

Updating your school profile on the Schools Online website

The following guidelines will help you to develop your school's profile to positively enhance the brand and reputation of your school.

School Overview page

This is a succinct overview rather than an essay. Web users expect short, to the point, pieces of information to whet their appetite to find out more from your school website. The tone is factual with a positive slant.

There is no word limit but it is recommended that your overview should not exceed 400 words (3000 characters including spaces). When writing your document use the 'word count' facility in MS Word.

Points to focus on when writing your School Overview:

- Research shows parents choose schools based on three key factors:
 - quality of teaching
 - values and pastoral care
 - behaviour management.

Parents see good teachers and a challenging curriculum – what happens in the classroom – as being the most important factor. They send their children to school to get a “good education”. They also want to know that their children will be taught in a safe and nurturing environment. Avoid writing about facilities and location (eg using terms like “nestled in the bushland”) – parents are selecting an education for their children, not a home property.

- Before you start to write your school overview, think about your key audience (ie parents/prospective parents) and what they want to know. Parents want to know what your school will offer their son or daughter – the benefits. Features of the school are of less importance. Check everything you write against WIIFM – ‘what’s in it for me?’.

Understanding the difference between features and benefits

Feature	Benefit
The school has links with Perth University.	Our relationship with Perth University gives our students access to cutting edge technology to challenge them academically and stretch their imaginations.
Last year the school had a \$5 million upgrade.	The \$5 million improvements to the school's arts centre provide students with outstanding facilities in which to develop their talents in music and drama.
Our specialised maths and science course has been running for 10 years.	Our well regarded maths and science course challenges students to research and experiment, and to explore different ways of thinking.
Our school is located next to the Institute of Training.	The school's proximity to the Institute of Training allows our students to benefit from working in state-of-the-art hospitality facilities.

The overview should give a clear insight into the unique aspects of your school. Provide information to help parents place student test data and attendance figures in context. For example, if a high percentage of your students do not have English as their first language this could have had an impact on NAPLAN results.

Avoid using terms or acronyms which are not understood by parents and the wider community.

Historical facts are not relevant for parents looking for the benefits your school can give their child. If this information is particularly interesting, include it on your school website. (Incidentally Schools Online already includes your school's commencement date on the landing (Administration) page.)

Do not include information (such as student and staff numbers or student achievement) which is covered in other sections of Schools Online.

Write in short, easy to read sentences and paragraphs. Long, detailed pages are difficult to read, especially on screen.

Use inclusive language (such as us, you, our) to engage your audience.

Check spelling, punctuation and grammar. Make sure your school profile does not include any content that might be culturally insensitive or subject to copyright.

It is recommended that you update your school at least once a year or more often if required.

See below for examples of how to structure your school overview.

Structure of your school overview

Paragraph 1: Introduction

A very brief introduction to provide key facts – it may be all some people read.

- What makes your school special or unique.
- Which years your school caters for.
- Where your school is located (you may want to include the distance to the nearest major population centre).

Example

Primary school	Secondary school
Pine Tree Valley Primary School, 50km east of Bunbury, caters for 150 children in Years 1 to 7 on the main site and 25 pre-primary students at our nearby purpose built centre. Our specialised team of early childhood teachers and education assistants provide innovative and engaging classes for the children's first introduction to education. The school has a strong focus on numeracy and literacy, with programs for students who show early signs of strong academic talent. (76 words)	Perth Senior School, 15km north of the city of Perth, specialises in teaching senior secondary students in Years 11 and 12. Within the broad curriculum, our science and technology programs have seen students go on to very successful careers in these fields. Strong links with universities, training colleges and employers also provide students with further learning and career opportunities. (59 words)

Paragraph 2: Education

- A broad outline of the programs offered.
- Details of special programs students can study.

Example

Primary school	High school
<p>Our positive and challenging teaching programs allow all students to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to become confident independent learners. We are proud of our reputation in offering a diverse range of subjects including music, French, arts and crafts and physical education which are taught by specialist teachers.</p>	<p>Through our highly successful academic program, students are encouraged to think critically and develop problem solving skills. Our excellent record of achievement in vocational education and training is supported by outstanding modern facilities and industry trained staff. The varied curriculum allows each student to develop their individual passions and talents. An IT rich teaching environment, and teachers who regularly receive technical proficiency training, ensure students graduate with the skills required for a positive future in further education, training or employment.</p> <p>Strong links with Perth University provide students with opportunities to participate in a range of research projects such as the application of solar technology in domestic environments and the use of phosphates in modern agriculture.</p>

Paragraph 3: Ethos

- Broad outline of the school's underlying principles and overall ethos.
- Focus on the support provided to nurture and develop these principles.

Example

Primary school	Secondary school
<p>Pine Tree Valley Primary School has a strong ethos of being a warm, caring and friendly community where every child is treated as a valued individual. Our very popular 'gumnut awards' help students to understand the idea of reward and recognition for their efforts both in and out of the classroom.</p>	<p>Students are challenged and valued in an engaging, innovative learning environment. Through a comprehensive transition program, students move easily and successfully from Year 10 into their senior schooling years. We pride ourselves on our strong pastoral care program that helps students anticipate and handle the challenges which can arise for young people. A strong mentoring system cares for, and provides positive guidance to, students as individuals. Our well-established community partnerships give students opportunities for real-life learning, engaging them in relevant and meaningful experiences.</p>

Paragraph 4: Facilities

- Details of recent improvements or particular facilities which will enhance student learning experiences.

Example

Primary school	High school
<p>Students are taught in modern classrooms, all with multimedia teaching facilities and a wet area for arts and crafts. Outside, pre-primary students enjoy their own outdoor play area and sandpit. Netball courts, cricket nets, a large oval and a challenging climbing frame provide opportunities for older students. The school is fully air-conditioned providing a pleasant learning environment throughout the year.</p>	<p>A recent \$5 million upgrade to our science facilities gives students a leading edge in developing their skills. Two large gymnasiums and extensive sporting ovals, along with our long-running positive healthy living programs, encourage students to improve their sporting abilities and to try new sports. The school has a modern multimedia centre with television and music recording studios, a visual arts area with ceramics and painting studios, a well-stocked library/research centre, and computing laboratories. These excellent facilities have helped our Year 12 students consistently achieve outstanding results. Perth Senior School has excellent public transport links; buses to many destinations leave from just outside the school gate.</p>

Your school overview should end with a 'call to action'. This is where people should go if they want to find out more about the school.

For example:

Discover more about Valley Primary School/Perth Senior School:
W: (*website address*).

To avoid confusion it is important to only provide one website address. Hotlinks should be checked regularly to make sure they work.

Your school photo




This is an opportunity to present the best views of your school to the Schools Online photo gallery – to show its 'essential spirit'.






- Include students and teachers in your photo to bring your school to life. Make sure you have permission to use these people's images.
- Check your photo for items which do not enhance your school's image such as litter bins or security signs. 'Political signage' should not appear in your photo, such as signs highlighting funded projects.
- Crop your photo so the focus is on the main subject. There are many free, easy to use online products such as Microsoft Picture Manager for basic photo editing.
- Your photograph will roughly appear as 8.5cm x 5.5cm on the average computer screen. Resize your image to check how it will look at these dimensions. (For people accessing Schools Online through the intranet they will also have the option to view a larger version of the photo. You will need to make sure your photo also works (in terms of content and resolution) at this larger size.)


Technical requirements:

- The photograph should be submitted in line with the requirements of the administration section on the Schools Online website i.e. less than 4 MB file size and either jpg, gif, or png format.
- The photograph you submit will be used exactly as it is, however there is opportunity to crop the photo correctly within the Schools Online submission facility.

Examples of photos (currently on Schools Online) which don't work






	<p>Picture is blurred and approximately 40% of the image is an empty car park.</p>
	<p>There is no evidence of the school.</p>
	<p>Too much grass and concrete; the litter bin is distracting.</p>
	<p>Students are distorted and difficult to see; the background is messy.</p>

	<p>Black and white photos and line drawings do not enhance your school image.</p>
	<p>Aerial photos do not show off your school.</p>
	<p>The focus is on three poles and the back of car.</p>
	<p>Composite photos are confusing and lack a point of focus.</p>
	<p>Buildings look dark and run-down; this early childhood school does not look caring or inviting.</p>

	<p>Photos should be in a standard size rectangle.</p>
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Examples of photos which do work

	<p>Clear, bright picture with the school at the centre of the shot – it would be further enhanced with students and teachers in the photo.</p>
	<p>Shows new, modern facilities – it would look even better with students and teachers in the photo.</p>
	<p>The school is rightly proud of its pond/outdoor learning area – adding students would enhance the image.</p>

	<p>Interesting photo showing buildings, surroundings and students. The image would be more interesting if it was taken closer to the students.</p>
	<p>Good, strong colours. The photo could be improved with more cricket players in the foreground.</p>
	<p>Happy, smiling students – a school where a parent would want to send their child.</p>
	<p>Good impression of the school with students bringing the photo to life.</p>
	<p>Another good photo with students.</p>



Great photo of buildings with trees to add interest in the foreground; students would enhance the image.



Photo gives a good impression of students interacting with a teacher; could be improved with fewer students, better lighting and the bin removed.

Your school logo

Make sure your logo includes the school name. Too often the crest part of the logo and the school name are separated. A complete logo includes the crest and school name which are always used together and in a consistent manner. It is also important that your logo is provided in either a jpg, gif, or png format, and is in the correct dimensions so that it doesn't appear squashed or elongated.