

HELP LINES



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

November/December 2009
Issue 45

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

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and all best wishes for the New Year.

Central Hosting - Major Maintenance Work - Date Change

Due to the later release of the SIMS upgrade, we have had to move the planned downtime for the Centrally Hosted service into **December**. This will now be the weekends of **12/13th** (already a scheduled downtime day) and **the 19/20th**. We apologise for this change to the dates.



Dinner Money 7

We are in the final stages of our Roll Out of Dinner Money 7 training and all schools have now been advised of their Training Date by e-mail. If you have not received such an invitation, please contact course admin at Godmanchester on 01480 376670.

Dinner Money 7 - Reminder (CCS Schools)

Please be aware that if you choose to edit meal prices and types following your Dinner Money 7 training, the catering return will not reflect these changes and you are likely to be invoiced for the full price meal.

Staff Ethnicity

In preparation for the School Workforce Census in January, please check that all Personnel records in SIMS .net have correct ethnic codes attached (e.g. White British not White)



Logging Calls with the Helpline

Whichever method you use to log a call with the Helpline voicemail, e-mail, fax, please make sure you include the name of your school, your name, telephone number and, if it relates to an ongoing problem, the call reference. This allows us to deal with your query much more efficiently.

Office Closure - 15th December

The Office at Godmanchester will be closed on Tuesday 15th December. The Helpline will still be operational but unable to provide the full range of services as we will be operating from another building. It will not be possible to remotely access non-centrally hosted schools until we return to our office the following day.

Helpline Support 21st—23rd December

Due to maintenance work, staff training and meetings scheduled for these three days, at times calls to the Helpline will go straight to voicemail. The mailbox will be checked frequently and we will respond as soon as possible.

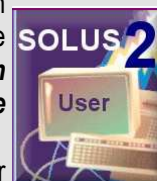
Christmas Closure - 28th December to 1st January

The Godmanchester and Waterbeach Offices will be closed between Christmas and new year.

SIMS Autumn 2009 Main Release

Capita are anticipating releasing the Autumn Upgrade on 9th November. We will be rolling this out to schools after allowing a short period for testing. Centrally Hosted Schools will be upgraded during the next scheduled downtime on 28th November. All schools will require this upgrade as it contains the School Spring Census 2010. Please be aware that performing this upgrade will close the 2009 Census year, **it is essential that your school's Autumn Census was accurate and has been successfully uploaded to Collect as it will not be possible to create another return once the upgrade has been performed.**

This upgrade includes CTF version 9.0, new functionality, particularly in Dinner Money and also a large number of fixes particularly in Assessment, Cover 7 and Exams Organiser. The Release notes will be uploaded to the Portal Solus Planet from the Sims Home Page.



Parental Responsibility Tick Box

The tick box in Contact Details is tiny and easily overlooked but is of crucial importance. It should **ONLY** be ticked for contacts that DO have Parental responsibility. The School Census collects information for all contacts with the Parental Responsibility box ticked, obviously schools should not be submitting details of people who do not have Parental Responsibility and incorrect use of this box would have this effect.



The School Learning Gateway is rapidly approaching, this will require schools to allow parents to access data on their children held in schools' MIS Systems. Ultimately the Parental Responsibility tick box will be the flag that controls who should be given access and to which Students' data.

Why not create a SIMS .net report of Student Name and Contacts, filtered for Parental Responsibility being True, plus Contact Type. This could throw up contacts such as Child Minders inappropriately flagged as having Parental Responsibility. Also gaps will be visible where Parent details do not have the Parental Responsibility Box ticked.

School Spring Census 2010

No sooner is one census complete, than it seems to be time to start preparing for next one. As far as we are aware there will be no changes from last year's Spring Census. However, as all schools should now have contracts in place in SIMS, the Staffing sections of the census should populate automatically. The accuracy will need to be checked however. As always, if you ensure your SIMS data is always up to date and accurate additional work required to produce the Census should be minimal. Do run test returns and upload to the familiarisation website. Training is available for users who have not produced a School Spring Census before.



The DCSF preparation and Guidance Notes, Helpline Overview and Capita Notes will all be uploaded to the Portal shortly.

Pupil Referral Units will be submitting a Pupil Level Return this January. Although Attendance information will not be collected as a part of this return, PRUs do need to be recording attendance as in January 2011 historical attendance data for the previous year will be collected.

Helpline Support

We would remind schools that the Helpline can only support users who have been trained by a SIMS Accredited Trainer to use the application for which they are seeking assistance. This is clearly stated in the Service Level Agreement. When users have not been trained they can inadvertently cause many problems with the smooth operation of schools' MIS systems. The Helpline is not able to train over the phone, this is not fair for schools who have paid for their staff to be trained and are unable to get through to the Helpline who are tied up for long periods supporting untrained callers.



Secure Waste Disposal

If you are looking to dispose of confidential waste schools can use the County Council's Corporate Contract with Donarbon. This supplier has been checked and vetted to ensure a value for money service that delivers a reliable and effective service. If you have any sensitive documents that need disposing of please contact Graham Smoker of Donarbon on 01223 861010, 07789754781 or e-mail GrahamSmoker@Donarbon.com
Further guidance available Search for ID 4033 on the Portal.

Address Validator

A number of schools were experiencing difficulties with Address Validator before half term. This feature should now be working again. If you are still experiencing problems it may be necessary to make minor adjustments in your Sims Services settings. Please give the Helpline a call.



Key Dates....

- ♦ 15 Dec - Godmanchester Office Closed - Helpline still available
- ♦ 28 Dec - 1st Jan Helpline (Godmanchester and Waterbeach) Closed
- ♦ 5th WB, 6th, 7th Jan - Primary School Census half day
- ♦ 11th Jan & 25th - FMS6 for New Users
- ♦ 12th WB Jan - RAISEonline - Data Management
- ♦ 20th & 27th WB Jan - Managing Student Data (SIMS .net new users)
- ♦ 21st WB Jan - Central Hosting workshop
- ♦ 2nd Feb - SENCO Training
- ♦ 2nd WB, 3rd Feb - ToPP Spring Marksheets and Grids
- ♦ 9th WB Feb - Fischer Family Trust (Secondary)
- ♦ 9th Feb - Reporting for Primary Schools

For booking and availability of all courses listed:
Telephone: (01480) 376670
Email: ict.courses@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



All Courses at Godmanchester unless stated otherwise
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.

