



PHOTO AND VIDEO POLICY

Overview

Summary statement: Excel Church / BPC is committed to obtaining the appropriate and legally required form of consent before photos and video are taken and used.

Photography and Video of Children

Excel Church /BPC is committed to the following principles and practices:

1. Excel Church/BPC must obtain written parental permission for all children (aged less than 18 years) before they are photographed. Leaders must inform photographers prior to an event of any children who should not be photographed.
2. In those situations where prior written parental permission has not been obtained, verbal consent must be obtained before photos and video of children are taken and written consent must be obtained before those images are used in any form.
3. If written parental consent has not been obtained for a child who is included in a group shot (e.g. nativity play), the individual publishing the picture on the website, in a newsletter or other media will obscure the image of that child prior to publishing or displaying the photo.
4. Photos and videos will have the minimum necessary amount of personal data accompanying them when shared.

For example, children in photos will not be named without good reason and only with the express permission of the person with parental responsibility for that child. Their street address is never to be included. This is important because images can be used as a means of identifying children when associated with personal information and this information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to contact and start to "groom" that child for abuse – online (e.g. through websites or social networking) or through direct contact in the off-line, "real" world. Information placed on the internet has also been used by estranged parents (e.g. in adoption or domestic violence circumstances) to identify, trace and cause significant difficulties for children. Photographs are also sometimes used or adapted for inappropriate use.

5. We may use group images with very general labels, such as "youth enjoying sport" or "making Christmas decorations".
6. If naming a child or group of children in an image is considered necessary and written parental permission has been granted Excel Church/BPC will only use their first names, as this will reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from other people.
7. We will only use images of people who are suitably dressed. E.g. we will not publish material from the youth group's swimming activity.

8. Photographers should not photograph any child who has asked not to be photographed or who is under court order (where it is known).
9. Photography or video filming should focus on the activity not on a particular young person.
10. Images should focus on small groups rather than individuals.
11. All concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour or intrusive photography should be reported to the Child Safeguarding Officer(s).

Photography and Video of Adults

1. At any time an individual adult or small group of adults is photographed or filmed, each adult must be asked for either written or verbal consent before their image is used.
2. The taking of photographs, film or other images of vulnerable adults is not appropriate without prior consent. Excel Church/BPC must ensure that such consent is in place before making any such image of a vulnerable adult.
3. Special care must be taken when using any image of a vulnerable adult in general publicity or in print publications. All images must maintain the dignity of the individual.
4. Photographers/videographers submitting photos/video to the church for use must provide written releases from the adults in the picture or sign a release stating that they obtained verbal consent from the individuals in the photo.

Taking Photos and Filming Video in Large Group Situations

It is not always necessary to obtain written consent before a photo or video is used:

“The general rule in the Data Protection Act is that individuals should, at least, be aware that personal data about them has been, or is going to be, shared – even if their consent for the sharing is not needed.” (*Data Sharing Code of Practice*, ICO, p19)

However, photos and video count as personal data and when such data conveys a person's religious beliefs it counts as sensitive personal data because the data could be used in a discriminatory way. The Information Commissioners Office advises that:

“Consent or explicit consent for data sharing is most likely to be needed where: • confidential or particularly sensitive information is going to be shared without a clear legal basis for doing so; • the individual would be likely to object should the data be shared without his or her consent; or • the sharing is likely to have a significant impact on an individual or group of individuals.” (*Data Sharing Code of Practice*, ICO, p15).

Accordingly, it is our judgement that explicit written consent will not be needed in many cases. In many cases, particularly large group situations where the distribution and completion of consent forms would be impractical, a clear 'privacy notice' will be reasonable. This means photos and video should not be taken in large group situations without a privacy notice being given.