Guidance about your school website – taken from www.clerktogovernors.co.uk

Maintained schools are required to publish their exam and assessment results online. The current advice from the DfE (as published 2014) says:

"Most recent key stage 2 (KS2) results

- *percentage of pupils who achieved level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths*
- *percentage of pupils who have improved by 2 or more levels in reading, writing and maths between KS1 and KS2*
- *percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 or above in reading and writing*
- *percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 or above in maths" (END)*

Contents

- Guidance from the Academies Financial Handbook 2015 about the publication of information about **academy** governance on websites "in a readily accessible format" (para 2.5.2) *(July 2015, with effect from **September 2015**)*
- Updated information about publication of **information about governors** in **maintained** schools *(**August 2015**) – in a "readily accessible form"*
- Some general comments about websites and what they say about your school
- A **list of the statutory content** for your school website (See: https://www.gov.uk/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online) including revised (**Sept 2015**) specification for KS2 results following the withdrawal of levels.
- Some ideas for other useful features of school websites
- Warnings about recent Ofsted inspections prompted by non-compliant websites

NB This page has been revised/updated in September 2015.

Introduction

Schools are required to publish certain information online – which in practice means you **must** have a school website. Before embarking on an audit of the style and contents of your website, one discussion that might usefully take place is why the school needs a website at all – what is its purpose? A marketing tool, a portal for your VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), a source of information for current and prospective parents, ... or ONLY to fulfil the DfE requirement for your school to publish key information online ?

August 2015: The Academies Financial Handbook (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook-2015) issued in July 2015 now says:

"Paragraph 2.5.2
In the interests of transparency, an academy trust must publish on its website up-to-date details of its governance arrangements in a **readily accessible format**. This must include:
• the **structure and remit of the members**, board of trustees, its **committees** and local governing bodies, and the full names of the chair of each (where applicable)
• for each **member** who has served at any point over the past 12 months, their full names, date of appointment, date they stepped down (where applicable), and relevant business and pecuniary interests including governance roles in other educational institutions
• for **each trustee and local governor** who has served at any point over the past 12 months, their full **names**, date of appointment, **term of office**, date they stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them (in accordance with the trust's articles), and relevant business and pecuniary interests including **governance roles in other educational institutions**
• for each trustee their **attendance records** at board and committee meetings over the last academic year
• for each local governor their **attendance records** at local governing body meetings over the last academic year"

*Q. What does "**readily accessible format**" mean? It means that the information should be published directly onto a webpage, not squirreled away / recorded within the depths of a lengthy pdf that has to be downloaded and scanned for the relevant paragraphs. "Trusts should ensure*

their governance information is readily accessible on a webpage without the need to download or open a separate document."

Update August 2015: Schools should [publish on their website, in a readily accessible form, information about governors, and a register of interests](#). (New **statutory guidance** August 14th 2015):

Publication of Governor's Details and the Register of Interests

25. Governors hold an important public office and their identity should be known to their school and wider communities. In the interests of transparency, a governing body should publish on its website up-to-date details of its governance arrangements in a readily accessible form**. (*NB**Readily accessible means that the information should be on a webpage without the need to download or open a separate document.*) This should include:
    a) the structure and remit of the governing body and any committees, and the full names of the chair of each;
    b) for each governor who has served at any point over the past 12 months:

- *their full names, date of appointment, term of office, date they stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them (in accordance with the governing body's instrument of government),*

- *relevant business and pecuniary interests (as recorded in the register of interests) including:*

- *governance roles in other educational institutions;*

- *any material interests arising from relationships between governors or relationships between governors and school staff (including spouses, partners and close relatives); and*

- *their attendance record at governing body and committee meetings over the last academic year.*

26. *Governing bodies should also publish this information for associate members, making clear whether they have voting rights on any of the committees to which they have been appointed.*

27. *Governing bodies should make it clear in their code of conduct that this information will be published on their governors and any associate members. Any governor failing to provide information to enable the governing body to fulfil their responsibilities may be in breach of the code of conduct and as a result be bringing the governing body into disrepute. In such cases the governing body should consider suspending the governor.* (END)

b) The Ofsted School Inspection Handbook (re-issued for **September 2015**) reminds **inspectors** that they: "must use all available evidence to develop an initial picture of the school's academic performance. Planning for the inspection must be informed by analysis of: (*........ and*) information on the **school's website**, including its statement on the use of the pupil premium, in primary schools the PE and sport premium, the statutory sharing with parents of curriculum information (so the lead inspector can start to assess the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum and whether it is likely to promote preparation for and an appreciation of life in modern Britain), the special educational needs (SEN) information report, the presence and suitability of the safeguarding guidance, taking into account current government requirements, information about the promotion of equality of opportunity and other information for parents" (para 29 of **DRAFT** handbook)

c) There is currently no statutory requirement for maintained schools to publish an **annual governance statement**, but it was suggested by the DfE that this would be good practice.   The Governors' handbook now **says that schools "should" publish such a statement**, though it doesn't actually say "must". (January 2015) NB. See update to statutory guidance, issued March 2015.

d) The recent report by Peter Clarke on the Trojan Horse allegations included the following suggestion – which is not mandatory (yet):
"**Recommendation 13**.
"*All schools should include details on their website of their governing body. This should include the full name of the individuals, along with any committees they attend; the method of appointment (eg whether a local authority appointment or an elected parent governor); and the expected*

period of the appointment, in order to promote transparency over the running of schools." (July 22nd 2014)

Sir Michael Wilshaw HMCI, in a [speech back in February 2012](#), said that: "The good head thinks carefully about how to prepare for an inspection by **ensuring the website is up-to-date** with information on school evaluation, development planning, the school timetable, etc."

It is probably worth considering what view inspectors will form of your school's ethos and practice based on their experience of visiting your school website ..... why make it so difficult for them to track down all the statutory content?

So, what should a school website include?

September 2014: The DfE has provided an up-to-date list of all the information to be published on the website of a maintained school: https://www.gov.uk/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online

Here are some examples of excellent school websites which seem to tick a lot of boxes in their content and style. Do you know another one which should be featured? Tell us ...

- [Moortown Primary](#) – see in particular their [report from committee chairs](#)
- [Eastwick Junior School](#)
- [Jack Hunt School – a Specialist Language and Sports College](#)
- [Capel St Mary](#) (see their [School Improvement section](#))
- Other suggestions include:
- [Friarswood Primary](#)
- [Polesden Lacey Infants](#)
- [Aldercar Community Language College](#)
- Heath S[chool's website,](#) showing how they report on the pupil premium.
- The [governors' blog](#) for the Federation of North Walsham Junior, Infants and Nursery Schools
- Ball Green Primary – [examples of how the school has responded to feedback](#) from parents.

NEW (August 2015)

[Statutory guidance setting out the arrangements for the constitution of school governing bodies](#) was re-published on 14th August 2015. (*Statutory guidance is issued by law; you must follow it unless there's a good reason not to.*)

The guidance says:
Publication of Governor's Details and the Register of Interests

25. Governors hold an important public office and their identity should be known to their school and wider communities. In the interests of transparency, a governing body should publish on its website up-to-date details of its governance arrangements in a **readily accessible form****. (*NB**Readily accessible means that the information should be on a webpage without the need to download or open a separate document.*) This should include:
a) the structure and remit of the governing body and any committees, and the full names of the chair of each;
b) for each governor who has served at any point over the past 12 months:

- their full names, date of appointment, term of office, date they stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them (in accordance with the governing body's instrument of government),

- relevant business and pecuniary interests (as recorded in the register of interests) including:

- governance roles in other educational institutions;

- any material interests arising from relationships between governors or relationships between governors and school staff (including spouses, partners and close relatives); and

- their attendance record at governing body and committee meetings over the last academic year.

26. Governing bodies should also publish this information for **associate members**, making clear whether they have voting rights on any of the committees to which they have been appointed.

27. Governing bodies should make it clear in their **code of conduct** that this information will be published on their governors and any associate members. Any governor failing to provide information to enable the governing body to fulfil their responsibilities may be in breach of the code of conduct and as a result be bringing the governing body into disrepute. In such cases the governing body should consider suspending the governor.

Statutory Content

(Information required by [legislation](#) to be published online.)

School contact details

- your school's name
- your school's postal address
- your school's telephone number
- the name of the member of staff who deals with queries from parents and other members of the public

Admission arrangements

Either: publish your school's admission arrangements, explaining how you will consider applications for every age group, including:

- arrangements you have in place for selecting the pupils who apply
- your oversubscription criteria (how you offer places if there are more applicants than places)
- an explanation of the process parents need to follow if they want to apply for their child to attend your school

Or: publish details of how parents can find out about your school's admission arrangements through your local authority

Ofsted reports

- *Either:* publish a copy of your school's most recent Ofsted report
- *Or:* publish a link to the webpage where users can find your school's most recent Ofsted report

Exam and assessment results

Most recent key stage 2 (KS2) results

- percentage of pupils who achieved level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths
- percentage of pupils who have improved by 2 or more levels in reading, writing and maths between KS1 and KS2
- percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 or above in reading and writing
- percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 or above in maths

Key stage 4 (KS4) results

- percentage of pupils who achieved a C or above in GCSEs (or equivalent) in 5 or more subjects, including English and maths
- percentage of pupils who achieved the English Baccalaureate
- percentage of pupils who have achieved at least the minimum expected levels of progress in English and maths between KS2 and KS4

Performance tables

A link to the DfE school performance tables website.

Curriculum

- the content of the curriculum your school follows in each academic year for every subject
- the names of any phonics or reading schemes you are using in KS1
- a list of the courses available to pupils at KS4 , including GCSEs
- how parents or other members of the public can find out more about the curriculum your school is following

Behaviour policy

This must comply with section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Advice on developing and publishing your school's behaviour policy is available.

Pupil premium

You must publish details of how your school spends its [pupil premium funding](#) and the effect this has had on the attainment of the pupils who attract the funding.

- your pupil premium allocation for the current academic year
- details of how you intend to spend your allocation
- details of how you spent your previous academic year's allocation
- how it made a difference to the attainment of disadvantaged pupils

NB The funding is allocated for each financial year, but the information you publish online should refer to the academic year, as this is how parents and the general public understand the school year. As allocations will not be known for the latter part of the academic year (April to July), you should report on the funding up to the end of the financial year and update it when you have all the figures.

Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium

If your school receives [year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium funding](#), you must publish details of how your school spends this funding and the effect this has had on the attainment of the pupils who attract it.

- your year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium allocation for the current academic year
- details of how you intend to spend your allocation
- details of how you spent your previous academic year's allocation
- how it made a difference to the attainment of the pupils who attract the funding

PE and sport premium for primary schools

If your school receives [PE and sport premium funding](#), you must publish details of how your school spends this funding and the effect it has had on pupils' PE and sport participation and attainment.

- your PE and sport premium allocation for the current academic year
- details of how you intend to spend your allocation

- details of how you spent your previous academic year's allocation
- how it made a difference to the PE and sport participation and attainment of the pupils who attract the funding

Special educational needs (SEN) report ([C2G note: see more information here](#))

If your school is a maintained school, then your governing body must publish a [report on the school's policy for pupils with SEN](#).

The report must comply with:

- [section 69(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [regulation 51](#) and [schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#)

The report must include details of:

- your school's admission arrangements for pupils with SEN or disabilities
- the steps you have taken to prevent pupils with SEN from being treated less favourably than other pupils
- access facilities for pupils with SEN
- the accessibility plan your governing body has written in compliance with [paragraph 3 of schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010](#)

Charging and remissions policies

The policies must include details of:

- the activities or cases for which your school will charge pupils' parents

the circumstances where your school will make an exception on a payment you would normally expect to receive under your charging policy

Values and ethos

A statement of your school's ethos and values.
(See [Moortown's Aims and Ethos](#) statement)

Desirable
(but not Statutory content)

- A domain name that makes sense to visitors (eg "**stcustardsprimary.sch.uk**" not "wearetheprovidersofeducationinyourvillage.com")
- Headteacher's name with first name or initial (Mrs J Smith or Mr Richard Jones)
- Name of whoever is actually most likely to answer the phone
- Names of staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, midday supervisors, caretaker, with responsibilities (Head of Y6, SENCO, Science Coordinator)
- A list of governors, with a pen sketch of their experience, and photographs.
- **Annual Governance statement**, including a record of governors' attendance at meetings.
- Governors' page, with information about the role of the Governing Body, how to become a Governor, forthcoming meeting dates and non-confidential minutes
- Google maps link. Directions, especially if parking or access are complicated.
- Information about disabled access
- Events calendar (eg Sporting fixtures)
- Term dates for the next two years
- Times of school day, lessons, and assemblies (eg Moortown's School Day)
- After school clubs, and extra curricular activities
- Complaints policy
- A link to your VLE, with instructions on how to get a parent's password
- Newsletter and copies of letters to parents
- Link to Parent View (Picture links available from Ofsted for a Parent View logo)
- The published information that demonstrates the school's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and the equality objectives that have been set. These are **statutory** requirements, with a **recommendation** that they be "published" on the school website.
- Your twitter feed, if you have one.
- Uniform list, with contact details for local suppliers (& downloadable order form)
- Downloadable permission slips for school trips (not legally necessary)

- A homework timetable, with handing in dates. Spellings lists.
- Information about the PTA or Parents Forum (See Moortown's Join In Page)
- Gallery of children's work
- Links to Local Authority Schools website and Gov.UK education pages
- This week's lunch menu
- Snow and bad weather policy, with a link to the local radio station Snow Line
- School policies: Anti-bullying policy etc
- Secure area for Governors, with all policies and their review cycle, SDP, committee and GB minutes, links to Modern Governor or GEL e-learning logins, LA Governor Services, the Governors' Handbook, NGA, training courses and contact details for the GB.
- A governors' blog (example)
- Pages that display correctly on a smartphone or other mobile device. It is recommended (see comments below) that the website should be built using a "responsive template" so the content automatically adjusts to the screen size of the device being used to view the site.

Other ideas to consider

- A feedback page, explaining how parents' questions and suggestions have been acted on *("You told us there was a problem with parking near the school on parents' evenings, so we have …..")* (See example)
- General guidance on showing children's photographs is that where these are used, names of children should not be given, and vice versa. See Guidelines on the use of images on school websites (Hampshire) and an example Policy on Use of digital & video images .
- A translate button, or key pages in languages that your parents use. See a Surrey County Council's information on school uniform in Polish and Urdu. You can download template school letters in different languages, and access a range of resources to include on your site
- FAQ page and / or Ask Us page
- News feeds
- Short videos on how to help your child with their reading, or showing how you teach multiplication (Moortown help parents support their child's learning)
- Icons for awards that the school has gained. eg Arts Mark, Investors in People

- House point counter (See the [Jack Hunt School](#) website)
- Discussion page – eg memories of the school opening (See [Comments at Jack Hunt School](#) – scroll down the page) and links to social networking sites
- Links to websites, such as CBeebies, TES Resources & local community sites
- Links to the feeder schools websites, and advice from ex-pupils about transition
- [Jargon buster](#) glossary and list of [acronyms](#)
- What about a secure section designed for Ofsted, containing directions to the school, the SEF, SDP, school policies, governors' contact details etc? Give login details to the lead inspector when you get the phone call (or the knock)

Basic web design rules

- Consistent design with pleasing colour scheme and legible [websafe](#) text
- Compliance with [accessibility guidelines](#) eg. image captions for use by screen readers
- Links that work ([Check for broken links](#))
- Pages that download in reasonable time
- Easy navigation to and from each section
- Correct grammar, spelling and appropriate language ([Check readability](#))
- Avoid having "Under Construction" pages, old news or incorrect information.
- Don't use [blue underlined](#) text, except for hyperlinks.
- Choose a font that isn't Comic Sans.
- **NEW** It is recommended (see comments below) that the website should be built using a "responsive template" so the content automatically adjusts to the screen size of the device being used to view the site. Pages may not display correctly on a smartphone.

Downloads

- [Guidelines on the use of images on school websites](#) (Hampshire)
- [Creating-and-managing-school-websites-Scotland 2007](#)
- An example policy: [Policy on Use of digital & video images](#)

Guidance

- [Creating a Safe School Website](#) (Salford)
- [Blog post on Great School Websites by Paul Haigh](#)
- Using [wordpress to create your own school website](#)
- [Information to be published on your school website (DfE)](#)

And finally …

- [How **not** to do it ….](#)

How important is it for your website to be compliant with legislation?

November 25th 2014: A [letter from Sir Michael Wilshaw to the SoS](#) Nicky Morgan (25/11/14) about the trial of 35 no-notice inspections in the autumn term said: "*This included 11 schools chosen primarily because they were failing in their legal duty to publish their curriculum plans on their website.*"

The letter recommended that: "***The DfE should continue to remind schools of the legal requirement to publish key information, including curriculum plans, on school websites***" and concluded with these words: "*Ofsted will continue to check curriculum information on school websites as part of its ongoing risk assessment procedures to determine whether no-notice inspection is necessary.*"

Q. Will non-compliance with statutory requirements for website content be a limiting factor in Ofsted judgements?
A. Probably not – if everything else is good or outstanding, inspectors may not be too worried about this aspect of the school's duties. Sean Harford, Ofsted's Director of Schools, tweeted on Jan 4th 2015:

Sean Harford @HarfordSean

"I know of no school deemed inadequate just because of a website omission. If you do, please tell me."

However ….

In the autumn term 2014, a number of schools were criticised by Ofsted for non-compliance with the statutory online information. An inspection report (Grade 4) in October stated that "*Governors do not fulfil their responsibility for ensuring that the school's website meets requirements.*" (although they do "*make sure that the information related to the pupil premium is published on the school's website*")

Another inspection report noted that governors "*have failed to ensure the school website meets the Department for Education's requirements. At the time of the inspection, guidance for parents on the curriculum was limited, as was information on the impact of the school's work for students entitled to the pupil premium, or the comparison between the school's achievements and national averages.*"

A no-notice inspection of one secondary school was triggered by a lack of statutory information on their website. The report said:
"*This inspection was conducted at no notice following non-compliance with the statutory requirement to provide parents with detailed information about the school curriculum on the school website.*"
(See: 2014.09.26_Ofsted_report_2014 original version as published in September and the current version of the report, which was published on 14th November 2014)
(The school concerned has now remedied this) **END**

Inspection report: St Benedict's Catholic School, 11–12 September 2014   2 of 10

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, of which six were seen jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors visited a sample of personal, social and health education lessons, tutor periods, and two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, two representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Telephone discussions were held with a representative of the diocese and a parent.
- Inspectors talked with many students about their learning and life at the school. They held meetings with three groups of students and reviewed their work in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 questionnaires completed by staff and the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team observed the school's work; reviewed current data about students' achievement; examined records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance; and looked at documents used by leaders in monitoring and evaluating the school's work.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions about the school's work on government changes to the curriculum and assessment. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the impact of those changes.
- This inspection was conducted at no notice following non-compliance with the statutory requirement to provide parents with detailed information about the school curriculum on the school website.