

Kate Middleton, the Daily Mirror and the PCC

Lawyers for Kate Middleton have informed the Press Complaints Commission that her complaint about the Daily Mirror has been settled following the newspaper's prompt public expression of regret and admission of error. This came after the Commission began a formal investigation into the complaint that a photograph published in the paper had been taken in circumstances that amounted to harassment.

The PCC would like to remind all editors of the need to refrain from using photographs when the subject of the picture has asked the photographer to stop photographing them, and there is no obvious public interest reason for persisting. In this case, Kate Middleton has made repeatedly clear to the press – through the Commission, to photographers, and to editors directly – that she objects to being followed by photographers when she is on her own going about her daily business and there is no specific public interest reason for following her. Failure to respect this request has, in the case of the Daily Mirror, resulted in a rare formal complaint to the Commission under Clause 4 (Harassment).

The Commission's 24 hour anti-harassment service – which is available to everyone regardless of fame or position – successfully deals with almost all harassment problems before the need to make a formal complaint arises.

ENDS

Notes

1. The photograph under complaint was published on page 22 of the Daily Mirror on Thursday 29th March. The complaint was made to the Commission on the same day, and a formal investigation commenced immediately.
2. The newspaper issued a public statement expressing regret on Friday 30th March, which it published on page 2 of its edition on Saturday 31st March.
3. Clause 4 of the Code of Practice states that journalists must not "persist in questioning, telephoning, pursuing or photographing individuals once asked to desist; nor remain on their property when asked to leave and must not follow them". Editors must take care to ensure that material that they use from third parties is compliant with this requirement.
4. For more information, contact Stephen Abell on 020 7831 0022.

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