

Children in the Media

In common with most schools, we like to celebrate children's special achievements by inviting press photographers and/or television or radio broadcasters into school now and again. As well as allowing parents and family to take photographs. Our impression has always been that most parents approve of this policy.

Photographs of children taken at School events

Concerns have been raised about the possible misuse of photographs and video films taken of children at school events such as concerts, productions and sports days. With digital technology there is the remote possibility that images of children could be produced, manipulated and circulated, without the children's or parents' knowledge. The concern is not just that children might thus be misrepresented or exploited, but also that a school might be criticised if this occurred.

The informal view of the Police is that schools need not feel vulnerable to complaint. If someone commits a crime it is that person who is liable. Schools events are not open to the public and it is reasonable to assume that members of the audience at such events are there for bona fide purposes.

Schools have been advised by Leicestershire County Council (2 December 2002, JS/ARD/SH/concerts) to insert the following paragraphs into their prospectuses or letters, or on to tickets or programmes for events.

"Parents and relatives of pupils should note that any photographs or video film they take at school events are likely to contain images of other children whose parents will not have given permission for them to be filmed or photographed. Such images should not be circulated more widely than the family, ie they should just be for the family's use. Our advice is that any manipulation or distribution of images of children could result in prosecution."

"Any photographs or video film taken by parents or relatives must be solely for the individual family's use and must not be distributed more widely."

In the Press

The school will have regard to the LEA's guidelines. However, rather than becoming overwhelmed with documentation seeking permission, parents will be asked to advise the school if they **do not** wish their children to be photographed or take part in media activities in school. The school will make the assumption that unless advice from parents has been received pupils will be able to take part in media activities.

In School Publications

In school publications, which includes the school's website, individual children will not be identified.

This policy statement will be included in the school's prospectus. Extracts will also be included in letters publicizing productions and events.