

KILMORE DIOCESAN GUIDANCE ON PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The majority of occasions when people take photographs of children and young people are valid and do not provide any cause for concern.

Unfortunately there are occasions when this is not the case and these are some of the risks associated with photographing children:

- The collection and passing on of images may be misused
- The identification of individual children to facilitate abuse
- The identification of children in vulnerable circumstances

THERE ARE SIX MAIN POINTS YOU SHOULD ADDRESS:

1. Consent and permission

The consent of parents/carers (and children/young people of appropriate age) should be sought before any photographs are taken. An organisation may seek overall consent from its members for photography; however the guidelines should be clear about the reason and purpose for that decision.

2. Reason and purpose

Photographs should only be taken by an authorised person who has a suitable reason related to the child or organisation i.e. they are a parent, a relative, a leader of an activity and a member of staff. Unless photographs are taken as part of activities such as sporting events, plays and concerts they should be used for an individual purpose and not for a public purpose e.g. not posted on the internet and not passed on to others unconnected with the child.

3. Appropriateness of images

No images of children are to be taken, which capture them in what are commonly understood as non public activities like toileting or changing clothes, or which show body parts not usually visible in public settings. Children should be fully clothed. Images involving groups should be about that activity, not the individual child.

4. Identification of subjects

A photograph should not allow an unauthorised person to identify a child or their whereabouts. If the full name of a child or young person is used, there should be no photograph; if a photograph is being used, the full name should not be given. Children in vulnerable circumstances, e.g., those in care or victims of parental violence should not be photographed at all unless there is clear consent and no risk.

5. Photography for public display

You can decide whether you want publicity photographs and if so you should inform the press of your policies before they arrive. It is worth noting that it is not illegal to take photographs at a public event even if asked not to do so but if your event is private then you can insist that your own policy is followed. Photographs of children in activities should try to include a wide range of types of children, and not show them in breach of rules, or behaving in a reckless or dangerous fashion. Images should never be stored on personal computers.

6. Use of mobile phones

Mobile phones are easily used for taking photographs without the subject being aware. In this case their main function is to transmit images to others, and not to retain them as a keepsake. Their use shall be discouraged. However the widespread availability of this technology does make this difficult. This is something to be aware of when hosting an event. You may choose to ban the use of photograph mobile phones at your event but this is difficult to police.

This policy applies to all organisations in the Church in the Diocese of Kilmore.

March 2012