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### **Parents free to take photos at school events - guidance reveals**

Parents should be allowed to take photos of their children during school activities such as sports day according to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). New common sense guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office aims to dispel the myth that data protection prevents parents from taking photographs of their child and friends at sports' day.

In the past, schools have prevented parents from taking photos of their children for fear of breaching the Data Protection Act. Photographs taken purely for personal use are exempt from the Data Protection Act (DPA). This means that parents, friends and family members can take photographs of their child and friends participating in school activities for the family album and can film events at school.

Commenting on the new guidance, Assistant Commissioner, Jane Durkin says, "Our good practice guidance gives clear advice to schools about when data protection does and doesn't apply. It is common sense that parents should be able to take photographs of their child at sport's day. The Data Protection Act doesn't stop them."

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Only photos taken for official school use, such as identity passes, are covered by the Act. Pupils and students should always be made aware as to why the photographs are being taken. Photographs taken by the media are usually exempt from the Act.

To obtain a copy of the data protection good practice guidance please see the 'Good Practice Notes' section within the 'Data Protection' area of the Information Commissioner's Office website ([www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)).

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1. The Information Commissioner promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation.
2. For further media information contact Helen Ketton, Katharine Courts or James Ford on 020 7282 2960