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Guidance

Copyright licences for state schools in England

Guidance on copyright licences and how copyright affects schools.

From: [Department for Education](#)

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Applies to England

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The Department for Education (DfE) buys copyright licences for all state-funded primary and secondary schools in England – covering schools for almost all their copyright requirements.

Purchasing these licences directly means that DfE can save schools money and the administrative time involved in applying for many different licences.

The licences mean you can copy, re-use and share content from a wide range of sources within your school for non-commercial, educational purposes.

Related content

[Changes to Section 72: Public showing or playing of broadcasts](#)

[Revised guidance issued under section 182 \(June 2014\)](#)

[How the IPO regulates licensing bodies](#)

[Licensing bodies and collective management organisations](#)

[Personal licence \(Scotland\)](#)

Your school leadership (head and chair of governors) needs to make sure that:

- all intended activities are covered adequately by the licences
- all staff follow the terms and conditions

For more information on what content you can use, and how to gain other permissions, contact the relevant organisation from the following list.

The copyright licences cover a range of content from printed materials to radio and TV broadcasts:

- [Copyright Licensing Agency \(CLA\)](#), for copying text and still images from most books, journals and magazines plus a range of digital publications
- [Printed Music Licencing Ltd \(PMLL\)](#) provides the Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML) which allows a copy or arrangement to be made of sheet music from printed music publications. The licence is administered by the [Centre for Education and Finance Management \(CEFM\)](#). The collection of information on works copied and arranged under the licence is operated by [Every Copy Counts](#)
- [NLA Media Access](#), for copying from newspapers and magazines. The Copyright Licensing Agency administers this licence and has information on [copying from print and digital newspapers](#)
- [Educational Recording Agency](#), for recording and use of radio and television programmes and clips, including catch-up services like BBC iPlayer, for educational use. The Centre for Education & Finance Management administers this licence and [operates a helpdesk for schools providing information about the licence](#)
- [Performing Right Society Ltd](#), for musical performances. The Centre for Education and Finance Management administers [this licence](#)
- [Phonographic Performance Ltd](#), for playing recorded music. The Centre for Education and Finance Management administers [this licence](#)
- [The Mechanical Copyright Protection Society](#), for making CDs and DVDs containing copyright music. The Centre for Education and Finance Management administers [this licence](#)
- [Filmbankmedia](#) and [Motion Picture Licensing Company](#) for showing films
- [Christian Copyright Licensing International](#) for copying and projecting hymns and other Christian music

If you require a copy of any of these licences, or further information about them, you should contact the relevant copyright management organisation (or, where applicable, its agent) listed above.

We encourage schools to make the best use of these licences. For example, the [Educational Recording Agency](#) offers links to broadcast resources and provides a collection of case studies showing how teachers use television and radio effectively in their lessons.

The Mechanical Copyright Protection Society licence allows schools to make recordings of student performances and sell copies to generate income.

The licences don't cover:

- images on websites, unless the website is covered by the CLA or NLA Media Access – you can check using CLA's [Check Permissions tool](#)
- content accessed directly from YouTube
- some extra-curricular activities, for example showing films to a paying audience; please contact the relevant organisation

The CLA's [Check Permissions tool](#) enables you to check whether you can copy from a particular publication under the terms of the CLA and NLA Media Access licences. (Remember that images copied under these licences are covered for internal distribution within the school, but not for sharing on a public facing website.) It also helps you to check whether you can copy from a particular publication under the terms of the Schools Printed Music Licence.

You can also use the CLA's [Education Platform](#) if your school is covered by the CLA Education Licence. The platform provides access to digital versions of books, allowing you to copy and share a portion of each book you or your school owns.

Teachers can access free resources by using [Every Copy Counts](#), the data collection programme for the SPML. Resources available include approaches to composing and songwriting, webinars on composers and guides to careers in the music publishing industry. These are available through the resource section of the [PMLL](#) portal, in return for submitting information on the works used under the licence.

Educational establishments covered by the DfE scheme:

- local-authority-maintained schools (including maintained nurseries)
- academies
- free schools
- special schools (these are schools for children with special educational needs or disabilities)
- non-maintained special schools
- pupil referral units (these provide education for children who can't attend a mainstream school)

Educational establishments not covered by the DfE scheme:

- sixth-form colleges
- local-authority-maintained schools that provide only for 16- to 19-year-olds
- academies that provide only for 16- to 19-year-olds
- independent fee-paying schools

Independent fee-paying schools can obtain information from the [Independent Association of Prep Schools](#) or the [Centre for Education and Finance Management](#).

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