



Information Commissioner's Office
Promoting public access to official information
and protecting your personal information

Press Release

For immediate release

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Parents can photograph school events, says the ICO

As the festive season rapidly approaches and schools start organising their annual Christmas concert or nativity play, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is reminding parents that the Data Protection Act does not prevent them filming or taking photographs of their children and their friends participating in such events.

To dispel any confusion, the ICO has produced guidance to help parents understand their rights under the Act and to ensure schools are aware of their obligations.

Jonathan Bamford, Assistant Commissioner at the ICO, said: "This guidance has been issued to reassure friends and family members that they can take photographs of their children and friends taking part in school activities for the family album without contravening the Data Protection Act. They can also film events at school. The Data Protection Act should not be wrongly cited to stop people taking photographs or filming videos."

The Data Protection Act is unlikely to apply in many situations where photographs are taken within schools. The Act does apply when photographs of children are taken for official use by a school or college such as for issuing identification passes..

In the other small number of instances where the Data Protection Act does apply, if the photographer obtains permission from the parent or individual to take a photograph then this will usually be enough to ensure compliance.

If you need more information, please contact the Information Commissioner's press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at:

http://www.ico.gov.uk/Home/what_we_cover/data_protection/guidance/good_practice_notes.aspx

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Information Commissioner promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation.
2. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office, subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk
3. Anyone who processes personal information must comply with the eight principles which make sure that personal information is:
 - Fairly and lawfully processed
 - Processed for limited purposes
 - Adequate, relevant and not excessive
 - Accurate and up to date
 - Not kept for longer than is necessary
 - Processed in line with your rights
 - Secure
 - Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection

