

The Blake CE Primary School

Data Protection Taking Photographs in Schools

Aim of this guidance

This guidance is aimed at Local Education Authorities and those working within schools, colleges and universities. It gives advice on taking photographs in educational institutions and whether doing so must comply with the DPA.

Recommended good practice

The Data Protection Act (DPA) is unlikely to apply in many cases where photographs are taken in schools and other educational institutions. Fear of breaching the provisions of the Act should not be wrongly used to stop people taking photographs or videos which provide many with much pleasure.

Where the DPA does apply, a common sense approach suggests that if the photographer asks for permission to take a photograph, this will usually be enough to ensure compliance.

- Photos taken for official school use may be covered by the DPA and pupils and students should be advised why they are being taken.
- Photos taken purely for personal use are exempt from the DPA.

Examples

Personal use:

- A parent takes a photograph of their child and some friends taking part in the school Sports Day to be put in the family photo album. These images are for personal use and the DPA does not apply.
- Grandparents are invited to the school nativity play and wish to video it. These images are for personal use and the DPA does not apply.

Official school use:

- Photographs of pupils or students are taken for building passes. These images are likely to be stored electronically with other personal data and the terms of the DPA will apply.
- A small group of pupils are photographed during a science lesson and the photo is to be used in the school prospectus. This will be personal data but will not breach the DPA as long as the children and/or their guardians are aware this is happening and the context in which the photo will be used.

Media use:

- A photograph is taken by a local newspaper of a school awards ceremony. As long as the school has agreed to this, and the children and/or their guardians are aware that photographs of those attending the ceremony may appear in the newspaper, this will not breach the DPA.

More information

If you need any more information about this or any other aspect of data protection, please contact us, or visit our website at www.ico.org.uk.