

5 CREATIVE WAYS TO UPDATE YOUR WEBSITE

A helpful resource providing easy-to-implement solutions to ensure your school website content remains fresh, interesting and always up to date.

INTRODUCTION

‘What’s the best way to keep our school website content fresh and up to date?’ is one of the most common questions that our Support Team and Account Managers receive from our customers.

And it’s a brilliant question.

Your website is a constantly evolving and vitally important source of information for existing parents, staff and students as well as the marketing window to the world for your prospective families and future employees.

You need to know how to ensure it remains current, fresh and interesting, which is why we have put together some helpful advice to outline **five creative ways to update your website**.



1. RECENT UPDATES – LATEST NEWS

How many interesting and important events happen in your school over the course of an academic year?

Inspector Visits, Sports Days, Musical Showcases, Drama Performances, Art Trips, Exams...and that's probably just the tip of the iceberg.

These occasions are perfect to highlight in the latest news section of your website as they allow you to showcase a snapshot of day to day life within your school. You also get to communicate with your audience on a regular basis as well as having the ability to share your latest accomplishments with prospective parents and visitors.

We would recommend that the best stories utilise the following important features; a snappy title, a relevant high-quality thumbnail and a short intro which outlines an overview of the piece.

You can then add the full details of the story into the main body text of the article, along with any additional photographs. For best results, align your in-article images to the right or left of the content region to allow the text to wrap around them and ensure the story continues to flow.

Don't forget, for important information (like a snow day) or to really highlight an outstanding story, you should enable your urgent news banner on your homepage, or it to the top of your news feed, so it's the first thing your parents see when they access your site.





2. LOOKING FORWARD - UPCOMING EVENTS

Utilising the calendar functionality on your website is an ideal way to ensure your parents and carers never miss an event again. They're also fantastic for keeping track of school holidays and any INSET days which you may have scheduled, as well as highlighting exam periods, curriculum schedules (if you have a two or three-week lesson rota) and forthcoming school trips.

Upcoming events can be quickly and easily added to your calendar by going onto the calendar page and then right-clicking on the day that the event occurs. Pop in the date, times, title and any additional info you want to share and then click save to add your event instantly into the calendar. You can also colour-code different categories to make it even easier for the parents to access the information they require.

If you have signed up to our Connect App functionality, then your parents (once they have downloaded the School News App) will also be able to see your recently added events on their phone.

To ensure your calendar is always up to date, with no manual input from yourselves, it may be worth looking into a Google or Outlook calendar sync which updates automatically approximately once an hour for the lifetime of your website. This does have an annual subscription cost but is something which can be added on at any time. If you are interested in this service, please don't hesitate to contact our Sales Team for the latest options and pricing.

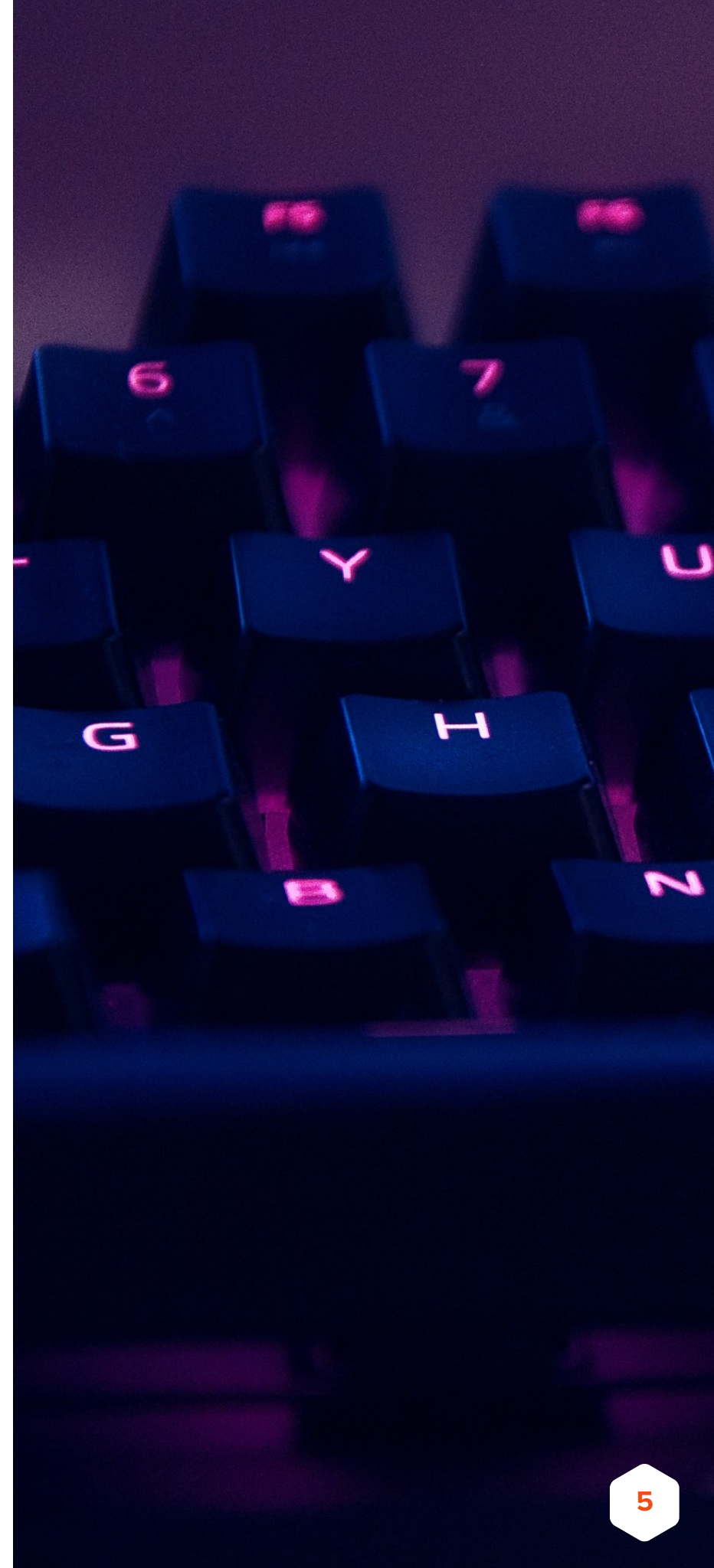
3. INVOLVE MORE PEOPLE - WRITE A BLOG

Adding in new content doesn't necessarily need to be one person's job – you can share the responsibility (and the work load!) by creating user accounts for different people within the school. These accounts can be set up with specific permissions if required, so that all posts and updates have to be verified by an administrator before they are published live onto the site.

Perhaps you could set up a events blog where students could write posts from their own perspective on what's been happening lately. Or, you could create a blog for specific classes, clubs or subject areas within school to showcase their latest updates. You might choose to have a set topic per month or you may prefer a more general approach; perhaps updating parents on the curriculum subjects that have been studied that term or the results a particular sports team has achieved in recent matches.

Remember, the most important thing about creating blog posts is to not to be afraid to be creative and think outside of the box; people are more encouraged to continue reading if there is something interesting immediately hooking them in. Some of our schools even have a school mascot or pet that 'writes' their blog for them! With a little nurturing your school dog, bunny or goat would be bound to create a buzz and eventually garner a faithful following!

Whatever you decide to do and however you decide to do it, remember to keep momentum with your posts as this will encourage your readers to check back for the next instalment. Our recommendation would be to post an update every two to three weeks but we appreciate that this may vary depending on your commitments.



4. A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

One of the quickest and easiest ways to update your website is by uploading a photo album to one of the photo galleries on your website. This is a great way to showcase sporting events, musical concerts, assemblies and performances, as well as end of year celebrations such as Prom and Leavers Day.

Please bear in mind that with most websites the smaller the file size, the quicker the upload. This also means there will be less load time on your website, so do consider resizing them to around 1mb or so if you have the resource.

As with any photographs used on your website, remember that it is your responsibility to ensure you have parental permission to use a child's photograph (even if they're in the background).

It's also important, for safeguarding reasons, that you never use the child's full name with their photo.





5. REVITALISING THE PAGE - CONTENT COMPONENTS

The latest update to the e4education CMS introduced a wide range of exciting content components which can be added onto any non-bespoke inner page of your website (free of charge!).

Do you want to have the PE Twitter account appearing on the PE curriculum page? Now you can! What about highlighting your fantastic Ofsted news article permanently on your Ofsted page? Not a problem! Or maybe, you just want one contact page that shows your address, your location map *and* gives your users an easy form to complete? Well, step this way because now you can do all of these things with a few clicks of a button.

Our new widgets will revolutionise the way you set up your content and allow you the freedom to make your standard inner pages more dynamic and interactive. The new content components give you complete access to pull content from different areas of the website into one page without your user ever having to leave the page.

Below are just some of the features you can now display on a standard inner page:

- News Areas
- News Stories
- Blog Categories
- Blog Posts
- Photo Galleries
- Photo Albums
- Calendar Events
- Social Media Feeds
- Enquiry Forms

If you have any additional suggestions for features we could look to add in, please do let us know! We can't promise we will implement every suggestion, but we'll certainly take all feedback on board and consider all options carefully.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU IN WHATEVER WAY WE CAN

We constantly receive amazing feedback about how easy to use, quick and intuitive our CMS is and as an e4education customer you can rest assured that you will always benefit from the following CMS features as standard:

- Unlimited Content (Pages, News, Blogs, Calendars, Galleries etc)
- Instant Restore
- Featured News
- Batch Uploads
- File Manager
- Social Media Integration
- Search Engine Optimisation
- Scheduling/Archiving
- Drag & Drop Interface
- True In-Line Editing
- Forms & Data Capture
- User Role Management
- Draft Management
- Friendly URLs
- Secure Areas
- Responsive CMS
- And much much more!

If you would like information on any of the above, please don't hesitate to give our friendly team a call on 03453 191 039.

**IF YOU REQUIRE ANY MORE HELP
OR ADVICE, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH.**



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