

# Computer thieves steal 14 laptops from village school



**VICTIMS: Merle Barbrook, chairman of governors, and Jenny Maskell, office manager at the primary school.**

Suffolk Free Press Friday 08 March 2013

**The headteacher of Monks Eleigh Primary School had to reassure pupils after burglars broke in and stole 14 laptops on Saturday night.**

The offenders smashed two windows and got into the building through a back fire exit at around 9.30pm before breaking into a locked cupboard containing the RM Notebook 300 laptops.

Despite setting off the alarm, which alerted parents and the school secretary who were at a barn dance at the neighbouring village hall, the burglars were able to escape unseen with the computers, worth a total of £5,600.

Rob Giles, who is joint-headteacher of Monks Eleigh and Boxford primary schools, said: "Obviously I am very disappointed.

“It appears that they knew exactly where the laptops were. They took 14 and there were another six or seven teachers’ laptops around the school which they didn’t touch – they just went straight to the cupboard.

“I went to the school on Monday to reassure the children there were no nasty people in the building and they weren’t going to come back,” added Mr Giles.

“Some of them were concerned on the Saturday night as their parents had been at the barn dance and they had heard about it.”

He said an insurance claim will be made and it could be up to six weeks before the network is back up and running again.

“These laptops were an integral part of day-to-day teaching,” he said.

“There are a number of support programmes that children use daily for literacy and numeracy work that they won’t be able to do now.”

A total of eight other schools in Suffolk have been targeted in identical raids since January.

The latest burglary saw £5,000 of Apple Mac computers stolen from King Edward VI school in Bury St Edmunds, less than 24 hours after Monks Eleigh Primary School was broken into.

A spokeswoman for Suffolk Police said: “We are currently investigating these burglaries and are appealing for any information. If anyone is offered laptops, they should contact us on 101.

“We have been working closely with Suffolk County Council and have spoken to schools to offer crime prevention advice,” she added. “We have also made security visits to affected areas as a precaution to help the schools.”