

Filming School Events

The article below has been adapted from one that recently appeared in *Protecting Children Update* (Issue 53 November 2008). It should be read in conjunction with Education Leeds 'guidance on filming & photography in schools' and the Education Leeds 'Safe Working Practice' guidance (April 2008 section 26)

- It is the school's decision whether or not to film the school concert or Christmas performance. However, remember that some parents may have very real concerns about their child being photographed or filmed, so schools need to ensure they have informed parents about their intention to film or take photos and seek their consent. This is especially important if the pictures are to appear in the press. Invite parents that are concerned into school to discuss.
- The issue is mainly to do with the risk that a child from a family fleeing violence might be recognised if the picture appears in the local paper, giving a violent partner information about the family's whereabouts.
- The school can decide whether or not to allow parents to take photos. If they are allowed, they should be advised only to take photos of their own child or to seek the agreement of other parents if they wish to take group pictures.
- Photos, if taken, should only be used for the family's own album and should not be posted on websites. Obviously this can only be advice as school has no control over the choices / decisions taken by parents but many parents will welcome a reminder of e-safety guidance.
- Many schools have found it useful to ask parents not to film or take photographs during the performance but to set aside time at the end for parents to photograph their child.
- It's not a good idea to suggest that the reason for banning photography is that the images could be used to exploit or abuse children or that the images could fall in to the hands of

paedophiles. Parents get very upset by the suggestion that one of them may use the images inappropriately.

- Many parents have mobile phones with very good cameras. Schools can ask parents to switch off their phones during the performance. This would be simple good manners anyway, but it would be virtually impossible to police the event for mobile phone cameras.

It is the belief of Education Leeds that parents and carers should be able to film or take photos of their child in school productions wherever reasonable and safe for all the children involved. The Education Leeds guidance can be downloaded from *Infobase* along with a sample poster from Teachernet, the Safe Working Practice guidance (April 2008) and an information sheet about the Data Protection Act, produced by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)– see Quick code D2294

Associated Talbot Primary School documents:

Safe Working Practice Policy

Use of Images Letter