

PHOTOGRAPHIC CONSENT - Safeguarding, image-taking & the use of images

This policy includes all photographic devices such as digital and non-digital cameras, mobile phones, headcams and other wearable cams.

Both competitors and the organisers of the SLMM like taking images either photographs or video. In general, SLMM is keen to promote the sport of Mountain Marathons and keen to support parents and guardians in celebrating and publicising their children's achievements and successes. We are also aware of the benefits of using video as a tool for coaching.

However, the use of photos and videos on websites and social media, and in posters, the press or other publications, can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people if not managed correctly.

The SLMM has to balance the benefits and risks associated with the taking and using of images.

The guidance is broken into three sections: the taking of images, the use of images and responding to concerns.

In summary:

The taking of images

The SLMM has agreed to go down a route of encouraging photography and will actively promote this decision. The SLMM is proactively promoting guidance to all spectators, competitors and members of the public and competitors about any specific areas where photography is not permitted under any circumstances (for example toilets).

Parents, guardians or carers who have a reason to be sensitive about the children they are responsible for are advised to ensure that this is made clear on the permissions form at registration. As they will be present at all times throughout the race, they will be aware of any other competitor or spectators taking photographs. We ask that if a parent or carer asks a spectator not to take a photograph, that the request is respected. The official SLMM photographers will be aware of any team who has expressed a wish not to be photographed.

People involved in the SLMM are encouraged to report any concerns they may have about anyone's behaviour in this context to the Organiser.

Using images

Think carefully before using or sharing any images showing children and young people on a website or on social media.

We request that images are used that present the activity in a positive light and promote the best aspects of The SLMM.

Avoid supplying the full name(s) of the child or children along with the image(s), unless this is considered necessary, is in the child's best interests, and the child and parent have consented.

Avoid using images showing the full face and body of a child; avoid images and camera angles that may be more prone to misinterpretation or misuse than others.

1. The taking of images by parents, competitors or spectators at events

A significant proportion of spectators (especially competitors' family and friends) will want to, and will, take photos or videos at the SLMM.

The publication of photos and videos on websites and social media can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people.

What are the risks?

Taking or producing inappropriate or illegal images of children:

Primarily there is a risk that images of children may be inappropriate in content or style. Some individuals deliberately target sports activities and set out to take inappropriate photos (for example of children changing, or in the toilet) in ways that are potentially illegal and harmful.

In other cases, images may be inappropriate in that they appear ambiguous and can easily be used inappropriately and out of context by others (for example images when a child may be injured).

Images can easily be copied and adapted, perhaps to create child abuse images, which can then find their way into the public domain on websites or social media.

Children may be identified, located, "groomed" or contacted.

Including personal details about a child (full name, address), for example on social media, can make them identifiable and therefore vulnerable to individuals looking to locate, contact and 'groom' children for abuse. Even if these details are kept confidential, other details accompanying the images (school or club they belong to, or their favourite sports person or team) can also be used to groom the child.

This also increases the risk of identification of, and contact with, a child by someone in circumstances where this is illegal or otherwise potentially harmful. For example, if the child is in Local Authority care or an adoptive family; or where it is potentially dangerous to reveal the child's whereabouts to an estranged parent due to previous concerns about domestic violence.

The term "grooming" refers to the process of a potential abuser using their knowledge of and/or relationship with a child to manipulate the child (and often adults around them) in order to create opportunities for sexually abusive behaviour.

Potential impact on children affected

The effects on children and young people of grooming or sexually abusive experiences can be devastating and life changing. Young people who have experienced online grooming or whose images have been misused and/or shared through social media often find this as traumatic and damaging as other, more direct, forms of sexual abuse.

There have been instances where identification of children through images and information appearing in public media have resulted in the breakdown of children's foster or adoptive family placements due to the intervention of adults who have subsequently traced them. Some children have also been put at risk when identified and traced by adults (known to them or not) with bad intent.

How can these risks be minimised?

The SLMM clarifies and promotes safe photography for the event to all staff, volunteers, spectators, parents and young participants.

Parents and spectators should be warned that there can be negative consequences to sharing images linked to information about their own or other people's children. Care should be taken about 'tagging' pictured children on social media, including Facebook or Twitter.

The SLMM has established procedures to respond to and manage any concerns arising, including clear reporting structures and a system to contact police when necessary.

Parental consents are required for photography at The SLMM and all competitors sign that they have read the photography policy as part of registration. The policy is clear to all participants and parents ahead of the event on the event website.

This approach has the advantage of not requiring any registration system (other than for official/professional photographers attending the event). It focuses more on the concerning aspects of photography being undertaken, rather than photography itself. It acknowledges that many spectators will wish to take photographs, while also promoting safeguarding messages (eg through event programmes, signage or announcements).

This system does however rely on an awareness of what behaviours should raise concerns, and of the event's process for reporting and responding to reported concerns.

How should you respond to concerns?

All staff and competitors should be informed that if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography (in terms of the way, by whom, or where photography is being undertaken), these should be reported to the event organiser.

Any concerns must be dealt with in the same way as any other child safeguarding issues; the lead child safeguarding officer must be informed. If there are concerns or suspicions about potentially criminal behaviour this should include referral to the police.

How are messages about event photography be publicised?

The SLMM will publish its photography policy on the official event website before the event. All competitors will sign that they have read and understood the policy as part of the registration process.

However, if there are any indications or concerns that an individual may be taking images of children/young people that are inappropriate or illegal, this should immediately be reported to the organisers who have responsibility for contacting the police.

The SLMM has a responsibility to report any issues through its procedures.

What to do when using official/professional photographers

The SLMM will ensure that children and parents are aware that a photographer will be active at the event, and consent has been obtained through the permission slip.

The SLMM will check the photographer's identity, the validity of their role, and the purpose/use of the images to be taken.

The SLMM will Issue the photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times.

The SLMM will provide the photographer with a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of image content and their behaviour.

SLMM will clarify areas where all photography is prohibited (toilets, changing areas, and so on).

The SLMM will inform the photographer about how to identify and avoid taking images of children without the required parental photography consent.

The SLMM will not allow unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions.

When photographic consent is not given

The SLMM organisers have a responsibility to put in place arrangements to ensure that any official/professional photographers can identify or be informed about which adults/children should not be subject to close-up photography.

This will involve providing wrist band (perhaps a different colour to 'consented' young people – ideally something easily recognisable but not stigmatising for the child), and/or a system for photographers to check with the organiser and/or team manager to clarify which groups or individuals should not feature in images. It must be emphasised to any photographer that the use of images with these 'unconsented' children included will not be permitted.

SLMM will happily remove any images from our own website, or those of our professional photographers.

2. Using photographs and videos of children and young people

Using photographs and videos of children and young people in sport for publication, promotion, press, or for coaching purposes is common in sport. The SLMM benefit from using images of young participants to promote and celebrate activities, events and competitions. Parents and children generally welcome opportunities to celebrate or publicise their achievements. Some coaches may want to use photographs or videos as a tool to support a young athlete's skill development.

However, the use of photos and videos on websites and social media, and in posters, the press or other publications, can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people if not managed correctly.

How can the risks (in 1. Above) be minimised?

Think carefully before using any images showing children and young people on a website or social media.

Only use the type of images that present the activity in a positive light and promote the best aspects of the event.

Avoid supplying the full name(s) of the child or children along with the image(s), unless this is considered necessary, is in the child's best interests, and the child and parent have consented.

Only use images of children in suitable dress/kit.

There are many activities children can be involved in but clearly, some activities may present a higher risk for potential misuse than others. Where possible images of these activities should: focus on the activity rather than a particular child

Avoid showing the full face and body of a child.

Avoid images and camera angles that may be more prone to misinterpretation or misuse than others.

4. How will The SLMM respond to concerns?

All staff, and competitors are informed that if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography (in terms of the way, by whom, or where photography is being undertaken), these should be reported to the event organiser. The issue will be logged on the incident form.

Any reported concerns are dealt with in the same way as any other child protection issue, ensuring that the safeguarding lead officer is informed. If there are concerns or suspicions about potentially criminal behaviour this should include referral to the police.

Concerns about professional photographers should also be reported to the event organiser.

Updated JFW 26/06/26