

Press Release

For immediate issue

Date: 30 June 2010

Parents can snap away at this year's sports day

Capturing the moment your child crosses the finishing line at their school sports day does not break the law. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is reminding schools that they cannot hide behind data protection myths to prevent parents from taking photos of their children at school events.

Deputy Commissioner and Director of Data Protection, David Smith, said: "A photo of your child at their first school production or winning the 100m race on sports day preserves precious memories. The Data Protection Act in no way stops parents from taking such photos. A common sense approach should be taken to photography at school events. Photos for personal use, such as family albums, are not covered by the Act. Schools that cite the Act to prevent parents from taking pictures are wrong."

The Information Commissioner's Office has produced [guidance](#) for local education authorities and those working within schools, colleges and universities explaining that the Data Protection Act is unlikely to apply in many situations where photographs are taken for personal use. The Data Protection Act does apply to photographs taken for official use by schools and colleges and stored with personal details, such as names. In cases such as these, a common sense approach would suggest that if the photographer gains permission to take a picture, this will usually be enough to ensure compliance.

The [full copy of the guidance](http://www.ico.gov.uk) can be viewed at www.ico.gov.uk

ENDS

If you need more information, please contact the ICO press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at: www.ico.gov.uk

Notes to Editors

1. The Information Commissioner's Office upholds information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
2. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003.
3. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can find us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ICOnews
4. Anyone who processes personal information must comply with 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