

# Photography and Social Media Policy

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## About this policy

It is in the interests of the Stevenage Scout District, and the Scout Movement as a whole, to promote the use of positive images that showcase the activities undertaken by our members. When we create and share digital content, we increase engagement with current members, potential members and the wider community. It's great for us to be able to share images of our members and young people with their parents/carers, and for them to be able to look back on their special moments and Scouting achievements.

Modern technology makes it extremely easy and accessible for people to photograph and video our members. It's important to be aware of safeguarding risks around taking photos and videos. Children and young people can be identified for the purpose of future grooming and abuse, and images can be modified or misused out of context. There is a need to protect any vulnerable individuals from being identified.

This policy seeks to set out clear guidelines as to how we will manage images and their use on social media. These guidelines are designed to be pragmatic, reasonable, and take into account data protection legislation, safeguarding best practice, and guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.

### Key points to note:

- We will carry out photography only with prior consent at Scouting events organised by Stevenage District or our Scout Groups.
- At public events where it may be impractical to obtain consent for every individual, we may proceed with photography with added caution and with regard to known preferences.
- We will always respect the wishes of any young person or their parent/carer who informs us they prefer not to have their photo taken or used, at any point, for any occasion.
- We will always ensure that we have consent before we publish any images on our website and social media, or before we take or share any images specifically for press use.
- We have no control over the taking and use of photos by other parties, though we would encourage parents/carers to follow the guidance set out within this policy.

## General points

Photographic and video images are considered personal data if people are identifiable in them, and as such are governed by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the regulations set by the European Union. The GDPR is now retained in domestic law as the UK GDPR, which sits alongside an amended version of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

In these situations, the rights of the individuals in the collection and use of their images must be respected, and a legal basis must be found before the images are used in any way. We have assessed 'legitimate interest' to be the most appropriate lawful basis for the District's use.

Under this lawful basis, consent is not normally necessary however we recognise that it is good practice to seek consent wherever possible. Many of the District's Scout Groups practice consent in their own collection and use of images; we will always respect such arrangements (such as at events at a Scout Group level, or at smaller-scale District events). Leaders would usually capture consent as part of event registrations, or as part of the joining process when a young person joins a Scout Group.

## How will we use photography?

This policy concerns photography, video and audio footage of any young person during Scouting activities being published via any of the following:

- Internally controlled publications
- Communication channels, such as:
  - Emails
  - Websites
  - Newsletters
- District meeting places
- District social media channels
- District advertising and/or promotional material, including the press

As a District, we would like to use photos or videos taken during our activities to promote Scouting and celebrate the endeavours and successes of our members. On our website and social media, we hope to have many opportunities to use photographs of activities to enhance the content. We hope that parents/carers will feel able to support us in using images towards this end.

Media taken and controlled by Stevenage District Scouts will only be published on our own platforms (e.g. website, social media platforms etc.). Occasionally we may forward photographs to other Scouting media outlets or the local press (see section below on 'Use of images by the media').

## Safeguarding young people

We will observe the following guidelines:

- We never publish personal details with any photo image that is used (e.g. full name, address, email, etc.). This includes details in captions, or within the image itself (e.g. visible on certificates)
- We will endeavour to remove identifying metadata from graphics (e.g. location, comments etc).
- We will reduce the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by only using images of members in appropriate situations and dressed in appropriate clothing; the content of all images will be considered in good taste before publication.
- Where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused, we will avoid full face and body shots of children taking part in activities (e.g. swimming)
- We will only use images to publicise Scouting related events, and that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.
- Young people's personal wishes are always respected and they will never be forced or persuaded into having their image or sound taken or shared against their wishes.
- On the rare occasion that we hire an external photographer or videographer for an event, we will provide them with a clear brief about appropriate content and conduct, and will make sure they understand the guidelines within this policy. We will also ensure that they are easily identifiable, and that young people and their parents/carers are aware that an external photographer is present.
- If we inadvertently publish material without parental permission or if we receive a request from a parent/carer for material to be removed, we will take action as quickly as possible after it is brought to our attention. In some instances, we regret that it may not be possible to remove images that have already been published (i.e. on print copies).

## If you object to photography

### How will we manage this?

If young people, parents/carers object to photographs being taken or used, we will of course respect their wishes where possible. **Parents/carers should inform their Scout Group's Leaders of their objection or preferences in the first instance.** The Leaders will then communicate this to the District Media and Communications Team in advance, or on the day of an event, of any 'no photo' members within their group. As a precaution, our photographers will always try to check with event organisers and Leaders on the day.

We will never exclude a member from an activity because they prefer not to be photographed.

We will agree in advance, either with the parent/carer or with the Leader who is responsible for the young people, how they would like to be identified so the photographer knows not to take pictures of them. As much as possible this will be done in a way that does not single out the young people or make them feel isolated.

Where objections or preferences are known to us, some of the ways we will endeavour to avoid photographing or publishing images of 'no photo' individuals are:

- Give the members the option to identify themselves by wearing a wristband/lanyard etc.
- Alert people who are within earshot of the photographer verbally and give them opportunity to move away if they wish.
- If a Scout Group is known to have 'no photo' members amongst them, the photographer can avoid photographing their group altogether, though this may mean that members of their group or Scout Group may be left out of event coverage.
- Take photographs in smaller groups rather than an entire group so that less attention is drawn to the young person who cannot be in photographs.
- Consider splitting the activity group up into two and the photographer can photograph the group where everyone has given consent across all activities.
- Photograph the back of individuals, or from the chin down with no identifiable faces.
- Focus on actions and items in the foreground, with people and faces blurred in the background.
- Take extreme wide-angle scene or crowd shots where individuals are not identifiable.
- If we inadvertently publish images of 'no photo' individuals or if we receive a request from a parent/carer for material to be removed, we will take action as quickly as possible after it is brought to our attention, whether or not we were informed of their objection to photography in advance of an event. In some instances, we regret that it may not be possible to remove images that have already been published (i.e. on print copies).

### **At smaller Scouting (closed) events**

For almost all events directly organised by Stevenage Scout District or our Scout Groups:

- We will gather consent preferences as part of the event registration process.
- We will avoid photographing those who wish not be photographed (as per section above).
- We will work with Leaders to review any photos taken to ensure that these individuals do not appear, and we will destroy copies of images where they do appear as identifiable.
- When publishing images on our website and social media, we will take care to only use photos of those who have consented to such use.

- For those who have consented to internal image use only, we will restrict the sharing of images to internal, closed channels (such as members-only Facebook groups).

### **At large-scale, public or open (community/family) events**

At some events, it would be impractical and disproportionate to obtain individual signed consent for every young person who may feature in photography, video and audio prior to the event. Examples of these would St George's Day and Remembrance Day parades. This also applies to Christingle as we do not require event registration for the occasion, and attendees are seated close to one another making it challenging to exclude specific individuals. It is reasonable to expect that photography will be captured at events like these, and it is more likely that photos to be taken of a crowd and not focused on an individual or a group of individuals, with the result that the photos will not contain identifiable individuals.

In these situations, you should be informed of our intentions with regards to photography and video in the information handed out around or before the event, and where possible on the day itself via signages or announcements. It's important to be clear from the outset that there is a possibility that a picture might be taken and your child could appear in the background.

To balance our interests with yours, and to observe best practice as much as possible, at these events:

- We may proceed with photography but we will avoid photographing those we know who would normally wish not to be photographed. You are of course encouraged to let your Leader or the photographer know of your wishes, in advance or on the day.
- Parents/carers and leaders who know there to be 'no photo' young people within their group should consider positioning the individuals where they are less likely to be identifiable in a photograph (i.e. avoid being in the front row, stay closer to the centre of a crowd, wear a hat/beanie/hoodie etc.)
- If we decide to use any of the photos on our website and social media, we will explicitly seek parental consent for that purpose. We will not assume consent for such use.
- Where we have not checked for consent, we will only publish anonymised photos or scene photos of large crowds, without identifiable faces.
- Before sharing to internal channels, we will work with Leaders to review photos to check if any show individuals who wish not to be photographed. If they do incidentally appear, we will blur or edit out faces before publication, or consider not sharing those images altogether.

## **Use of images by the media**

We occasionally supply images to the local media in certain situations e.g. special events, award ceremonies. In the rare event that the media come to us and wish to take their own images, where practicably possible we will notify parents/carers advance. We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that where permission has been refused for images, no such images will be provided for media purposes. The media often ask for the

names of the young people to go alongside the images, and these will be provided only where parents/carer have been informed about the media's visit and parents/carers have consented as appropriate. We would not normally use the full name, only the first name.

The local press (and sometimes the national press) are sometimes invited to Scouting events and may wish to photograph or film members doing Scouting activities. Photographs taken by press photographers without invitation or permission when it is required, are subject to the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice.

## **Photography and filming by the public**

We are unable to control members of the public or the press taking photos when Scouts are appearing in a public place, such as parades. In these situations, they require no invitation or permission. (There is nothing under GDPR that prohibits people from taking photos in a public place.) We are unable to control members of the public or the press taking photos when Scouts are appearing in at larger Scouting events not directly organised by Stevenage District Scouts.

We are also unable to control photographs taken by other parents/carers or relatives of our members. We ask that all parents are sensible when sharing media (particularly via social networking) and follow the guidelines set out in this policy.

## **Photography and filming by parents**

Parents/carers or close family members are welcome to take photographs and recordings of their own children taking part in our events, subject to the following guidelines, which we expect all parents to follow:

- Parents are asked not to take photographs of other young people, except incidentally as part of a group shot, without the prior agreement of that child's parents/carers.
- Parents are reminded that such images are for personal use only. Images which may identify other young people, should not be made accessible to others via the internet e.g. Facebook or published in any other way.
- Parents may not film or take photographs in changing rooms, tents, nor in any other circumstances in which photography or filming may embarrass or upset young people.
- We reserve the right to refuse or withdraw permission to film or take photographs (at a specific event or more generally), from anyone who does not follow these guidelines, or is otherwise reasonably felt to be making inappropriate images.
- Leaders will question anyone they do not recognise who is using a camera or recording device at Scouting events.

## **Photography and filming by young people**

All young people are encouraged to look after each other and to report any concerns about the misuse of technology or any worrying issues to a Leader. The use of cameras or filming equipment (including mobile phones) is not allowed in toilets, washing or changing areas, nor should photography or filming equipment be used by young people in a manner that may offend or cause upset. The misuse of images, cameras or filming equipment in a way that breaches this policy, or the Association's Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy or procedures is always taken very seriously.

## **Use of images on social media**

District controlled social media platforms will follow the guidance on publishing images as outlined in this policy.

The District does not have any control over the use of social media channels that may be used by Scout Groups, adult leaders, parents or youth members. However we do encourage all Scout Groups to adhere to these same rules and guidance within their own channels.

Individuals are responsible for the content of their own social media accounts. We would, therefore, request that you are mindful of any content that you or your child may post to this type of site and that any pictures that are set in a Scouting context should not bring the District, their Scout Group, or the Scout Movement into disrepute or put young people at risk. We would also ask that you respect the wishes of other parents/carers if they ask for their child's picture to be removed.

## **Monitoring this policy**

The District Media and Communications Team, and the wider District leadership team, will be monitoring our website and social media to make sure that all content adhere to these policies. We reserve the power to remove any content we deem contravening this policy, inappropriate or unsuitable without notice.

All District volunteers are encouraged to help review content on our website and social media, in particular scrutinising our images to ensure that we have not overlooked any 'no photo' cases. The District Media and Communications Team should be alerted immediately if any problematic content has been identified.

## The Scout Association's guidance

The Scout Association encourages the use of photography and social networks as ways of publicising Scouting. To keep children and young people safe, it has published the following guidance:

- [Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Adults](#)
- [Photography, video and audio recording at Scout events](#)
- [Digital Safeguarding](#)
- [ICO advice for schools](#)

## Who to contact

If you would like to contact us about any aspect of this policy, or report any breaches, please reach out to the District Media and Communications Team ([media@stevenagescouting.org.uk](mailto:media@stevenagescouting.org.uk)).