



Context

The escalation of AI use on social media platforms in the last year has led us to review our policy and principles around the images we share – especially of young people and children. The dramatic increase in amateur AI tools, as well as the proliferation of AI-generated images on all platforms, means that traditional approaches to consent and image usage no longer feel valid or adequate. We do not believe consent to be informed or meaningful when the use and manipulation of an image is now impossible to determine or even guess.

As such, we have decided to implement the following principles at the Ernest Cook Trust:

What we are changing:

1. We will no longer include photography or videography with identifiable faces of children on our public digital channels.
2. We will never name children or young people in our comms (even when unidentifiable) and we will only name adults when they have explicitly consented to be named.
3. We will only include the faces of children or young people in rare cases where the person in question is a paid actor or model. In these cases, we will require consent from parents/guardians and (in the case of children over the age of 13) the young person.

Some exceptions:

4. We will make a case-by-case decision on photography or videography of children or young people that our partner organisations share, based on whether we are further amplifying the reach of this content, how identifiable it is, and what its purpose is.
5. We will allow the continued use of photography and videography of young people that is necessary for internal purposes i.e. to document programme delivery where this is a requirement of the course or programme.
6. We will continue to feature identifiable faces of adults as long as they are a) not deemed a vulnerable person and b) photographs or videos are supplied with fully-informed consent. This also applies to young people over the age of 18 who participate in our Youth Advisory Board and 18+ participants of our Influencer Schemes.

How we will communicate our impact:

7. We will allow the use of children's voices through audio files, to capture the richness of young people's experiences without exploiting their identity. We will never name children or young people in an audio file, wherever it is used (we may use false names).
8. We will introduce illustrations into our brand toolkit to supplement our visual imagery, by both professional artists and the children and young people we work with.
9. We will endeavour to remove photography and videography taken or shared prior to September 2026 that does not adhere to these guidelines, but we cannot be held accountable for this.