

LOUDWATER COMBINED SCHOOL

Policy on Photographic and Video Images

“Loudwater Combined School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.”

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct for Schools and Governors and Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People.

Introduction

There are many occasions on which it is a good thing to make use of photographs and video images that include children. This is perfectly proper and to be encouraged. However, our school will do all it can to ensure that images are used appropriately, and that, as in all matters, risks are minimised, and our children kept safe and secure, whether at school or elsewhere. The aim of this policy is to establish the right balance between the proper use of technology and the safety of our children at all times.

The aim of the school is to have a responsible, practical approach to the taking and use of photographic images of children and to honour their obligation of duty of care to all pupils. We understand that on occasions any prohibition in relation to the taking of photographs or video recordings will be disappointing for parents, especially in relation to school events such as performances and sports days. However, there are often genuine reasons relating to the safeguarding of individual children which mean that the school has no alternative but to prevent photographs and video recordings being taken and the welfare and safety of the children will always be uppermost in the school's decision-making process.

Parental permission

All parents and carers will be asked to sign a consent form allowing their child to be photographed or videoed while taking part in school activities, and for the image to be used within the school. This form will be given to the parents or carers of all children joining the school and in each successive year. This 'rolling' consent will allow the school to take pictures of pupils engaged in educational activities such as sports events, drama productions, field trips, etc., and to use these pictures internally. Where parents or carers do not give their consent, then the children concerned will not have pictures taken of them.

All pictures taken will be appropriate, and will show children properly clothed for the activity they are engaged in. The school will do all it can to ensure that due sensitivity is shown in the choice and composition of these images. For example, parents assisting with swimming will not be able to take pictures of children during this activity.

School performances

We will allow video and photographic recordings of school performances, as long as none of the parents or carers of the children involved have advised us that they do not wish photographs to be

taken. This means that if one parent does not give consent for their child to be photographed it will not be possible for any of the children to be videoed or photographed. However, every effort will be made to mitigate any disappointment that may be felt by parents or carers as a result of this prohibition. For example, some or all of the following steps may be taken:

- Allowing individual children to be photographed, in costume, at the end of a production.
- Arranging for “official” photographs or video recordings to be taken, vetted by the headteacher, and distributed to parents.
- Any other reasonable step which, in the opinion of the headteacher, allows a balance to be struck between the safeguarding of any vulnerable children with the wishes of the majority of parents and carers.

The school will observe the way in which video recordings are made, and photographs taken, during performances, and will withdraw the right of anyone to bring a camera of any sort if they are felt to be making inappropriate images. For example, photography is forbidden in changing rooms or backstage during school productions.

The School Website

Only appropriate images will be used on the school website, and children will not be identified by their name or address on the school website. Consent will be sought from parents for the school to display pictures of children or their work on the school website.

Mobile phones

We do not allow children to bring mobile smart phones into school. If permission is given for a phone to be brought into school it must be turned off and given in to the school office for safekeeping during the day. The type of phone that may be brought into school should be one which can send texts and make phone calls. It must not have a camera or be able to be connected to the internet. Adults (including staff) may bring mobile phones, but must not use them to take pictures of children.

Use of digital cameras

There are many ways in which the use of digital images is valuable for children's learning. For example, they may be used in art work or geography or science fieldwork.

Images will be made only as appropriate for school-related activities. Children will be taught how to take pictures, but we will discourage them from taking pictures of each other, and they will be supervised by an adult when they have access to a digital camera. Members of staff and other adults are not permitted to bring their personal digital cameras onto school premises, nor are they permitted to take home the digital cameras belonging to the school. Images will be made only as appropriate for school-related activities. All images will be stored in school.

Media publications

Sometimes, local or national media visit the school to follow up a news story. This is often to do with a notable achievement by a child or a group of children from the school. For example, the netball team may have won a regional competition, or the school may have raised money for a charity whose representative wants to receive the donation in person. In this situation, where

children's images might be made public, the school will inform parents of the event in advance, and allow them to withdraw their child from the event if they so wish. Newspapers normally ask for the names of the children to go alongside the photographs; if parents or carers do not wish this to happen, then the school will not allow the individual to be photographed or filmed by the media concerned.

We would also urge parents to think very carefully about posting any images they may take of school events on social media sites, particularly if they include other children in the class or school. Images of others should only be posted on social media if you have their, or in the case of children, their parent's permission to do so.

Responsibility and Monitoring

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy. The final decision in relation to any questions arising under this policy will be made by the headteacher in her role as Designated Person for Safeguarding.

This policy will be monitored by the governing body and revised as appropriate, and not less than two years from the date of its adoption. Any incidents of concern relating to this policy will be referred to the Chair of Governors by the Headteacher.

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