School website requirements have been updated. Academies should publish the recommended information and check their funding agreement. Maintained schools must publish the required website information. Differences between the old and new requirements are summarised at: www.diffchecker.com/qbb10XFW
www.gov.uk/guidance/what-academies-free-schools-and-colleges-should-publish-online
www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online

Data protection toolkit: The 'General Data Protection Regulation' came into force on 25th May. It is important that schools ensure they have the necessary policies and processes, from collecting and handling the data through to the ability to respond quickly to data breaches. www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-toolkit-for-schools

Privacy notices: Suggested texts for privacy notices have been updated for use with staff, parents and pupils. The DfE strongly recommends that privacy notices are used to explain how personal data is processed. Schools are advised to publish privacy notices for pupils and parents on their website and highlight them every year. Induction packs for new staff members should include privacy notices and existing staff need to be made aware of them annually. They can be displayed on the staff notice board or school intranet. Suggested texts meet the GDPR requirements. www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-and-privacy-privacy-notices

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Revised statutory guidance comes into effect in Sept 2018 with more advice about responding to allegations of child-on-child sexual harassment. An updated safeguarding booklet should be shared with all staff; www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education—2 New guidance to avoid or manage allegations of sexual harassment between children and a school's legal responsibilities is available. www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges

Enhanced DBS disclosure checks: All academy trust chairs of trustees must apply for an enhanced DBS certificate and have their application countersigned by the Secretary of State for Education, regardless of positions held previously at another trust. Only chairs with an enhanced DBS certificate from the same school before converting to an academy trust are exempt. The chair is responsible for ensuring that other members and trustees have an up-to-date enhanced DBS certificate but these do not need to be countersigned by the Secretary of State. www.gov.uk/guidance/enhanced-dbs-disclosure-checks-for-chairs-of-academy-trusts

Staffing and employment: Statutory guidance on managing staff employment (2009) has been withdrawn. Schools should use 'Staffing and employment advice for schools', originally published in 2017 and released again with a minor update. It covers a range of issue including: staff appointments, TUPE, employment checks, contracts, statutory entitlements, sickness absence, appraisal, disciplinary matters and redundancy. There are links to relevant legislation and up-to-date advice for employers, some of which refers to statutory guidance. www.gov.uk/government/publications/staffing-and-employment-advice-for-schools

QTS and career progression: The NQT induction period will be extended to 2 years as part of an 'Early Career Framework' with further details to be released. Induction guidance will cover the standards expected of NQT mentors. www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-qualified-teacher-status-and-career-progression

Charging for activities: Guidance for schools about charging for activities, asking for voluntary contributions and offering reduced charges has been updated in light of the regulations for Universal Credit.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities

Finance and resources: The DfE has updated tools and checklists to help schools with managing finances and resources. They cover efficiency of spending, benchmarking, workforce planning, money-saving deals, questions for governors, and sources of advice. www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency

Estate management: Governing boards, trusts and leaders need to ensure school premises are safe and well-maintained to avoid significant capital expenditure and disruption as a result of building failure. Good estate management includes reducing energy costs, emergency planning, health and safety procedures, and fire risk assessments. There are tools to help schools assess their current arrangements and identify where improvements can be made. www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-estate-management-for-schools-tools   Policies, processes and documents can be found at: www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools

Ofsted and assessment: Since NC levels were removed, a new way of thinking about the place of assessment has been necessary. Assessments should reflect pupils' achievements of the curriculum they've been taught which requires careful planning to assess the most important areas at. There has been too much reliance on meaningless data; inspectors don't need to see large spreadsheets of data about children's performance. Progress is shown by pupils knowing more and remembering more so they can use the information to understand concepts and master skills. Inspectors shouldn't ask schools to predict progress scores; expected progress was removed as an accountability measure. Inspectors want to see that assessment supports learning to ensure pupils benefit from a deep and rich education. https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/23/assessment-what-are-inspectors-looking-at/

Ofsted and the curriculum: Recent training for inspectors looked at the curriculum and evaluating how well it is designed and implemented. Inspectors are likely to discuss this idea with senior leaders: '*What is the school trying to achieve through its curriculum, how is it being delivered and what difference is it making to pupils' learning?*' Ofsted doesn't have a preferred curriculum although it will be a greater focus once the new inspection framework is introduced in September 2019. https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/24/ofsteds-spring-conferences/

Timing of inspections: A small number of updates were introduced in April about the 'windows' in which a school inspection can take place. The usual timeframe for short inspections of good schools is extended from 3 to 4 years although the maximum period for returning to inspect a good school stays at 5 years; (which is taken from the end of the academic year of the last inspection.) The re-inspection window for requires improvement, serious weakness and special measures schools is now 30 months (rather than 30, 18, and 24 months, respectively) This gives Ofsted regional directors more discretion about the timing of re-inspections. https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/13/changes-to-the-school-inspection-window/

Good and outstanding schools: Ofsted has used risk assessments for many years to identify potential decline in performance. This helps to decide the timing of a school's inspection but it is not used to pre-judge outcomes. Risk assessment has evolved and a new model uses DfE progress and attainment data along with information from the school workforce census data and Parent View responses. There are no thresholds that automatically determine that a school should be inspected and inspectors are not given the risk assessment findings to avoid any influence on the outcomes. Senior HMIs always review the selection of schools. Some good schools automatically receive a full inspection if concerns are raised by the risk assessment. Outstanding primary schools are exempt from routine inspection but can be inspected as a result of a risk assessment. https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/17/risk-assessment-process-for-good-and-outstanding-schools/

Inspection data summary reports will show 3 terms of absence data, rather than 2 terms, for the last 3 years. www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-ofsteds-inspection-dashboard-early-years-foundation-stage-profile-to-key-stage-4

Staff are loyal to a school's culture rather than strategies and action plans

Unintended consequences of the culture at work

Imagine eight people are meeting to take an important decision about a company's future. Two members of the group have key insights which others don't know. Another person is aware of recent developments across the industry and uses of new technology. The meeting should ensure that everyone shares their information to inform decisions. However, if a company places too much emphasis on workplace harmony, new information is likely to be buried. This occurs when team members become highly attuned to each other's feelings and short-term well-being due to a group psychology called 'shared information bias'. Staff assume that their careers will rely upon making others feel good as much as their effectiveness at work.

One way to make a group feel good is repeating ideas that everyone knows, even if you're only repackaging views already discussed last week or spoken by someone else a few moments ago. It is an easy path to follow as colleagues nod heads in agreement and it spreads a good feeling of consensus. But it closes down critical thinking and team members with contrary views or novel ideas may be 'silenced' by the positive attention being placed on what the group already knows. Poor decisions may be taken by limiting the number of inputs a group will consider which diverts the focus away from discussing new ideas or ways to achieve better results.

Why is shared information bias so common? Many new ideas and information gets ignored is it is held by people with lower status in a company. Staff are well aware what the senior managers believe, so that's what everyone finds easiest to discuss. There seems to be little to gain for group harmony by speaking up. Companies become places of conformity with few opportunities for everyone to contribute their ideas. Companies can overcome this issue by defining 'respect' as something different than uninterrupted harmony. Respect is shown when we listen to someone's views even when their perspective contradicts or weakens the positions of others and may make others feel less comfortable. Several techniques will help:

- Before a meeting starts, everyone writes down the key information they want to share about a topic.

- Leaders should speak last and invite those with new ideas to speak first.

- Meetings shouldn't end without everyone being invited to share their ideas.

This approach may make some meetings less comfortable but far more creative and likely to lead to improvements. Move away from a culture in workplaces that expects an easy agreement of ideas. *(Edited from an article by Jonah Sachs about a new book Unsafe Thinking: How to be Nimble and Bold When You Need It Most.)*
https://work.qz.com/1260571/at-work-a-respectful-culture-is-better-than-a-nice-one/