How to Film a WE ARE... Virtual Tour

This guide is for when you are ready to start filming. For more information about getting started see "The importance of planning guide"

We recommend that the virtual tour photography takes place during daylight hours in an empty location.

Plan

Plan for which rooms and areas in the school you want to include in the tour.

- It's helpful to get a floor plan before filming. This will be a map of the building you can use to navigate with. This way you'll know which rooms are which as you're taking the panoramas.
- Has anything changed in the building since the floor plan was made? Has an area become blocked off or moved? If this is the case, make changes to your floor plan as you go along. This will help you when it comes to putting the tour together.
- Only include rooms relevant to the young people. If a young person wouldn't usually be able to access a room, then they shouldn't be able to access it in the tour either.
- Make sure your tour links together. If you take a 360-degree panoramic photo inside a room, you might also need one outside the door of the room and the corridor that leads to it. Otherwise the viewer may teleport to random areas without knowing where they're going.

Use a weighted stand for the camera. Be aware of the width of the tripod feet when taking the images, otherwise these need to be edited from the final versions.

It may be good to use an average child's height for the stand, keeping the camera at the same height for all the shots.

Attach the 360-degree camera to the weighted stand and connect to a tablet or phone:

- In its protective case, the camera can screw onto the top of the stand. Make sure the camera is level (not at an angle).
- There are only 2 buttons on the camera, and you usually only need to use one - the on/off button. Turn the camera on, and load up the corresponding app on your tablet or phone.
- The camera transmits its own WiFi signal, which the tablet or phone can connect to. The first time you use the camera with a particular tablet or phone, you'll need to verify the connection over Bluetooth also.
- When connected, there is a big button on the app to control the camera. Make sure it is set to "Photo" to take indoor panoramic photos, or "HDR Photo" for outdoor ones. HDR will help make sure that the sun isn't too bright, or that shadows aren't too dark.

Put the camera in an empty space, hide nearby to take the 360-degree panoramic photo (or "panorama") by pressing the record button on the app, then wait for the photo to be taken. Repeat this step for as many areas as needed.

With good planning, you can take 20 – 30 panoramas per hour.

Find out more online

To view 'We are' virtual tour examples visit **acorns-soton.org.uk**

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DO

✔ Number the panoramas
(write the number on the floor plan or map, for the location of each panorama).

✔ Watch out for any signs or text that get merged in the blind spots – the sides of the camera.

✔ For corridors and rooms, you can take one panorama in the corridor outside a closed door, then take another one inside the room with a closed door. This means when people explore the virtual tour, they can click on the doors and see what it's like inside.
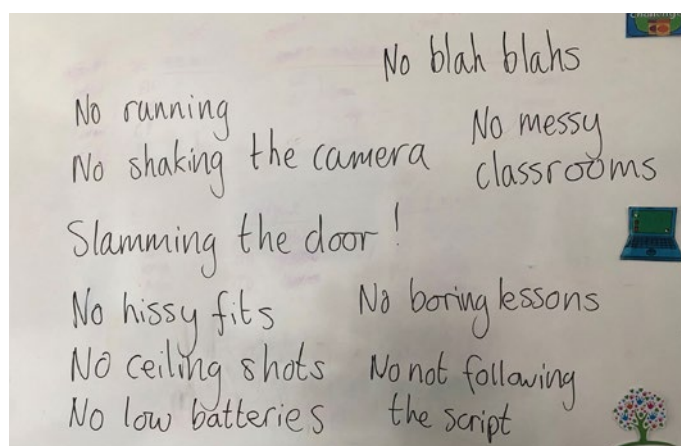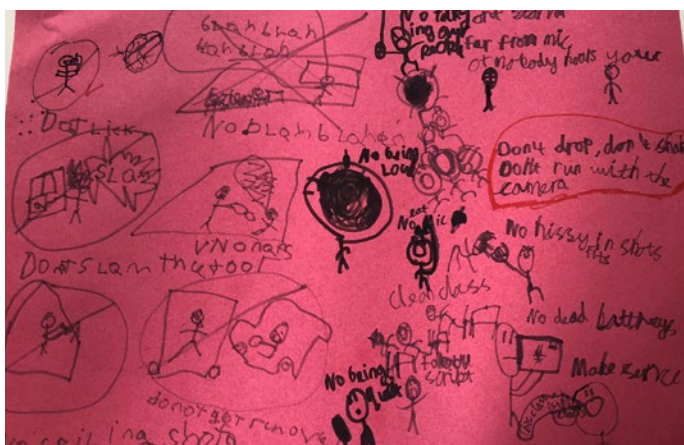
DON'T

✘ Avoid getting people in the panoramas.

✘ Try to reduce reflective surfaces as much as possible for example, you could film with all the blinds down, computer screens off, and the lights on.

Bloopers!

Here are some ideas of how to avoid bloopers in your 'We are' Virtual Tour courtesy of young people from New Forest School:

- No running
- No shaking the camera
- Don't slam doors
- No hissy fits
- No ceiling shots
- Make sure you have sufficient batteries
- Don't say blah blah
- No messy classrooms

- No boring lessons
- Don't go off script
- No rudeness
- No whispering
- No swearing
- No disrespect (make sure photos/personal details removed from filming areas, don't film someone who doesn't want to be filmed or hasn't got consent)

- No licking the camera or eating the mic
- Don't stand too far from the camera mic
- Don't get run over (when filming the car park)
- Don't drop the camera

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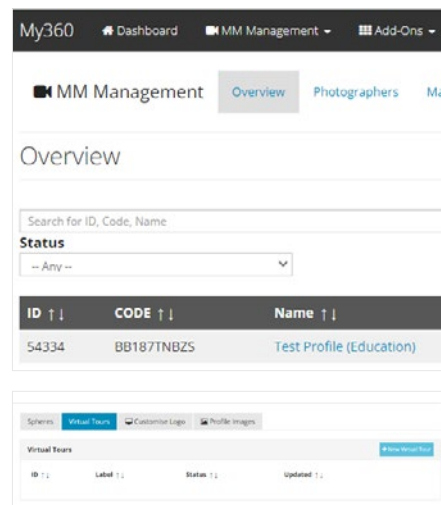
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After taking panoramas on an Insta360 camera, they need to be processed through the corresponding software and exported as JPEG images. You can then rename these JPEG images to the numbers marked down on the floor plan, so that you can see where each one is.

Next, you can upload them to an online tool such as my360tours.com

On my360, follow the Management menu to an Overview page, where you can create a new profile. This will allow you to upload your panoramas – called "spheres" in my360 – for a particular location.

You can then label each panorama by clicking the small pencil on paper icon, and then typing the name of the place depicted. This will make it much easier to edit the tour, and anyone using the tour will need to see these labels.

In my360, to access the virtual tour itself, click the "Virtual Tours" tab and "New Virtual Tour" to create one. To edit the virtual tour, click the small pencil on paper icon.

Tour settings

When you create a tour, the first thing you will see is the Tour settings menu. Tick Select all to include all panoramas, then use the Tour start scene drop-down menu to set the first panorama people will see.

On the next tab of Tour settings, simply called "Settings", you can title your tour, then turn on "Overwrite defaults".

You will want to change the Tour colour to black (000000), the Transition type to Fast Blend, and Auto rotate to 0 (disabled), so that your tour is more accessible.

On the next tab of Tour settings, called "Menu", you can create the menu that users will see when accessing the tour. To do this, simply drag each panorama to the right-hand list, in the order you want people to see and navigate them. This can be re-ordered later if necessary.

Finally, click the Floorplan tab and – if you intend to include a floor plan or map in the virtual tour – turn on Enable Floorplan. Then press Save to save and enter the virtual tour editor.

You can access the Tour settings menu again at any time during editing, by clicking the three cogs icon at the top left of the editor screen.

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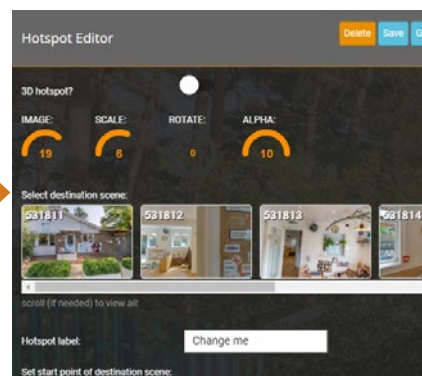## Ordering scenes and setting default views

On the right-hand side of the editor, you can drag panoramas up or down into the same order as your menu. This will help with navigating panoramas within the editor.

On each panorama, you can drag the screen to the best view of the panorama that you would like users to see when they tap on that panorama. Then, click "Set default View", which will make this the first view of the panorama that someone will see.

You can press the save icon at any time, and Publish Tour at any time to make the latest changes visible to others.

Adding directional hotspots

To add a hotspot, click the blue circle and drag it to wherever you want on the screen. Once you've put it in place, an option wheel will appear. To add a directional hotspot, which is a clickable arrow (that will take users to the next panorama), click the icon with the up arrow.

Choose a hotspot which stands out against most backgrounds. The best is probably Image number 1. This is a circled arrow, which will point forwards by default.

Select a destination scene, then a start point for this, which is the initial view of the scene when the hotspot is clicked on. Then click the "Save" button. Clicking on the hotspot again will allow you to move it around and change anything, but crucially, it will let you press the "Goto" button which takes you to the next scene.

Once on the next scene, drag the mouse cursor to move your view of the scene around to the opposite direction, and you should find the reverse hotspot (which is auto-generated by my360) that is meant to lead a user back to the previous scene. Usually it will not be in exactly the right place, so drag it around to wherever is best.

Find out more online

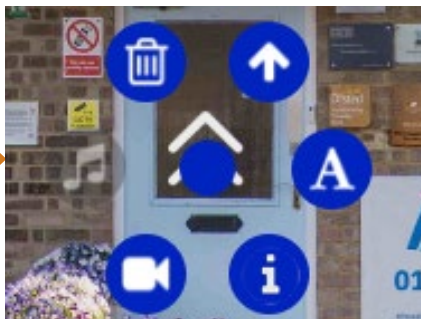To view 'We are' virtual tour examples visit **acorns-soton.org.uk**

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Video hotspots

To add a video hotspot, drag the blue circle onto the screen and then click the video camera icon.

Follow the instructions in the menu by selecting video provider (YouTube or Vimeo) and pasting in only the first ID number after the URL as indicated.

Adding a floor plan

To add a floor plan or map, click the floorplan icon on the top right. This will take you to the Floorplan Editor, where you can upload a floorplan ("Add a new Level"), and drag as many spots to the plan as you want. Clicking on each spot will let you connect the spot to a panorama of your choice.

The clearest spot colours should be Stroke Color: #000 for black, and Fill Color: #fff for white. You can press "SET AS DEFAULT" for every new hotspot to use these settings.

If you have more than one floorplan to add – for example, multiple floors, or an outdoors and an indoors – you can "Add a new Level", and put spots on that one too. You can also change the order that people will see these levels in the tour by pressing "MOVE UP" or "MOVE DOWN" on the left-hand side.

Finally, back on each panorama, you can drag the screen to the view that would face "north" on the floor plan (not necessarily the real north). Then, click the red N arrow icon.

"Set current view as North", and this will help users see what direction they're facing on the map.

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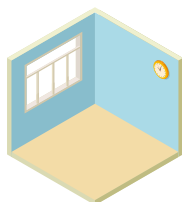# How to Film a WE ARE... Virtual Tour

Remember!

Check the weather before you film so that you can avoid the rain is possible. This will help when filming outside but rain can also affect indoor shoots, as the lighting through the windows may make the room dim.

Ideally, filming needs to be carried out in empty rooms so that spaces can be captured clearly.

Discuss the plan with site management to ensure that there is no other planned work going on at that time - builders or maintenance or cleaners will be visible in the panoramic images.

Check that all equipment is a) working, b) fully charged, and c) has enough storage in the SD Card. You will need to charge batteries for the camera and the phone or tablet that connects to it.

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To view an animated version of this guide visit acorns-soton.org.uk

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