

For all assistance / enquiries: Telephone: 01480 376650

Email: ict.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

October 2005



During October Half Term the Help line will be getting a new telephone system. The new Help Line number will be 0845 0450973.

We will of course let you know when dates for this implementation have been finalised.



*Coming soon to a Computer near you...
We are proud to present our new SIMS Website which will be available on the Portal very soon. Watch this 'Space'.
.....It's out of this World!*

Welcome to our October 05 publication. With the start of an academic year, we would also like to extend a warm *welcome* to all new staff who have joined us at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

For many of you, we appreciate that the year end and start of new year academic was not quite as expected, therefore, we have included some additional 'Helpful Hints' in this newsletter which we hope you will take on board for future academic years.

As many of you are aware, we are extremely busy at the moment, but we take this opportunity to stress that we are getting back to ALL our callers. If you are leaving a message on the voice mail, please ensure that you leave as much information with respect to your enquiry as is possible: Always leave your name, contact number and where you are calling from. If you are experiencing problems getting through and would prefer to email us, please send your enquiries to ICT.Helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Please don't forget that we would like to hear *your* views too; all contributions should be received by us prior to the 15th of the month if at all possible.

Helpline Team



SIMS Upgrades / Updates

The current version of SIMS .NET is 7.48 and Build 3.61.178

Please can you check your version. If you are not on this version or build, please give the Helpline a call.

We once again take this opportunity to stress that it is *essential* to carry out a full back up of your SIMS Data prior to running your Updates / Upgrades. All schools should have received a laminated sheet containing in depth back up instructions. If for some reason you have not received this sheet, or have any questions with respect to SIMS Backups and Updates, please contact us.

FMS6

For those of you operating FMS 6 Bank Account, you will need to be on version 6.78. Please be aware that future upgrades to this module are to be done via SOLUS. If you are at all unsure, or are requiring more information, please do not hesitate to give us a call.



SIMS Dinner Money 05/06

We have had a lot of problems with the Dinner Money Module at the start of this Academic Year (mainly for those schools who have converted to SIMS .NET).

There are a lot of schools who use their Teacher's Names / Initials as their Class Names within their Pastoral Structure, these obviously will need to be updated when a Teacher leaves, gets married etc... This procedure has all sorts of complications, not only within SIMS .NET, but more importantly with predominantly Dinner Money and Attendance modules.

May we suggest that Schools take on naming their classes something that will not need to be edited. Those operating this 'system' use: Class One, Class Two / Nature Themes (e.g. animals) / Previous Headteachers; the possibilities are endless. Perhaps introduce a School Competition to find class names for your school, which then can be introduced for Academic year 06/07?

Thanking you in anticipation for your support with this matter.



October 2005

Key Dates...

- 12th September 05 - onwards SIMS .NET Training available (for all dates refer to the portal, all courses are in Godmanchester)
- 13th September 05 - onwards SIRT Training available (for all dates and venues refer to portal)
- 4th October 05 - Final Conversion Seminar (Oliver Cromwell Hotel, March)
- 6th October 05 - Final Conversion Seminar (CPDC, Cambridge)
- 13th October 05 - Day One of First AM6 Course (courses available throughout year, check availability)
- 17th October 05 - Secondary User Groups (March Library, March)
- 21st October 05 - Secondary User Groups (CPDC, Cambridge)
- 24th February - SIMS .NET Advance Reporting (all courses are in Godmanchester)

Training Courses
For SIMS .NET Training and availability
Telephone: 01480 376670
Email: ict.courses@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Secondary Schools who have *Withdrawn* Students still appearing on Nova should run Tools – Validate Memberships in Sims .Net.

In Nova, you will need to Reload from SQL to 'refresh' your data. Then go to General Student list to ensure students not appearing.

Assessment Manager 6

Automatching of Students

Following the update to 6.78, those of you who regularly export and import data from AM6 to Microsoft Excel Spreadsheets will notice a particularly useful update.

When attempting to import data from a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet into Assessment Manager for a new intake group, the student data in the spreadsheet was not automatically matching against students in the SIMS SQL database. It used to match only for students and not for pre-admission students. This caused an issue whereby the workaround was to match each student manually. This occurred for both formatted and unformatted Marksheets that have been exported to Microsoft Excel.

Also while importing the Results XML files, the automatching used to consider only students and not applicants.

These issues have been resolved, by changing the matching process to match on UPN or surname / forename combination, even for pre-admission students and leavers. If the UPN is present in the import file (Excel or XML), it will use the UPN to find a match. If the UPN is not present it will attempt to find a match based on surname and forename. If there are two students with the same forename and surname combination, one with a UPN and one without, then the automatch process will match the student with the UPN and there will be a multiple match for the other student.

We know this will resolve a lot of problems.



Attendance

...More Good News

Following the latest Enhancement, there have been some improvements made to **Printing Manual Registration Sheets**. When using the option to **Print Existing Marks**, the marks were displayed one week ahead of the week entered, i.e. week 1 marks were displayed under week 2, and so forth for the whole year. This symptom was only displayed where the first week was an incomplete week.

Printing OMR Registration Sheets. When printing the OMR Registration sheets for new registration groups, the header information was missing or replaced with 'n/a'.

ALICE in SIMS .NET

For those of you using SIMS .NET, and wishing to use the ALICE Library software, we have been made aware of a workaround that has proved to be successful!



In the first instance we would recommend that you go to www.softlink.co.uk You will be able to download instructions and files that can be imported into SIMS .NET.

If you are experiencing difficulties with downloading the files for import into SIMS .NET, please let us know, we have copies that we can send you.

Common Transfer Files (CTF's)



We have received a number of calls from schools experiencing problems with importing CTF's from other schools.

We strongly recommend that prior to importing, you check the contents of the file sent. This will

prevent importing children on roll who have not actually arrived at *your* school, as well as avoiding duplication.

Before downloading this file into Windows Explorer, please check the contents. To do this, you will need to double click on the file name which will open in 'notepad' format; you will be able to view the children's names, which in turn will identify how many children are included in the sent file.

For those of you who have already entered the basic details of children contained on the ctf, ensure that you only import the relevant required information.

If you are at all unsure, *please* give us a call.

Final Conversion Seminars

For those of you who have not yet converted onto SIMS .NET and have not yet attended any Seminars; please be aware that your *final* opportunity to do so will be on the 4th and 6th October 05 from 10.00—12.30, being held at The Oliver Cromwell Hotel in March and Cambridgeshire Professional Development Centre in Cambridge, respectively.

If there are any of you who have previously attended one of these Seminars, but have not yet finally converted onto SIMS .NET, please feel welcome to come along.

These Seminars are free of charge to all attendees. You will need to book your places at your earliest convenience. For more information, please go the Portal Home-Page (There's no need to log in), in the Search, type in: FC Seminar. This will give you all the information you need with respect to relevant documentation and availability.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Tip of the Month

With 'PLASC' only a matter of months away, we would like to draw your attention to the Bulk Update facility within SIMS .NET.

The functionality to Bulk Update Student Information has been incorporated in the system to replace the functionality previously available in the **Flood Fill Utility**.

Through the **Bulk Update Student** Information page, you can assign and edit data values for a particular section of **Pupils / Students** at one time. This allows you to set a specific data value for all **Pupils / Students** and then simply edit the data value for those children who are the exception.

Select **Routines- Pupil / Student—Bulk Update** to display the **Bulk Update Pupil / Student** page.

We hope that you will find this useful.

Final Conversion Update

The Number of Primary Schools now on SIMS .Net is 135!

Well Done



SIMS

Accredited Support