

Advice To Parents And Carers About Online Safety And Sharing Images Of Children On Social Media

As more of our lives are spent online, the associated benefits and risks increase. The sharing of photographs is a delicate subject, balancing the fair and expected use of photographs as mementos to be shared with friends and family, alongside the risks of sharing those photographs publicly. There is no law against taking photos at public events, including of other people's children (Ask the Police, 2021) however, parents or carers should gain permission before sharing photographs or videos of other people's children on publicly open social media.

Some parents or carers prefer that their children's images do not appear online or in print form, sometimes for specific reasons. JSTA abide by those requests and ask all parents not to share any pictures or videos of events and activities on publicly open social media without consent, where other people's children can be identified.

Sharing images in this way could place some children and families at risk.

- if a child and/or their family have experienced abuse they may worry about the perpetrator tracing them online
- children who choose not to have contact with some members of their family may decide to minimise their online presence
- children may become vulnerable to grooming if a photograph is shared alongside information that makes them identifiable.
- images may be copied, downloaded, screenshotted, or shared by anyone
- images of children may be adapted and used inappropriately
- depending on the terms and conditions of using an online platform, the image may be owned by the platform once it has been posted. Platforms may then license images for use by third parties – such as for commercial purposes
- each photo or video, and any comments on them, become a part of a child's public image. This may affect them later in life – for example, it may affect how they see themselves, or how they are viewed when applying for a job

(Thinkuknow, 2021).

Sharing Images

Parents or carers who want to share pictures or videos of their own children on social media should make sure they understand who else will be able to view images of their child, how widely images may be shared, how long they may remain available and how this may affect the children's long-term wellbeing. Parents and carers should use their privacy settings to make sure only their friends can see their profile and photos, and that geo-location settings are not shared.

They can also have a conversation with their children to discuss the subject and their views and consider the long-term implications of sharing an image before making it public.

Parents and carers should not share photographs of other people's children on public platforms without consent.

Public Performances

It is rare, but has been known, for someone to contact a child that they have seen performing in public. This can be done either in person or via social media.

Below is a link to the CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) website, which has great advice for parents and children concerning online safety and how to guard against and respond to unsolicited or suspicious contact, online or in person, as well as other dangers.

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/Concerned-about-your-child/Online-contact-and-staying-safe/>

Sharing Video of Festival Work

We request that you **do not share any video of JSTA festival work on social media**. This helps us protect our choreography, music choices, and costume ideas.

In the past JSTA creative work has been copied by other schools and used in Festivals. We would like to ensure that everyone's hard work creating our successful Festival items is rewarded and remains unique and special to the JSTA family.

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