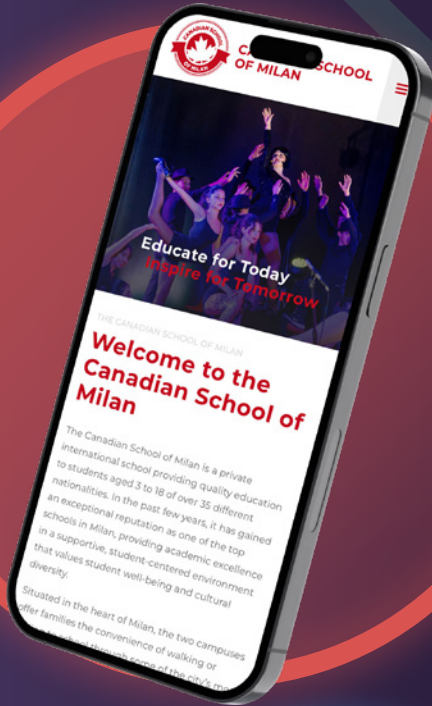


# Juniper



# A headteacher's guide to a **school** **website** that parents love

Attract families. Boost enrolment.  
Keep parents engaged.

# Introduction

Schools need to stand out more than ever, with competition for pupil enrolments at an all-time high.

Your school's website acts as your shop window. It is often the first impression prospective parents have when searching for the right school for their child.

A great website can make all the difference, helping families decide if your school is the perfect fit for them. This free guide is designed to help headteachers make impactful, budget-friendly improvements to their school website that will help them shine online.





# **Section 1:** **Make your school's first impression count**

## Did you know?

It takes **less than 1 second** for users on your website to form an opinion about your school.

Parents will either feel an immediate connection and envision their child as part of your community, or they won't.

A clean, modern homepage design helps create an emotional resonance with what you offer. You can achieve this connection through engaging videos, vibrant imagery and relevant content.

On the contrary, a cluttered or difficult-to-navigate website leads to frustration and paints a negative picture of your school, prompting visitors to exit quickly. If parents struggle to find the information they seek, they will quickly move on to explore other alternatives. They are unlikely to return and may place your school at the bottom of their options during the admissions process.



To avoid this, ensure your site is easy to navigate, with clear categories in your menu, such as About Us, Vision and Values, Calendar, and School News. It should only take a few clicks to get to the page they are looking for. Remember, people won't always recall what you say, but they will remember how your website made them feel.

**Expert tip:** Create a positive user experience with:

- A simple, clear layout
- Easy access to important information pages
- A mobile-friendly design

### **Looking for inspiration?**

Discover how these [schools with top-performing websites](#) create great first impressions online.



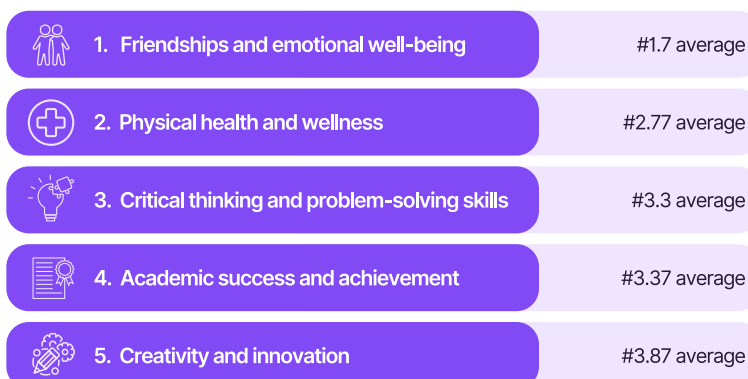
**Section 2:**  
**Create content  
that resonates with  
your whole school  
community**

# Your school's 'About Us' page

When creating your school's message, think about what parents care about most—*their children*. Academic excellence is important, but every school claims that. Instead, highlight your school's unique mission, vision, and values and describe what day-to-day life is like for pupils. Focus on how they will be happy, how they will make friendship groups, and enjoy coming to school—that is what parents really care about most: their child's happiness.

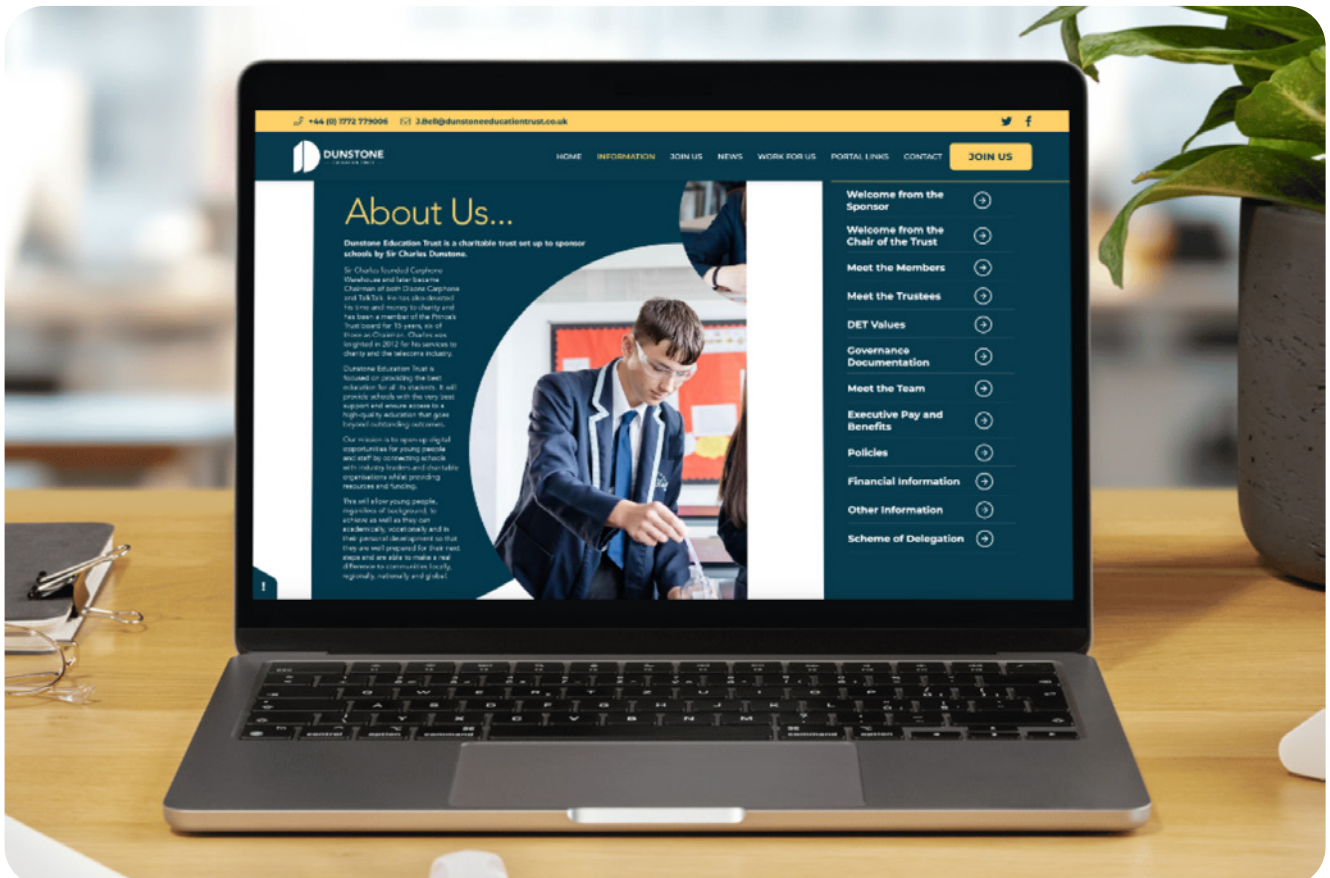
**Expert tip:** In a recent survey we conducted, parents ranked academic success and achievement as the fourth priority for their kids in school, while emotional well-being and physical health ranked first and second. This shows that it's essential to communicate a balanced approach to education that values both academic performance and overall pupil well-being.

## What do you value most in your child's education and development at school?



The About Us page is also a great place to share your parent engagement initiatives, such as family workshops and the wonderful experiences your school offers to further help parents resonate with your school.

Don't forget, when writing content for your 'About Us' page, or anywhere else on your website for that matter, to include [SEO-friendly content](#). This not only improves your ranking with Google and other search engines but also helps drive more traffic to your site, making it easier for prospective parents to find and learn about your school.





## Include real-life parent testimonials

Use real-life parent testimonials that tell specific success stories to build trust. For example, instead of a generic “The school is great,” try:

**“Thanks to the after-school science club, my son found a passion for chemistry and now enjoys recreating experiments at home!”**

Speaking of testimonials, here's one of our customer testimonials we wanted to share as a visual example of what this could look like on your website:



**The new website is like a breath of fresh air! It is exciting and modern, and it will really help attract future parents to our school.**



**Rob Bogan**  
*Headteacher, Itchen Abbas Primary School*



# Show off your school's **success** and achievements

Show off your pupils and their achievements—big or small!

Parents want to visualise their children in your school, and seeing other pupils thrive can help them connect with your school community. So why not include some photos of school activities and community events for parents to enjoy?

This is also a great opportunity to showcase the diversity of your pupils and the variety of accomplishments they achieve. The types of achievements you choose to celebrate reflect your school's ethos. Do you only celebrate academic successes? What about recognising pupils' demonstrations of good character or adherence to school values, too?

Highlighting pupil achievements can spark a bit of FOMO (fear of missing out) among parents, as they'll naturally want their children to be acknowledged and celebrated, too. This can be a positive driver of new enquiries, boost parent engagement, and improve school-home communication to achieve better outcomes for pupils.

**Expert tip:** Remember safeguarding when displaying any media featuring children and ensure you have permission to publish pupils' faces and names online.



## **Section 3:**

# **Engagement features to keep families coming back**

**Including interactive features on your school website, such as event calendars, parent portals, and social media feeds, is an easy way to keep your school community engaged.**

**Expert tip:** Show your live social media feeds, such as Facebook and Instagram, to keep the site fresh. It's also a great way to help families feel connected to everyday school life and see what's going on.

## Parent newsletters

Do you have a newsletter? Mention it on your website! And if you don't have one, consider launching one – even if you start small. A newsletter is a great way to keep both existing and prospective parents engaged and up to date with your school activities and reinforce your brand. Yes, your school has a brand, whether you realise it or not.





# Use clear call-to-actions (CTA's)

Use psychological principles behind your CTAs to encourage enrolment inquiries and newsletter open rates. A well-designed CTA motivates parents to act.

Here are some simple tips and examples:

- 1 Create urgency:** We might be giving away our trade secrets here, but use phrases like “Limited spots available!” to encourage quick responses for after-school clubs or fundraiser events, for example.
- 2 Be clear and direct:** Instead of just saying “Submit Form,” use “Book Your Parent Consultation Now!” to show exactly what to do.
- 3 Highlight benefits:** Explain what the user will gain, like “Join our newsletter for tips to support your child’s education at home!”
- 4 Make it stand out:** Use eye-catching colours (the school’s brand colours, for example) and clear text to ensure your CTA is easy to find.
- 5 Keep friction to a minimum:** Don’t make parents jump through hoops to talk to you. Make sure to include your call to action in all of your communications.



## From click to conversion in 4 simple steps

1



Create urgency

2



Be clear & direct

3



Highlight benefits

4



Make it stand out







# **Section 4:** **Your brand, vision, and values**

# Colours, fonts and imagery

Your website is an extension of your school's brand, so make sure your colours, fonts, and imagery reflect your school's vision and values. This alignment can help communicate your school's culture and ethos to parents and help create that all-important positive first impression when visitors land on your website.

**Expert tip:** Consider the principles of colour theory and how your colour schemes can create a welcoming, secure, and forward-thinking environment. Cooler tones can convey academic rigour, sophistication, and discipline, while warmer tones evoke a sense of community, creativity, and character development.



# Your school's visual story

Your school's visual story is key to connecting with prospective families and building a sense of community. By featuring high-quality images of everyday school life—like classroom activities, sports events, and clubs—on your school website, you evoke a sense of warmth and offer families a glimpse into the school experience they can expect. This approach helps build a real-life picture of what school life is truly like.





## **Section 5:** **Optimise for mobile and accessibility**

## **Most people, including parents, browse the internet on their phones, so a mobile-first design is essential.**

Optimising for mobile and tablet users not only improves the user experience but also shows professionalism, indicating that you've considered the needs of your community.

## **Accessibility**



It's important to have a website that everyone can use, including people with disabilities like visual impairments. This is not just good practice; it's also a legal requirement from the UK Government, with new accessibility standards that took effect this year (WCAG 2.2).

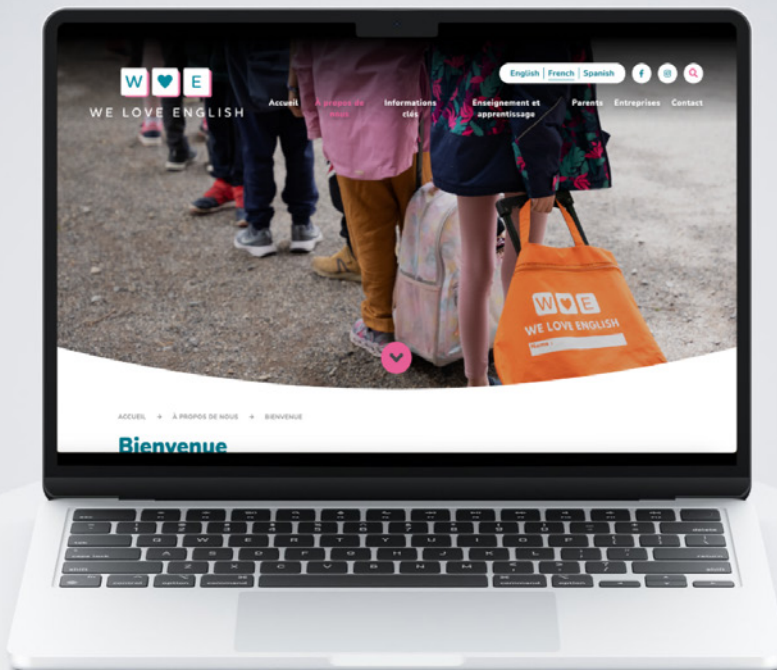
Small accessibility changes can make a big difference—like adding alt text to images, having healthy margins around each section, using clear fonts and colours, and making sure your page meta-data is complete. These adjustments help ensure that all family members feel welcome and can easily find the information they need about your school.

If you're not sure whether your website is compliant with the new government regulations, consider registering for a [school website audit](#) to verify that it meets all requirements and demonstrates your commitment to accessibility.

# Inclusivity

Also, think about families whose first language isn't English and try to use simple language on your website, especially in areas that contain important information.

Parents can also use translation features in their web browsers, so adding a quick guide on how to do this could make it easier for them to get around. By considering different language needs, you'll create a more welcoming online experience for all families.





## **Section 6:** **Budget-friendly choices with big impact**

**You don't need to break the bank to make meaningful changes to your site. Here are some low-cost, high-impact, DIY ideas to give your school website the wow factor:**

## Add a welcome video

If a picture paints a thousand words, then video speaks even louder. Parents care about the people behind the school, so show them who their child is going to be around five days a week. Video content is highly engaging and can really impress parents. If you have the budget, you might want to [hire a professional service](#) to create a high-quality video. But even without spending money, you can make a great video using your smartphone. For better sound, try using another smartphone just for recording audio.

## Embed social media feeds

Posting on social media is a great (free!) way to keep your website fresh, and your community up to date without too much effort—all you need to do is embed your feed on your homepage and in high-visibility areas of your website. Train and encourage teachers and staff to capture everyday moments in your school that parents want to see and post the images and videos on your social media platforms.



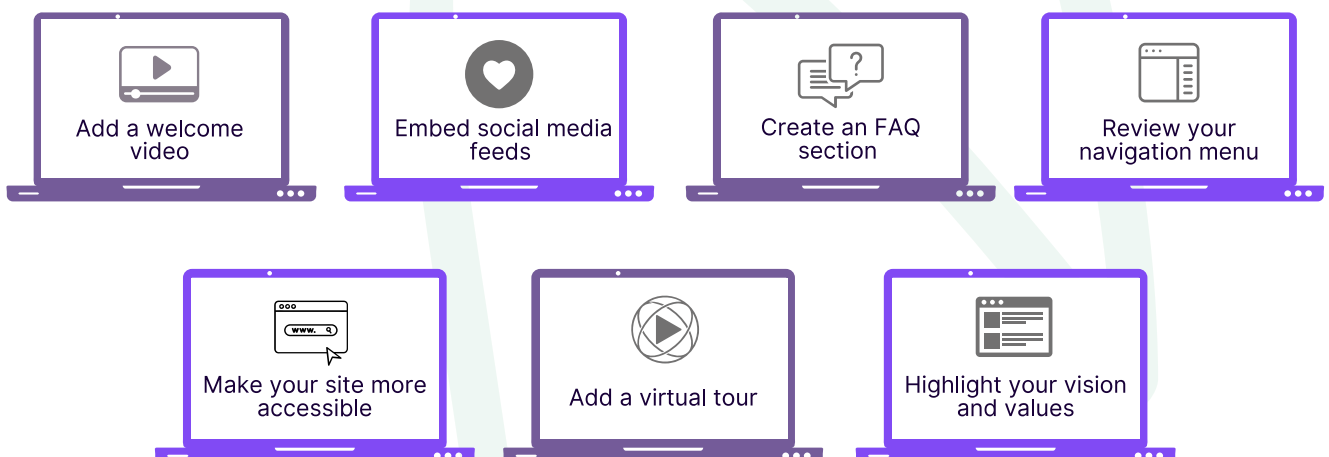
## Create an FAQ section

What are the top 10 queries you get over the phone and email? These would make a great basis for a frequently asked questions (FAQ) section on your school website. Answering these in advance can help improve the quality of your conversations with parents and can also reduce inbound calls to the school office.

## Review your navigation menu

Pretend you're a prospective parent. How easy is it to navigate around your website? Organise your menu with clear, simple categories that align with parents' needs — like Admissions, News & Events, and Parent Resources.

Make sure key information is no more than a click or two away, and use internal links and breadcrumbs to guide parents between pages so they can find what they're looking for.



## Make your site more accessible

As mentioned earlier, small changes can make a big difference in website accessibility. Adding alt text to images and using clear, easy-to-read fonts (with the right size, colour, and style) can help make your site more user-friendly. These updates also show your school's commitment to supporting all families and community members.

## Add a virtual tour

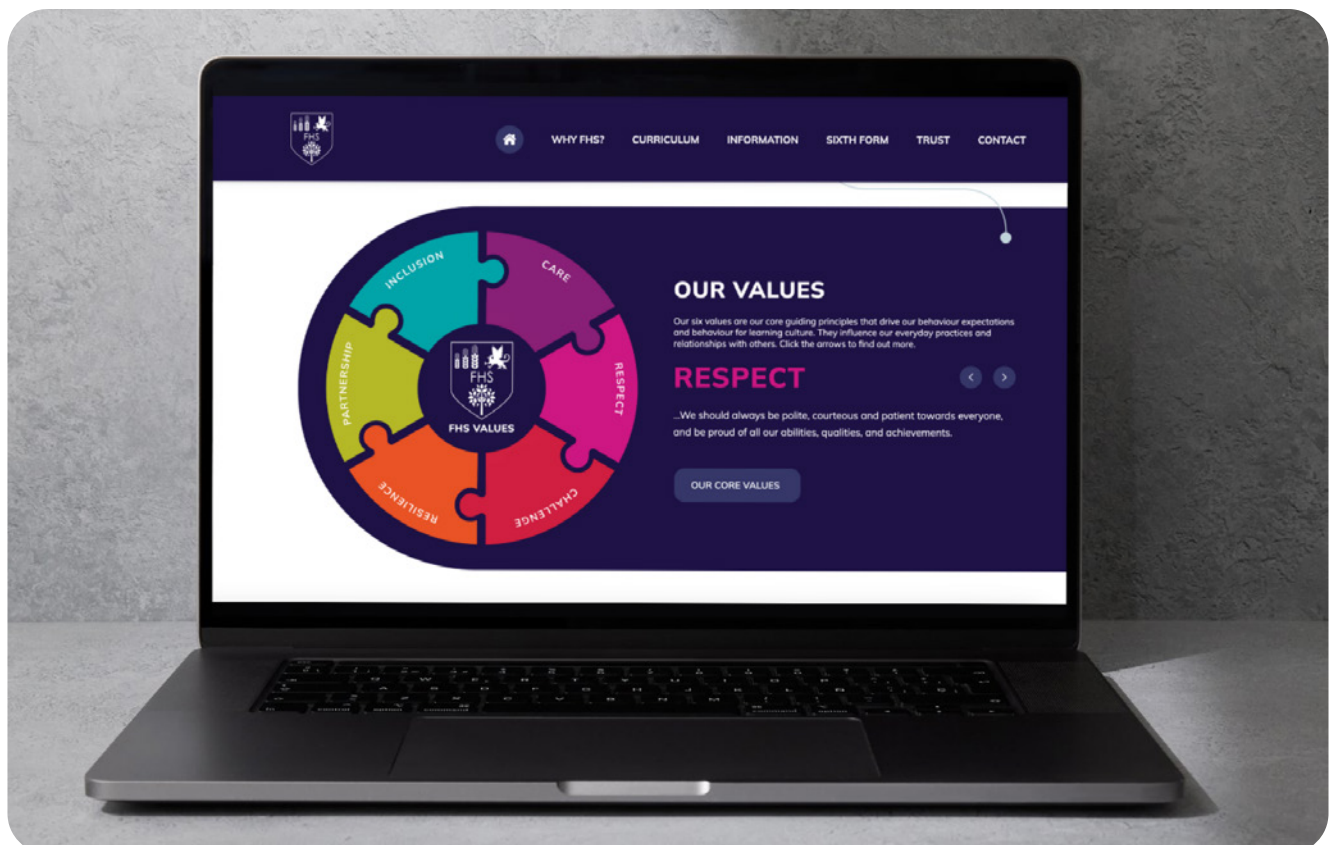
Use a smartphone and an affordable tool like Kuula or Matterport to capture a virtual tour of your campus and showcase it on your website. If your school has beautiful spaces or standout facilities, show them off!



## Highlight your school's vision and values

Highlight your school's mission, values, and vision on the homepage to show prospective families what makes your school unique. This will help reinforce your brand and build a connection with families who share your educational priorities for their children.

**Expert tip:** If you're already a Juniper Websites customer, great news: you can access a [free vision and values template](#) for your school, which is easy to install and publish. Not a customer? We've got you covered, too. [Click here](#) to download a docx version.





# **Section 7:** **Website quality checklist**

**How do you know if your website is good or great?  
Use the checklist below to see if your current school  
website is missing any critical attributes.**

- Easy navigation
- User-friendly layout
- Mobile-friendly
- Brand cohesiveness
- Informative content
- Simple language
- Strong first impression
- Headteacher's welcome message
- Welcome video
- Newsletter integration
- Pupil spotlight
- Event recaps
- Fully accessible
- Parent testimonials
- FAQ section
- Social media feed
- Strong photo and video content
- Clear calls to action
- Frictionless enquiry form
- SEO-friendly keywords
- Virtual tour
- Clear vision and values
- Up-to-date school calendar
- Live news feed
- A schedule to regularly review content





## **Section 8:**

**Take your website  
from good to great**

## If you've made it this far, congratulations!

You're clearly committed to improving your school's website. Reading this guide shows that you really care about how your school is perceived online and the experience you're offering to your school community.

We know we've covered a lot, but don't feel overwhelmed. Remember, you don't have to do it all at once.

Want your website to be reviewed by a school marketing expert? [Book a free website consultation with us today.](#)