Parish of St Mary's, Summerstown

Photography policy
Approved by the PCC on 25th January 2022. To be reviewed annually
Latest update: 24th February 2026

Summary Principles (to display in church)
The taking of photographs and videos is usually enjoyed by children and adults alike, but steps need to be taken to ensure that privacy is respected and consent is obtained at all times. At St Mary's we follow these principles with regard to photos and video:

- Occasionally, St Mary's will take 'official' photographs to be used on our website, social media, publicity etc. When this happens, a clear notice will be displayed and there is the option for anyone to opt out of being included in any photos or video.
- Photos of children or adults who may be vulnerable are not permitted without written consent from parents/carers, or the adult themselves. St Mary's will seek written consent before any photographs or videos are taken of children or vulnerabe adults for use by the church.
- St Mary's will use a church device to take official photographs, including children or vulnerable adults, not a personal device.

- If members of the church or visitors wish to take photographs at a church event:
  - We do not permit photographs of children or vulnerable adults without prior consent from their parent or carer
  - Photographs of children are not permitted to be shared on any form of social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) without written consent from the parent/carer
  - We encourage people taking photos to always ask consent from anyone who may be in your photograph if they will be identifiable, irrespective of whether they may be at risk of vulnerablilities or not. This is to respect their privacy and rights.

Full details of our photography policy is available from our Parish Safeguarding Officers.

Taking and publishing photographs and videos, including on websites (Taken from Section 4 of a Safer Church, pages 36-37)

Introduction
The taking and publishing of photographs and videos is usually enjoyed by children and parents, and by adults who may be vulnerable, and can bring good publicity, but steps need to be taken to ensure that privacy is respected and no embarrassment is caused.

The issues are the same for still photographs or films, and regardless of the particular technology used. They also apply to audio clips from individuals. For convenience they are all referred to as images.

Images count as personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. It is therefore a legal requirement that the consent of the adult who may be vulnerable, or child and his/her parent or guardian is obtained for the taking and using of images.

Guidelines

General

- Do not take pictures of children or adults who may be vulnerable without another adult present.
- When an image is taken for publication or distribution, those being photographed should be aware that it is being done. Awareness can be assumed if: - people are attending a photo-call - the intention of taking images is included in the invitation to the event and people are given the option of opting out.
- Ensure that any use of images reflects the diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity.
- Ensure that professional or amateur photographers commissioned to photograph events are given a copy of this procedure and agree to abide by it.

Consent

- Except in the above circumstances, consent should be obtained before taking and using images, and a chance to opt out must be given.
- Consent need not be in writing if it is not proposed to publish the images in any way; but if they are going to be displayed, used in a newspaper or magazine (including the Diocesan or parish newspaper or magazine), or put on a website or used in social media then specific written consent should be obtained. A template consent form for using photographs of children and young people, and a template consent form for using photographs of vulnerable adults are both available in A Safe Church, Section 10, Appendix 10 and Appendix 11.
- Images should only be used for the specific purpose agreed by the person photographed. Written consent must specify what purposes the image will be used for, and how it will be stored if not destroyed. If the intention is to use an image on the internet, this must be clearly stated at the time that consent is sought. Further written consent is required if images are to be used in ways other than originally specified.
- For children under 13, written consent must be obtained from parents or guardians.
- For young people aged 14-17, written consent must be obtained from parents or guardians and the young people themselves.

- For vulnerable adults, images should only be used for a purpose which is explained to them, and to which they give their recorded and preferably signed informed consent; in other words, they understand and agree. They should see the photograph before being asked to give consent. The person who obtains the consent should sign and give their relationship to the person photographed, and the name and address of the organisation for which they work or volunteer.
- If the vulnerable adult cannot give informed consent the images should not be used, unless the individual cannot be identified from the photograph.
- For any photographs submitted to the Diocesan Communications Department for use in any Diocesan communication (for instance in the Diocesan newspaper or on the Diocesan website), it will be assumed that the parish has obtained the consent of the vulnerable adults or parents/guardians and children before such submissions are made.
- In the case of a general photograph of a public event, such as a church fête, where no individual or group of people is the focus, prior consent of everyone is not required. It is still appropriate to consider carefully where and how such photographs should be displayed. Best practice with publication of images
- Think carefully before taking any images showing children and young people on your website, social media or other publications. Consider what the images will be used for and whether consent will be required.
- Do not supply full names of children along with the images, unless: - it is considered necessary, for example celebrating a performance or achievement - the child and parent(s) or carer(s) have consented.

- Only use images of children in suitable dress or kit, being particularly mindful of some activities (for example, swimming) which involve partial states of dress. Additionally, avoid pictures of children in school uniform where the name of the school is visible.
- Keep images of children securely: - hard copies of images should be kept in a locked drawer - electronic images should be in a protected folder with restricted access.
- Images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks or mobile phones. If such storage is unavoidable, the images should be kept in a password-protected folder or on a device protected with a code or some other secure method of access such as fingerprint identification.
- Avoid, if possible, using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children on behalf of the church — use only cameras or devices belonging to your organisation. This may not always be achievable but it is best practice. If personal equipment has to be used for church purposes, delete the photographs of individual children once they have been used for the purpose for which they were taken.
- For guidance on the Data Protection Act and other privacy regulations, visit the information commissioner's office (ICO) website at https://ico.org.uk Images taken by participants
- If, at a church-related event, children or adults who may be vulnerable use cameras or mobile phones to take photos of each other, or if parents or carers take photos of children or adults other than their own, they should be advised that these are for personal use only and should not be displayed in any publicly accessible space, including on the internet or social networking sites.
- Schools, including church schools, will have their own policies which apply to children on school premises or engaged in school-sponsored activities.