

HELP LINES



For all assistance / enquiries: Telephone: 08 450 450 973
Email: ict.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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Issue 34

Please ensure the following members of staff receive a copy of this newsletter:-

School Secretary/Administrator ICT Technician Headteacher Exams Officer Bursar / Finance Officer Attendance Operator
Dinner Money Operator SENCO Timetabler Assessment Co-ordinator

Please e-mail any requests for items to be included in the October edition of *Helplines* to: ict.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

School Census

Schools Autumn Census Thursday 2nd October 2008



All schools must submit the Autumn Census on 2nd October. This Census is very similar to the Summer Census for Primary Schools but for Secondary Schools with Sixth Forms, Post-16 Learning Aims are included.

Please ensure all statutory fields in SIMS .net have been completed for your new intake i.e. UPN, Name, Gender, DOB, Home Address and Post Code, NC Year and Year Taught in, (Class Type Primary Schools only) Ethnicity, 1st Language, SEN Status, FSM eligibility, Gifted and Talented, **Connexions Assent (Secondary Schools only)**.

Attendance data will be collected for the Summer Term, up to 23rd May 2008.

Exclusion data will be collected for the Spring Term 2008.

Secondary Schools only - Post-16 Learning Aims will be collected electronically as part of this School Census. Secondary Schools must ensure that courses have the correct QANS attached and that Students' membership of courses is up-to-date.

Do not leave it until 2nd October to start working on your Census. The ISSIS team are happy to receive dummy returns.

Guidance Notes are available for download from the SIMS .net Planet (for Primary, Special and Nursery Schools) and from the Secondary Planet.

For primary users who performed the Spring and Summer Census Returns, the Helpline "Overview Notes" may provide sufficient information. For users requiring more in-depth guidance the "Autumn Census Guidance Notes" are available. The DCSF "School Census Preparation and Guidance for 2008" are the same set that were used for the Spring and Summer returns. Separate notes are available for schools with Sixth Forms for guidance on the Post-16 Learning Aims Return.

SIMS .net Primary Calendar

The Primary Calendar was sent out to all Primary Schools in September 2007. This calendar gave advice on the tasks that need undertaking for each month of the year. If these recommendations are followed, should run more smoothly and because the Census data will be uploaded by the DCSF to ContactPoint in January 2009 you can be confident that your data is accurate. If you are unable to locate the hardcopy version that was sent to your school last year, we have made it available for download from the SIMS .net and Primary Planets on the Portal. (Nursery and Special Schools may also find this guide useful).



Attendance 7 after the August Upgrade

The August SIMS upgrade introduces a number of changes to SIMS Attendance. The ! Code, until now being used to record absences for pupils below compulsory school age, is replaced with X. This is a global and retrospective change, i.e. all ! Codes in attendance will have been changed to an X. The other major code change is the Z code. Hopefully schools in Cambridgeshire have not been using this code since the major code changes which occurred about 18 months ago. The August upgrade changes the Not On Roll code from * to Z. It is worth running an attendance report to ensure there are no Z codes recorded against any of your students while they were on roll, as these will be counted as Attendance not Required in the Census or a CTF File. Schools using external Lesson Monitoring programs please ensure the Z code is no longer being inserted into Attendance.

The August Upgrade has also brought the Attendance Letters and printing of Manual Registration Sheets into SIMS .net. Please see the SIMS 2008 August Main Release Notes for details.

Student Details in SIMS .net

The start of a new academic year is a good time to work on the data the school holds on its students in SIMS .net . Taking time now to ensure the accuracy and completeness of data when new students are added to the system, can save huge amounts of time in the future. Ensuring that all contacts that live at the same address as a student have the house symbol next to their name on the Contact Panel of Student Detail, that the Parental Responsibility is ticked for contacts for whom this is appropriate (and NOT where it is not). Ensure that all siblings appear in the Family Links Panel of Student Details.

When data is accurate it can really help schools. For example Mailing Points can be used to produce class lists of oldest and only (or youngest and only) so that newsletters etc. can be issued one per family, leading to huge savings.

Now is the best time of year to send home Data Collection Sheets, asking parents to check every detail carefully, particularly postcodes, to indicate any changes or corrections, then sign and return them to the school as soon as possible.

New - Address Tidy and Merge Tool

A tool is available in SIMS .net which will allow schools to tidy addresses and merge any duplicates. Most schools will welcome this facility, as they will have experienced problems associated with duplicate addresses. There are so many variations in addresses that no tool can be foolproof, it is therefore essential that schools read and follow the guidance notes (available on SIMS .net planet of the Portal) before carrying out this procedure. Cambridgeshire has its own difficulties created by the major postcode changes that were introduced a couple of years ago. We would strongly suggest that you run off SIMS .net reports to help identify any old postcodes before proceeding with the tidy and merge, these postcodes can then be edited manually. Returned Data Collection Sheets can also help with this process.

It is necessary to apply a licence patch via Solus to activate this tool. Please contact the Helpline to request the release of the patch when you are ready to carry out this routine.

We would strongly recommend that all schools use this tool in preparation for running the Bulk Address Validation tool. Advice on this Validation Tool will follow later in the Autumn Term.

FMS Versions

Centrally Hosted schools and most schools who have signed up for the remote upgrade service are now on the latest FMS version of 6.106. Schools who have had the earlier FMS 6.100 released to them but have not carried out that upgrade should have received an email reminder on 7th August giving instructions on how to run the upgrade. Schools that are on version FMS 6.100 need to check their level 5 access rights. To do this log into FMS using your sysman id and password. Go to Tools | Manage Users and highlight the normal level 5 users (Finance and Head). Click on Access Rights. Make sure the "bullet" is in Supervisor in Finance Access and Manager for Equipment Register Access and then click Save. Say Yes to the permissions query. It is necessary to do this procedure in version 6.100 as in 6.106 the sysman id loses its access rights.

Foundation Stage Profile - Autumn Results Return

As you are probably aware, this year the Standards and Effectiveness team are requesting schools upload a CSV file to Collect with the On Entry FSP results for this year's Reception pupils. Guidance notes for this process have been uploaded to the Assessment Planet from the SIMS Home Page on the Portal.



Dinner Money

At some point during the first couple of weeks in September you may get the following error message: Meal type(s) without charge or not set for the current date. This happens when your lowest year comes on roll. To rectify this go to System Menu | Settings Menu | Year Map and make sure all the years have either an Infant or Junior meal mapped. Then go into System Menu | Settings Menu | Meal Charges and ensure that your lowest year has a valid date range and price.



News for Centrally Hosted Schools

The August SIMS upgrade will be performed for all Centrally Hosted schools over the last weekend in August. This upgrade includes an updated version of the predefined reports. Please perform the usual report import routine to update your predefined reports i.e. use route Reports | Import - browse for PreDefined_Reports_v7108, RptDef - open and import.



Key Dates....

- 11th (G), 15th (WB), 19th Sept (G) - e-Profiles, Getting Started
- 17th & 24th (WB), Sept - FMS for New Users
- 25th Sept (WB), 2nd Oct (WB), - ToPP Aut & Dec Marksheets & Analysis
- 25th Sept (G), 23rd Oct (WB), - Target Tracking and ToPP using Primary TT
- 18th Sept (G), 16th Oct (WB), - RAISEonline, Question Level Analysis
- 23rd Sept (WB), 14th Oct (WB) - FMS Budget Adjusting and Profiling
- School Autumn Census Day - Thursday 2nd October
- 7th Oct (WB) - Self Evaluation Workshop
- 8th & 16th Oct (G)- Managing Student Data - SIMS .net for New Users
- 9th Oct (WB) - SIMS .net Reporting for Primary Schools
- 14th Oct (G) - Analysing Assessment Data in SIMS
- 21st Oct (G)- RAISEonline, data Management
- 22nd Oct (WB) - ToPP Reporting Home to Parents

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.net

support team
Accredited 2008

For booking and availability of *all* courses listed:

Telephone: (01480) 376670

Email: ict.courses@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

G = Godmanchester. WB + Waterbeach

For details of ALL ICT Courses please check the [SIMS Home Page](#) and click on the *Training Planet*; this will allow you to view all of our Administrative and Curriculum Courses available throughout the Academic year.

