

Guidance on Use of Photography



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This guidance aims to protect children and young people from the inappropriate use of their images in Church-related activities, publications, and online platforms. It provides guidance to ensure safe and respectful photography practices within the Church context.

The Church only has responsibility for safeguarding and the use of photography if it plans to use the photographs for Church purposes. Photographs taken at events organised by families or schools—such as First Holy Communions and Confirmations (including where the photographer is engaged by the family or the school)—are not the responsibility of the Church, unless the photographs are taken specifically for Church purposes.

This guidance applies to all Church personnel, volunteers, group leaders, and professional photographers/videographers involved in Church activities where photography or videography may occur.

Risks to children and young people

- Images may be misused or shared inappropriately.
- Potential for grooming or abuse.

Easy Rules to Remember

- Avoid publishing full names or personal details with images.
- Use images showing appropriate dress and group activities.
- Obtain informed consent and allow for withdrawal.

- Avoid personal IT equipment and social media posting by group leaders.
- Children and young people aged thirteen or over, should give their own permission.

Use of Professional Photographers/Videographers

- Vetting may be required.
- Provide clear briefs and identification.
- No unsupervised or off-site sessions.
- Inform and obtain consent from parents/carers.
- Clarify ownership, usage, and storage of images.
- Report concerns to event organisers or authorities.

Parish Events

- Recommended wording for photography notice to be displayed prominently in the Church:

"In line with child safeguarding best practice the Diocese of Down and Connor require that the organisers of this event, ensure that any person wishing to engage in any photography, video, zoom or close-range photography should register their details with the Parish Priest/Church personnel/volunteers before carrying out any such photography. If parents have any particular concern about their children being photographed or filmed they should notify the Parish Priest/Church personnel/volunteer in charge. The parish reserves the right to decline entry to any person unable to meet or abide by the parish's conditions. If you are concerned about any photography taking place at this event, please contact the event organiser, who will be pleased to discuss this matter with you."

Responding to Concerns

- Children, young people and parents/carers should be informed that if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography, these should be reported to the Diocese to ensure that any reported concerns are dealt with in the same way as any other child protection safeguarding issue.

Relevant Forms

SO6, SO7 & SO14