

SCOIL MOCHUA



POLICY ON THE SAFE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

Introduction

This policy applies to the use of photographs in classroom displays, school publicity materials, on the school website, school social media channels, school foyer monitor and in the press. Schools need and welcome positive publicity. Children's photographs add colour, life and interest to school activities and initiatives. Making use of photographs in school publicity materials can increase pupil motivation and staff morale and help parents and the local community identify and celebrate the school's achievements.

However, photographs must be used in a responsible way. Schools need to respect children's and parents' rights of privacy and be aware of potential child protection issues.

At Scoil Mochua every reasonable effort will be made to minimise risk by following the guidelines detailed in this document and by securing parental consent for the use of photographs/video recordings.

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the staff and the Board of Management. Its implementation is the responsibility of all staff and the Board of Management. Parents and visitors to the school will be made aware of this policy where necessary.

All guidelines and procedures for photographs in this policy also apply to video recordings.

Rationale

This policy was formulated in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation and Child Protection Guidelines. We want our school to provide a safe and supportive educational environment where the privacy of students, parents and staff is respected.

Aims

1. To ensure that the right to privacy of children, staff and parents is respected.
2. To ensure that all photographs published are in keeping with the school Child Protection Policy, the ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy and GDPR legislation.
3. To ensure that all photographs published are in keeping with the values and ethos of the school.

General Guidelines

- Scoil Mochua will seek the consent of parents / guardians regarding the use of photographs of children. There will be a section for parents to give consent on the school enrolment form completed prior to admission. For children who start in Scoil Mochua later than Junior Infants, a completed copy of the form at the end of this policy will be requested.

- A record will be added to the school's administration system to inform teachers of the consent, or lack thereof, for a child to appear in photographs / videos.
- Parents may, at any time, withdraw their consent / non consent for the use of pupil images and digital recordings in school. Any such request must be made in writing to the school Principal.
- Staff are permitted to take digital/video images for a range of purposes including the following (the list is not exhaustive):
 - to support educational aims e.g. for classroom displays or projects
 - to provide parents with a window into school life, which may include some or all of the following: plays, sporting events, reading, class activities, maths games, events in the yard, gardening, games, Book Fair, Readathon, buddy reading, Christmas activities, tours, picnics, Aistear, etc.
 - as a record of school events for the monitor in the school foyer
 - for the 6th class graduation
- Photographs should be stored securely and used only by those authorised to do so.
- Photographs of students should not be stored on teacher's personal devices.
- Students' names should not be used in image file names when storing photographs.
- When taking digital/ video images teachers should ensure that the students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individual or the school into disrepute.
- Digital images/ video images should not be manipulated or amended, unless it is to protect privacy or dignity, e.g. blurring of faces.

Guidelines for Publishing Photographs

- Pictures to be published on school platforms, or in the media, which include pupils will be selected carefully and will comply with the school's ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy.
- When publishing digital images/ video images on the school's platforms, teachers should be mindful of the way pupils and staff may appear. Images which are likely to cause embarrassment should not be published.
- Pictures to be published on the school's platforms should focus on group activities rather than individual children.
- Personal details (including the name) of any child or adult in a photograph will not be used in association with the photograph without explicit permission.
- Photographs of pupils or staff should not be published on the various school platforms after they leave the school, without their consent.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that photographs published on the school's social media platforms will feature school activities rather than children. Where photographs of children are used, the children will not be easily identifiable, unless explicit permission is sought.

Guidelines for Taking Photographs at School Events

It is up to school management to decide if they are to allow videos or photographs to be taken by parents during school events such as School Concerts, Talent Shows, Nativity Plays, Graduations etc.

Parents are not required to comply with GDPR legislation when taking photographs of their children at an organised event where the photographs are for their own private use. However, GDPR legislation may be breached if these photographs or videos are uploaded to the internet.

When hosting a school event where parents are permitted to take photographs or videos the school will:

- Make it clear that any images taken must be for private use only.

- Inform parents that they do not have permission to share any pictures/videos of our pupils on social media and to do so would contravene GDPR legislation.

An announcement will be made at the start of events to provide guidance for parents. This includes classroom plays and recitals.

When an event is hosted by a third party outside the school, e.g. Cumann na mBunscol (sporting events) or Peace Proms it is up to the host to decide if they wish to allow parents to take videos or photographs at the event. The organisers of the event should explain to parents and/or staff how images taken by the organisers are to be processed, the purpose for which they will be used, and they should gain consent if necessary.

Where photographs are taken at a public event attended by a large crowd e.g. during the St. Patrick's Day Parade or at a sporting event, this is regarded as a public area so it is not necessary to get the permission of everyone in a crowd shot before publishing the image.

Images taken on behalf of the school

On occasion, official commercial video films of children may be recorded e.g. videos of school concerts, sacraments etc. The school also arranges for a professional photographer to take class photographs and individual pupil photographs.

Where a commercial photographer is used, the following guidelines apply:

- Commercial video films may only be recorded or professional pupil photographs taken with the permission of the school's Board of Management.
- Commercial photographers will be required to comply with GDPR legislation.
- The school will inform parents that a commercial photographer will be in attendance in school or at an event.
- The school will inform parents of the purpose of taking the commercial digital/ video images and how the digital/ video images will be used.
- The school will ensure that pupils are fully supervised by a teacher at all times while the commercial/ professional photographer is present in the classroom. While individual photographs are being taken, the child will at no time be alone with the photographer.

The Press

The use of photographs in newspapers and magazines is already subject to strict guidelines through the Code of Practice of the Press Council of Ireland.

- Press photographers should get the permission of the school principal before approaching pupils in the school to take photographs.
- The school will ensure that pupils are fully supervised by a teacher while a press photographer is present.
- The Press must consider parental wishes if they take photographs from which a child can be identified.
- Scoil Mochua will seek parental consent before providing names of children to accompany photographs published in newspapers and magazines.

Re-use of Images

Photographs or videos published on school publicity material/the school website and/or social media platforms, may not be copied and/or re-used by staff, parents or others for any purpose other than that for which they were intended, without consent.

GDPR legislation may be contravened if photographs or videos published on school publicity material and/or the school website are copied and/or re-published for any purpose other than that for which they were intended, without consent. This would also represent a violation of the school's ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy.

Concerns

If parents have any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography at a school event they should report their concerns to the school Principal (or to a Staff member if the Principal is not present).

If a parent or child wishes to have a photograph removed from the school website, foyer monitor etc. at any time, they should contact the school Principal.

When a press image has been captured the data controller for that image is the media concerned and not the school. Therefore parents will need to make any objections directly to that organisation.

Concerns regarding a breach of GDPR legislation should be reported to the Data Protection Commissioner.

Success Criteria

- Photographs are published in school publicity materials, on the school foyer monitor, on the school website, on the school's social media platforms and in the press in accordance with this policy.
- Parent Consent forms are collected and are maintained on the school's administration system, and are easily accessible to teachers.
- The aims set out are fulfilled.
- Positive feedback is received from pupils, staff members, parents and the wider community.

Implementation and Review


This policy was first ratified in May 2019 and is reviewed regularly.

Communication


Copies of the policy will be made available to parents at the time of enrolment. It will be published on the school website and copies will be made available to parents at any time on request.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 14/5/24

Signed :  _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 14/5/24

Signed:  _____
Principal

Date: 14/5/2024

PARENTAL CONSENT REGARDING PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS IN SCHOOL

(Please note, parents of incoming Junior Infants complete an online version of this form as part of the enrolment process. The form below captures the data for children who join Scoil Mochua after Junior Infants.)

Having read Scoil Mochua's **Policy on the Safe Use of Photographs and Videos**, please complete this form and return to school to indicate whether or not you wish your child's / children's photographs to be used in the way described in this policy.

Use of children's photographs at Scoil Mochua

Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I have read and understood Scoil Mochua's policy statement on the use of photographs in school.

Yes

No

I give permission for my child to appear in photographs/video recordings used for school publicity (including the school website, school foyer monitor, classroom displays, social media and local press).

Yes

No

Please note, your child's name will not appear with their photograph. In the case of local press, permission will be sought prior to publication if the newspaper wishes to include names with a photograph. You can, at any time, withdraw consent/ non-consent for the use of your child's images. Any such request must be made in writing to the school Principal.

Signed: _____
(Parent / Guardian)

Date: _____

