

Our Ref: GJ/AH
Date: 8th February 2016
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To All Headteachers and Principals
Maintained Schools and PRUs

Dear Colleague

WHAT MAINTAINED SCHOOLS MUST PUBLISH ONLINE

You will recall that the agenda for the Standards and Excellence Officer visit has regularly included an item on school websites. This includes reference to what every maintained school must publish on its website to comply with The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>

All schools were given feedback and in some cases schools were alerted to areas that would benefit from improvement and updating. Academies or Free Schools will need to check their funding agreement to find out what should be published on their website as this does not always match requirements for Local Authority maintained schools.

This letter follows up previous alerts regarding this important aspect of leadership and a copy is being sent to your Chair of Governors.

The school website is a public window into the school. Parents, potential applicants responding to your recruitment activities and Ofsted all look at your website to understand the school better. Schools should be confident that their website meets statutory requirements and is up-to-date. The Governing Body will want to monitor the impact of the website from the perspective of the range of users likely to engage with it to be clear what are the strengths of the website and how could it be further developed.

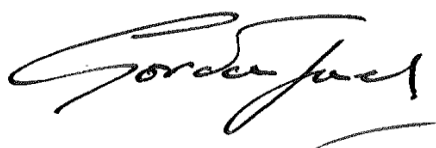
In recent weeks some Suffolk schools have been told that their website will close because their commercial provider will cease trading. This is an unusual situation but it is useful for schools to consider what back up plans might be necessary.

Local Authority survey activity shows that some schools have very comprehensive and up-to-date websites which share all necessary information quickly and clearly. Local Authority officers have also noted that some websites do not meet statutory requirements either because key information is not included or is difficult to find on the site. Part of the LA

support to schools is to monitor all school websites and to provide school leaders with feedback. The SEO assigned to your school will regularly provide verbal and written feedback on the website which I hope will be helpful to you. The feedback along with any actions arising for the school are recorded on the written report that is shared after each visit. I am pleased that many schools have responded to this support and used the LA feedback to make improvements. Unfortunately there are still some school websites that remain in need of updating if they are to comply with the statutory requirements and to effectively present the strengths of the school, you will I am sure agree that this is a cause of concern.

I know that you will want your school website to showcase the very best impression of your school and the on-going Local Authority support to schools described above is intended to help you in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Jones', with a horizontal line underneath.

Cllr Gordon Jones
Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills