



South Dartmoor Community College

Executive Head teacher | Mrs J Veal
Balland Lane | Ashburton | Devon | TQ13 7EW
01364 652230 | www.southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk

Empowering everyone to be the best they can be.



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Dear Parent / Carer

Use of Student Images and new safeguarding measures

We are writing to update you on how we use images of students at South Dartmoor Community College and to outline additional safeguarding measures we are introducing.

As technology continues to develop, including the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI), it is important that we take sensible and proportionate steps to protect our students, staff and wider school community. While incidents of AI misuse involving school images remain rare, the pace of change means it is important that we review our approach and strengthen our safeguards.

Our approach moving forward

We are reviewing whether images of children are always necessary, or whether alternative imagery (for example, photographs that do not show faces) can still effectively showcase our school. Where images of students are used, we will continue to take careful steps to minimise any potential risks.

To ensure transparency and safety, we will:

- Provide clear information to students and parents/carers about how images may be used online, including potential risks such as misuse or manipulation.
- Regularly review and reissue consent forms. We will clearly outline the risks of AI within the consent form process.
- Ensure consent processes are clear, accessible and allow for questions or withdrawal at any time.
- Make it clear that images published online may remain in the public domain even after a student has left the school. It is not possible to delete all historical images posted in the public domain.

When publishing images, we will:

- Use first names only (no surnames or initials).
- Avoid naming students in group photographs.
- Ensure identification badges or clothing initials are blurred.
- Avoid displaying certificates or sensitive information in images.
- Remove all metadata from images before publication.
- Reduce image resolution so images cannot be easily reused or enlarged.
- Disable comment facilities on social media posts.

New additional safeguarding measures

Staff are expected to:

- Avoid images where students are looking directly at the camera.
- Use over-the-shoulder or images from behind.
- Always check consent before taking or using any image, even if consent has previously been given.

Understanding the Risks

When giving consent for images to be used, it is important to understand that there are unavoidable risks associated with publishing images online. These include:

- AI manipulation of images
- Misuse of identity
- Images being shared beyond the school's control
- Increased risk for vulnerable children
- Hidden data (metadata) risks
- Long-term digital footprint

Our commitment to student safety

To make sure we do everything to ensure student safety, we will take the following precautions:

- Raw images will not be used, preventing metadata from being accessed.
- All published images will be reduced in quality to limit misuse.
- Full names will never be published alongside images.
- Student consent will always be checked at the point of capture and can be withdrawn at any time.

We appreciate that this is a sensitive area. Our aim is not to cause concern, but to ensure that we are acting responsibly and proactively in light of changing technology and safeguarding expectations. It will also mean that photos and publicity released from South Dartmoor Community College may look different from previous publications. Please be assured this is purely to safeguard students, the fundamental provision will not have changed.

If you have any questions, or if you would like to review or withdraw your consent, please do not hesitate to contact the school. Otherwise, as part of our routine safeguarding practice, you will be asked to consent in September, as your child returns to school for new academic year, for that year only.

