



Images of pupils on school web sites



Introduction

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Survey of Information and Communications Technology in Schools, 2001 estimates that 37% of primary schools, 71% of secondary schools and 33% of special schools, now have school web sites.

Including images of pupils on the school web site can be motivating for the pupils involved and provide a good opportunity to promote the work of the school. It is important to balance the potential risks of including images of pupils on the web site against the design principles of creating colourful, attractive and relevant pages, just as the school, heads and governors would do with any publication.

Schools need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of pupils on the school web site. The head and governors will need to make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and that appropriately represent the school. They will want to ensure parents support their policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of pupils, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate usage of images of children.

Providing the name and photograph of a pupil on a web site allows for the possibility of people outside of the school identifying and then contacting pupils directly. Avoiding the use of images of named individuals therefore reduces the risk of unsolicited attention.

Schools may want to include images of an individual or a group of children who have won a competition or took part in a school trip. Avoiding naming pupils who feature in the image reduces the risk of inappropriate contact.

Examples of good practice are available on the Superhighway Safety web site.

Guidelines for developing school web sites

- Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the school. An easy rule to remember is:

- **If the pupil is named, avoid using their photograph.**
- **If the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil.**
- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a pupil. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the school. A parental permission form is one way of achieving this and there is an example included in this pack.
- Use photographs of items designed and made in technology lessons, excerpts from written work and scanned images of artwork. This allows pupils to exhibit their work to a wider audience without increasing the risk of inappropriate use of images of pupils.
- Only use images of pupils in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to pupils.

First steps and things to think about...

- Establish the type of images that appropriately represent the school for the Web medium.
- Think about the level of consideration you give to the use of images of pupils in other publications, for example, the processes involved in choosing appropriate images for the school prospectus or school magazine. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of pupils used on the web site.
- Develop a procedure to ensure that only appropriate images of pupils are used on the school web site.

