



Safeguarding Pupil Images

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE
FOR SCHOOLS



PROTECTING CHILDREN WHILE CELEBRATING SCHOOLS

WHY IMAGE SAFETY MATTERS



Photography plays an important role in school life. It celebrates achievements, showcases learning and helps families understand what makes each school unique.

However, the online world has changed. Images shared publicly can be copied, downloaded and reused by anyone. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) have also increased the risk of photographs being manipulated or used without the knowledge of schools, parents or pupils.

Current guidance does not suggest schools should stop using photography. Instead, it encourages schools to take sensible, proportionate steps that reduce unnecessary risk while continuing to celebrate pupil achievements. The emphasis is on capturing learning, participation and school life, rather than creating highly identifiable images of individual children.

Potential risks include:

- Images being copied or shared without permission
- AI manipulation of photographs
- Children becoming identifiable through images and other online information
- Long-term digital footprints created without informed consent
- Misuse of images by unknown individuals

Our aim

To celebrate school life while placing pupil safety, privacy and wellbeing at the heart of every decision.

[Learn more about the UK Safer Internet's Guidance](#)

GOOD PRACTICE FOR PUPIL PHOTOGRAPHY

When capturing or publishing images of pupils, consider:



Consider Alternative Angles

Use photographs that focus on activities, learning experiences or group participation rather than individual face-on portraits.



Avoid Identifiable Information

Do not publish full names or personal information alongside pupil images.



Think About Image Quality

Lower-resolution images can help reduce the risk of unauthorised reuse.



Remove Metadata

Before publishing, remove location and device information embedded within image files.



Use Protective Measures

Where appropriate, consider:

- Watermarks
- Text overlays
- Strategic cropping



Review Content Regularly

Remove outdated imagery and ensure photographs remain appropriate and relevant.

EXAMPLE PHOTOS



**For Expert
Marketing Advice**
Contact Diddle
Communications



USING IMAGES ACROSS DIFFERENT PLATFORMS

Different communication channels carry different levels of risk.

Platform	Recommended Approach
School Website	Prioritise activity-based and group images. Regularly review older content.
Social Media	Use images carefully and avoid unnecessary close-up portraits of individual pupils.
Printed Materials	Follow the same safeguarding principles as digital communications.
Prospectuses & Recruitment Campaigns	Consider whether photography is necessary or whether graphics and design elements can communicate the message effectively.
Video Content	Continue following existing safeguarding and consent procedures while ensuring content remains appropriate and proportionate.

Remember

The safest image is often one that focuses on learning, participation and school life rather than identifying individual children.

AI AND PUPIL IMAGES

AI-Generated Images: What Schools Need to Know

Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing how images are created, edited and shared. While AI can be a useful tool for schools, it is important to use it responsibly and ensure pupil safety remains the priority.

Schools should take a precautionary approach when using AI-generated content and avoid practices that could compromise privacy, safeguarding or public trust.



Use AI to support communications

AI can be a valuable tool for:

- Drafting social media posts
- Generating newsletter content
- Creating marketing copy
- Brainstorming campaign ideas
- Designing layouts and graphics

Use illustrations and graphics

Create:

- Icons
- Infographics
- Abstract artwork
- Branded design elements
- Non-child illustrations

Review all AI-generated content

Always:

- Check facts and accuracy
- Ensure content reflects school values
- Review safeguarding implications
- Edit content before publication



Don't upload real pupil photographs into AI tools

Avoid:

- Image generators
- AI photo editors
- AI enhancement tools

Don't create AI versions of pupils

Never use AI to:

- Recreate a pupil's appearance
- Generate alternative versions of photographs
- Alter facial features

Don't use AI-generated children

Even fictional AI-generated children can:

- Be mistaken for real pupils
- Create safeguarding concerns
- Undermine trust with families
- Raise ethical questions about authenticity

Don't enter sensitive information into AI platforms

Avoid sharing personal data, pupil information, safeguarding information or confidential school data.

REMOVING METADATA FROM IMAGES

What is metadata?

When a photo is taken, hidden information is often stored within the image file. This is known as metadata or EXIF data.

Metadata can include:

- Date and time the image was taken
- Location information (GPS coordinates)
- Device or camera details
- File ownership information

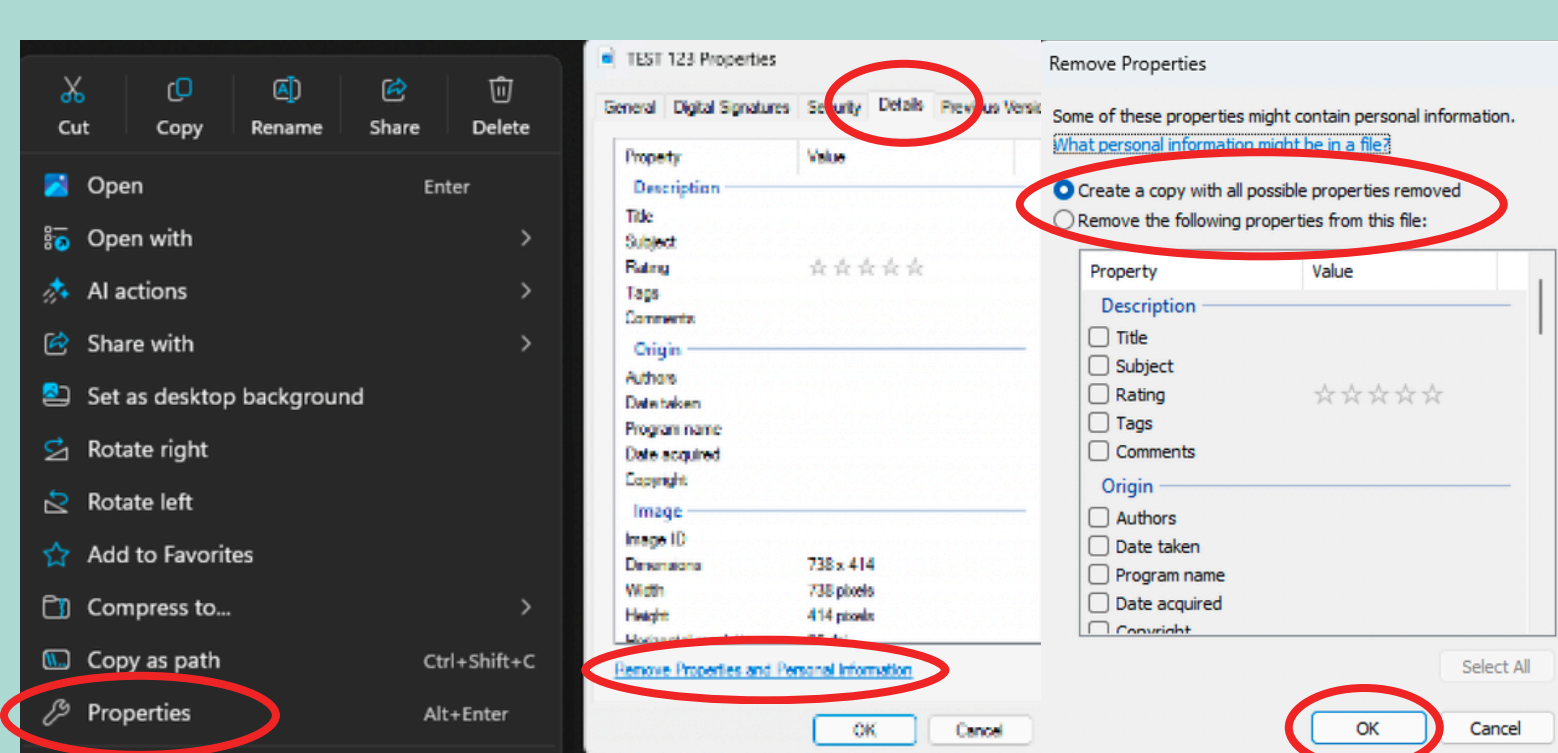
While this information is usually invisible when viewing a photograph, it can sometimes be accessed by others if the image is shared online.

Removing metadata is a simple way to reduce the amount of information attached to an image and supports good safeguarding and data protection practice.

Whilst these steps do not prevent someone from harvesting images on public platforms, it is a useful step in ensuring associated metadata is kept to a necessary minimum.

PC/Windows

1. Right-click the image file and select Properties and then the Details tab.
2. Click Remove Properties and Personal Information at the bottom of the window.
3. Choose from 'Create a copy with all possible properties removed' or 'Remove the following properties from this file'.
4. Check the resulting file using Step 1 above to ensure the metadata has been successfully removed.



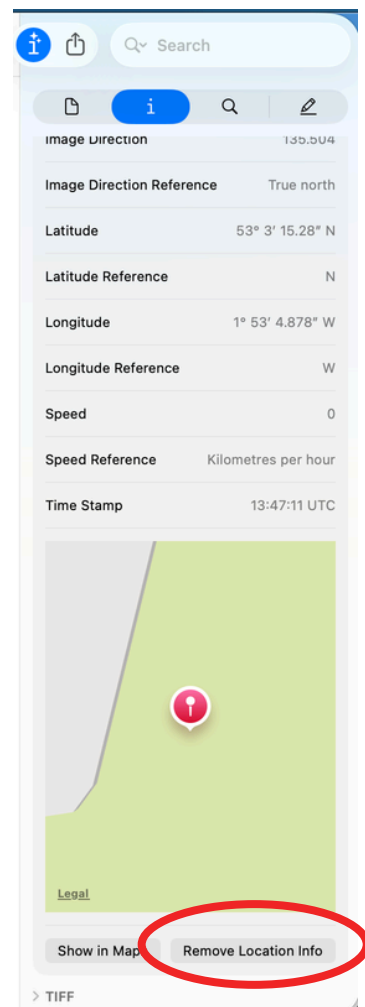
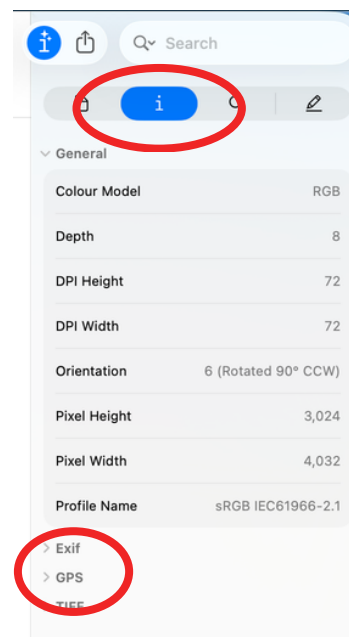
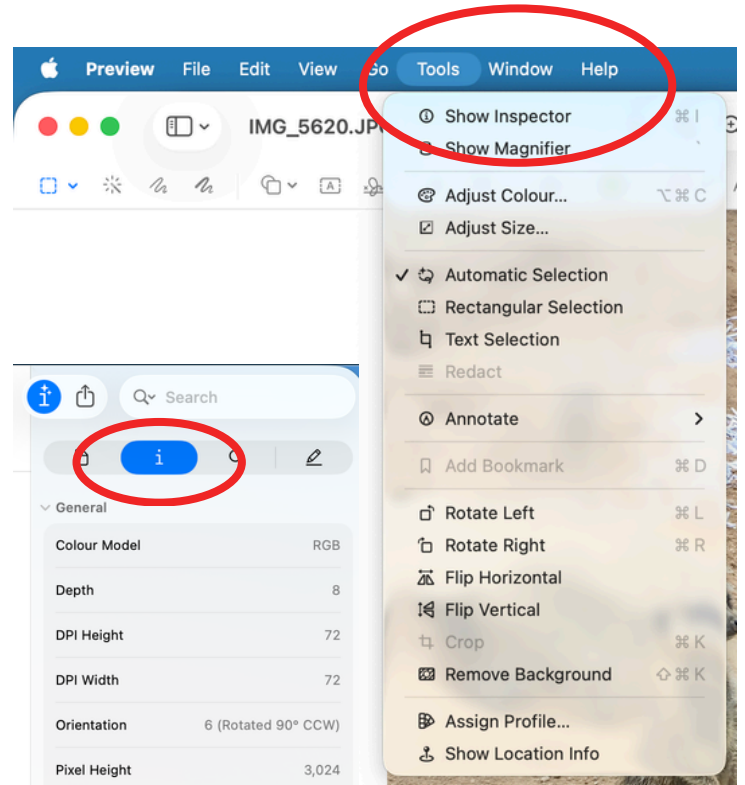
REMOVING METADATA FROM IMAGES

Newer macOS Versions

1. Open the image in Preview (double-click the image).
2. Click Tools > Show Inspector
3. Open the GPS tab within the Inspector window.
4. Scroll down and click: Remove Location Info.
5. Click Save.

Older macOS Versions

1. Open the image in Preview (double-click the image).
2. Click File > Export
3. Under Info, ensure the box 'Include Location Information' is NOT checked.
4. Ensure the image title does not contain identifiable information.
5. Click Save and then check the resulting file using Step 1 above.



Quick Tip

Images taken on mobile phones are the most likely to contain GPS metadata and should always be checked before being published online.