Photography and Sharing Images Guidance

for Photographing and Recording Children During Children’s Services Support Activities and Events.

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Introduction

It is important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. 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 or even just want to capture a memory.

However, it's also important to be aware of child protection and [safeguarding](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/) issues when people are taking photos or filming at events. The potential for misuse of images can be reduced if organisations and individuals are aware of the potential risks and dangers and ensure appropriate measures are in place.

Some of the potential risks of photography and filming at events or for social care support include:

* Children may be identifiable when a photograph is shared with or without 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;
* Implications of public display pertinent to child protection and security of placement.

Blackpool Children’s Services Policy

This policy has been developed for use by Blackpool’s Children’s Services. It should be used and referenced when social workers and workers in Children’s Services intent to obtain and use images of children and young people that are going to be used in Life-story work, websites and social networking sites or information leaflets on service’s or initiative’s being developed for young people.  This policy can also be used to help children, parents, staff and volunteers understand how photographs can be shared more safely.

The term ‘Parent’ is used throughout this policy to refer to Parents, Guardians, or anyone with Parental Responsibility. It will also make reference to recordings, videos and photographs for ease of use the word image will be considered for all.

Photographs of children wherever possible should not include close ups or head and shoulder portraits. When taking photographs of groups of children it is preferable to take photos of activities rather than portraits or ‘Team photos’

Care should be taken that photos of individual children do not include identifiable insignia such as name badges or School badges.

Do not use children’s names in photograph captions. If a child is named, avoid using the photograph.

You should exercise caution when using a camera or smartphone which has a GPS function. If you do, the location will be embedded in the photograph’s EXIF data and will require specialised software to remove it.

Obtain written parental permission to confirm consent for a child to be photographed and videoed where this is applicable and necessary. (Appendix1)

Obtain the child’s permission to use their image which might identify them. (Appendix 2)

Only use images of children in suitable clothing ensuring that the dignity of the child is safeguarded. This is especially important when recording activities such as swimming. Children should not be photographed in attire that could clearly present a safeguarding risk, for example swimming costumes.  Where activities such as swimming are photographed these should be at a distance and should always protect the dignity of the child.

Address how images of children on an organisation’s website could be misused.

Images accompanied by personal information, such as the name of a child and their hobby, could be used to learn more about a child prior to grooming them for abuse, or be used to identify an individual’s whereabouts when child protection and place of safety needs to be a consideration.

Provide expectations on the safe use of photographs to professional photographers or the press who are invited to an event. These should make clear the organisation’s expectations of them in relation to child protection.

Do not allow professional photographers’ or the press unsupervised access to children.

Do not approve photography sessions outside the event or at a child’s home.

Publishing details which may lead to the identification of a child who is subject of Family Court proceedings is a contempt of court, and that it is also a criminal offence to publish to the public at large, or any section of it, any material which is intended, or likely, to identify any child as being involved in any proceedings before the Family Court or an address or school as being that of a child involved in any such proceedings (s97 Children Act 1989)

Blackpool Children’s Services employees will need to ensure that parents, carers, family members and others understand the policy. Many schools and clubs also have an acceptable use policy for using photographs, which may include asking parents not to share photos on social media.

**Seeking Consent for Children and Young People**

Discussion should always be had with children when taking their photograph and the use of this. This ensures they're aware the picture is being taken and understand what the picture is going to be used for. This should be recorded on a child's permission form and on a young person’s records. (Appendix2)

For young people under 13 years of age parental consent to use an image for promotional purposes should be obtained. Make sure parents and carers are aware of the photography policy. Ask parents to sign a consent form for use of their child's images and keep a record. (Appendix 1)

When Children’s Services intent to obtain and use images or recordings of Children, Young People and families that are identifiable and going to be used for display and promotional purposes written consent will always be obtained (appendix 1).

Further guidance on the Data Protection Act 1998, GDPR and other privacy regulations can be obtained from the council’s own Information Governance Team, or found on the Councils internal hub or the council’s website, as well as the Information Commissioner’s website.

Updates are published on the Blackpool hub under hot topics through the following link.

<http://hub/intranet/modules/services/default.aspx?id=2950>

**Storing Images Securely**

Images or video recordings of children must be kept securely. Hard copies of images should be kept in a locked drawer and electronic images should be in a protected folder with restricted access.

Images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones and should only be stored electronically on the child’s electronic record in attachments, as this is password protected. Such photographs would inform life story work to be undertaken.

For further guidance on security please seek advice from the council’s ICT Service or review the information they publish on the Hub and in the iPool training course on ICT Security. You can also review the information published by the Information Commissioner at the link below:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/security/>

Personal equipment should not be used to take photos and recordings of children. No images should be stored on devices used to take photographs or recordings and should be removed and stored in line with council policies on secure data storage at the earliest opportunity. No images should be stored on removable media without this media being encrypted. Use only cameras or devices belonging to the organisation. As above, use a camera or device with a GPS function with caution.

Organisations who are storing and using photographs to identify children and adults for official purposes, such as identity cards, or for  a child’s life-story work, should ensure they are complying with the legal requirements for handling personal information.

Loss or theft of any device holding images and / or recordings of children should be reported as a potential data breach. This should be reported to the police and a crime number obtained which should be forwarded to an appropriate service manager and the IT helpdesk.

The Blackpool Council Mobile policy states that

“*Where the supplied handset has a camera or video facility, this must only be used when approved for the business and care should be taken to ensure that such images comply with safeguarding requirements and are taken with relevant permissions.*

<http://hub/intranet/searchresults.aspx?q=mobile%20phone%20policy%20document>

Once images or videos have been stored securely or have been used for the purpose intended they need to be removed and deleted from the device used to take them immediately.

Organisations who are storing and using photographs to identify children and adults for official purposes, such as identity cards, or for a child’s life-story work should ensure they are complying with the legal requirements for handling personal information.

Further guidance on the Data Protection Act and other privacy regulations can be found on the [Information commissioner's office website](https://ico.org.uk/).

This Guide and Policy has been adapted from NSPCC Guidance

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/photography-sharing-images-guidance/>

**Appendix 1**  

**Photography Consent Form**

I (We), the undersigned, do hereby consent and agree that Blackpool Council, its employees, or agents have the right to take photographs, or digital recordings of my child (named below) and to use these for the purposes and media I have selected below.

**\*Tick if consent is given as appropriate**

**Publicity:**

Publications Social media (e.g. Face Book, Twitter)

Advertising for Council services on Council approved websites

Use in Council provided training or Council presentations

**Life Story**:

My child’s social care file / Children’s Centre Learning Journey

My child’s album

Other……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Name ……………………………………………

DOB: …………………………………………….

I further consent that my child’s name and identity may be included in any descriptive text or commentary.

Name of parent…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Signature (of parent or guardian if under 18)………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Name of parent…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Signature (of parent or guardian if under 18)………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Date ………………………………………………………………

**Appendix 2** 

**Photography Consent Form for children looked after or**

**Receiving services from Blackpool Council.**

I, the undersigned, do hereby consent and agree that Blackpool Council, its employees, or agents have the right to take photographs, or digital recordings of me and to use these for the purposes and media I have selected below.

**\*Tick if consent is given as appropriate**

**Publicity:**

Publications Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)

Advertising for Council services on Council approved websites

Use in Council provided training or Council presentations

**Life Story**:

My social care file / Children’s Centre Learning Journey

My album

Other…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

I further consent that my name and identity may be included in any descriptive text or commentary.

Name of young person………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature of young person………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...

Signature (of parent or guardian or local authority representative if under 13yrs)

Name……………………………………………….

Signature………………………………………..

Role………………………………………………..

Date ………………………………………………………………

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