full name and contact details, the practice of photography, for school events by families and the media, should be allowed. In addition, the widespread use of mobile telephones as digital cameras would make banning difficult to impose and police. Generally, photographs for school and family use, and those that appear in the press, are a source of pleasure and pride which we believe usually enhance self-esteem for children and young people, and their families, and the practice should continue, within safe-practice guidelines.

Consent

The Data Protection Act 1998 affects our use of photography. This is because an image of a child is personal data for the purpose of the Act, and it is a requirement that consent is obtained from the parent of a child or young person under the age of 18 years for any photographs or video recordings for purposes beyond the school's core educational function (e.g. school web sites or school productions). This means we can take photographs of children for use in their learning, on display boards around school and for use in the classroom without requiring parental consent. If we wish to upload these to the school website or publish them in our weekly newsletter we need to have your consent to do so.

As life at Pirbright is often photographed and celebrated, we believe the most efficient way to gain consent is on entry to the school and it is assumed that this will continue until children leave us. Permission to take photographs is obtained before children start at the school by the completion of a consent form within the Admission Pack (see Appendix 1). Where children are 'Looked After', it is necessary to gain consent from the social worker, and there may be other situations (in adoption placements or following a resettlement from domestic violence for example), where a child's security is known by the class teacher to be at stake, indicating the need for extra care.

Parents retain the right to withdraw consent at any stage, but they need to do so in writing to the head-teacher. From this point onwards, children will be exempt from school photographs. If we feel that children will be missing out on something which will impact their emotional wellbeing, we may seek clarification from parents that their consent levels remain the same and they don't wish to change this. Consent is always decided by parents, but they are always welcome to come and discuss the nuances of school events with us to make good decisions for their children. If they wish to make a change and give consent, we endeavour to action this as soon as possible.

Minimising Risk

Images published together with names and details of pupils allow for the remote possibility that people outside the school could identify, and then attempt to contact, pupils directly. The measures described below should help to minimise the risk of such unsolicited attention.

- ✓ Where possible, use general shots of classrooms or group activities rather than close-up pictures of individual children.
- ✓ Use images of children in suitable dress, and take care in photographing PE or swimming events to maintain modesty.
- ✓ Remember to include images of children from different ethnic backgrounds in communications wherever possible, and positive images of children with disabilities to promote Pirbright as an inclusive community, and to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- ✓ Consider alternatives. Is a photograph of the children necessary?

Identifying Pupils

At Pirbright we endeavour to ensure children cannot be identified from photographs which we may publish in the school setting. This may include our website, weekly newsletters or in publicity materials. We follow the following guidelines:

- ✓ If the pupil's full name is used, we won't use their photograph.
- ✓ If the photograph is used, we won't use pupils' full names.
- ✓ Where possible, we will give the minimum information and always consider if the information given is necessary.

School Website, Prospectus, Instagram, Facebook and Other Literature

Most school information is accessed by the Pirbright Village Primary School community, but the nature of publishing photos online is that they can be accessed by members of the general public. We will use all of the guidance noted above with regard to names and minimising information and parents are required to give consent on the initial form in the admissions pack. We will not upload photographs of children to the school's Instagram or Facebook feeds.

In special circumstances, we might consider using a Social Media platform to live-stream an event. We will seek permission from the parents of the children involved and ensure the video does not remain uploaded for a sustained period of time.

Parental Rights

Parents are not covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 if they are taking photographs or making a video recording for their own private use. The Act does not, therefore, stop parents from taking photographs or making video recordings at school events, such as class assemblies or school productions. Parents are not permitted, however, to take photographs or to make a video recording for anything other than their own personal use (e.g. with a view to selling videos of a school event or uploading to social media). Recording and/or photographing other than for private use would require the consent of the other parents whose children may be captured on film. Without this consent the Data Protection Act 1998 would be breached.

At Pirbright we will ensure that only individuals with a connection to pupils take photographs or videos. Members of staff have the authority to question anyone they do not recognise should they be observed using photographic/videoing equipment or if it is being used covertly. This could be during school productions or at any other point in the school day such as on the playground before or after school.

When productions are held at the school the 'Use your camera and video courteously code' (which is a guide for parents who wish to photograph and/or video a school event) is displayed at school and sent home with the head teacher's newsletter prior to the event. This code is subject to change and will be regularly updated alongside safeguarding procedures and developments in technology/social media.

Official School Photographs and Videos

Official photographers will be invited into school to take portraits/photographs of individual children and/or class groups at various points throughout the school year. We will always undertake our own risk assessments in terms of the validity of the photographer/agency involved and establishing what checks/vetting has been undertaken. Procedures will ensure that levels of supervision are appropriate to safeguard the welfare of children at all times when visitors are present on the school site. All photographers will be subject to DBS checks.

Currently, the school use TEMPEST to take all school photographs at two points during the school year. All children have individual portraits (or sibling/family portraits) taken in the autumn term and this date is advertised in the school newsletter. TEMPEST will give parents a personal code so they can access their own child's images on the internet and decide whether to purchase their school photos. No other parents have access to children's images which are not their own. If you wish your child to be exempt from having their photograph taken, then please inform their class teacher or school office before the day of the photographs. The second visit from TEMPEST takes place in the summer term when they take class photos and images of "teams" who have worked together throughout the school year – the date will be published on the school newsletter. Parents are given a "class code" to see the image of their child's class photo which will naturally include the other children from their registration group. If you do not wish for your child to be in their class photo (as they will be available for all of the class parents to access), then you must contact the school (class teacher or school office) to let us know and we will ensure they are not in the photo.

One of the most photographed days at Pirbright is Sports Day. We aim to take lots of photos in order to celebrate the children's achievements and ensure working parents are able to feel part of the day if they are unable to attend. Due to the fast-moving nature of the day, there are constant "podium" photos being taken and we have to take reasonable steps to ensure we are both compliant with parents' wishes and efficient in time. Children who have not given consent for the school to take photos of them for use on the website will be removed from the podium photography to ensure we are not breaching the withdrawal of parental consent.

All photographs which are published on the school website (or an associated school website - Zenfolio) are not downloadable by parents – they can only be viewed. There are two instances when we feel that parents would benefit most from being able to download the school photos – the residential visits. Children in Year 4 and Year 6 traditionally go on residential visits and permission will be sought, before the trip, to publish these images on Zenfolio for parents to download. Only parents of children on the trip will have access to the drive, via a protected password, and they will be able to save these important memories to their own computers. They will be asked not to distribute the link to other people and reminded not to repost on Social Media. Parents who do not wish to have photos of their children taken on the trip will let the school know this and we will not take any photographs of their children.

We may decide to invite official filming companies into the school to take videos of school events (ie productions) as directed by the head teacher. Again, companies will be subject to stringent checks beforehand and be required to provide DBS documentation on arrival into school. Parents will be fully informed before the date and appropriate permissions sought.

If the school decide to investigate the sale of photographs taken by us (ie school show photos or class groups) then we will fully inform parents of the steps we take to do this and seek consent for the sale of the images. All profits will go to the school fund.

Use of images by the Press

There may be occasions when The Press take photographs of pupils at Pirbright in celebration of various events such as our new Reception Class intake or special themed days. As a school, we will never supply members of The Press with full names of children, just first names if requested, and will always make decisions based on reasonable requests with regard to information which ay identify children. Parents are free to opt out of images being used by The Press and this forms part of the parent consent form filled out when children join our school.

Appendix 1

Using Photographic Images of Children – Consent Form Pirbright Village Primary School



To: Name of Parent or Guardian _____

Child's name _____

As a part of Pirbright Village Primary School, parents should understand that we are allowed to photograph children for use in class and around the school (following our own guidelines to minimise risk) without seeking permission. The consent request below is for two additional uses of photographs.

1. Frequently, we take photographs of children either at the school or when they are involved in organised activities away from the school site. We may use the pictures in school publications, such as the prospectus, and on our website. We may also make video or webcam recordings for use by the school.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we need your permission to photograph or make any recordings of your child.

2. Occasionally, the school may be visited by the news media (usually local newspapers) to take photographs or film of an event at the school. Pupils will often appear in these images, which will be published in local newspapers or even broadcast on television.

Please answer questions 1 and 2 below, then sign and date the form where shown and return it to the school as soon as possible.

1. May we take photographs of your child and use them (unidentified by their full name):

- in school publications;
- on the school's website;
- on video
- Please note that websites can be viewed throughout the world and not just in the United Kingdom, where UK law applies.

Please circle your answer: Yes / No

2. Do you consent to your child being photographed by local newspapers and other news media, on the basis that their full names will not be published along with the picture?

Please note that:

- (a) newspapers will be asked to avoid using the child's name if their image is put on the newspaper's own website;
- (b) this consent will also be taken to apply to television images, provided that your child is not named except with your specific agreement.

Please circle your answer: Yes / No

Declaration: I have read and understood the school's policy. My decision on whether to give consent will remain valid throughout my child's time at the school, unless I notify the school to the contrary in writing. I promise that if I, or members of my family, take photographs or video recordings at a school event, these will be kept for family use only.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date: _____

Appendix 2: Example guidance for parents/carers on the use of photographic/videoing equipment

Photographs During School Productions & Class Assemblies



During School Productions and Class Assemblies we would expect parents to abide by the following rules. We know that most family members would like to have a record of these important events in their child's school life and we are happy for you to take photographs and short videos during performances. However, when taking photographs, we must follow certain rules to ensure the safety of all children in our school:

- Parents are not permitted to take photographs or videos for anything other than their own personal use*
- Do not post images or videos on social networks (Facebook, Instagram, X (formally Twitter), YouTube etc) as these may include children who must not have their image online.
- Please zoom in on your own child to minimise the number of other children who are included in your photos and videos.
- Please be considerate of other people in the audience: turn off the sound on your camera or phone; only take short videos; do not use large screen devices that may distract others; do not obstruct other audience members' view.
- Members of staff at Pirbright Village Primary School reserves the right to challenge any person using photographic/video equipment at a school event who they do not recognise or where they do not know that person's connection to pupils. The member of staff also reserves the right to ask the person to stop taking photographs/video.
- Pirbright Village Primary School reserves the right to remove consent to take photographs/video at any time.

As you know, parents signed a consent form giving permission for their children to be photographed by the school. We will, as usual, be posting pictures on the school website as we are aware as a school which children have permission for the website.

**The Information Commissioner's Office states photographs taken by parents at school productions do not breach the Data Protection Act so long as they are only for personal use.*

Thank you

Pete Wright
Headteacher
Pirbright Village Primary School