

SITSS NEWSLETTER

School IT Systems Support Newsletter

Summer 2016

SIMS Managers Conference

Herts Development Centre - Wednesday 6th July

This conference is an annual event organised by the School IT Systems Support Team to update secondary, middle, ESC and special (deemed as secondary) schools with developments in SIMS. The conference is aimed at the manager with responsibility for SIMS within the school. We would expect that normally this would be a member of the senior management team of the school, although it is also useful for the SIMS system manager and the senior member of the school administration team to attend. This is a morning event from 9.30 a.m. to 12.00 p.m with a light lunch provided at the end.

Book your place now:

<http://tinyurl.com/simsconf>

Course code: 16SIT/038S

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 <http://tinyurl.com/hflsitss>

 [@hertsforlearning](https://twitter.com/hertsforlearning)

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Encryption & Data Security

Is your data secure?

We advise that any computer hosting the SIMS database or sensitive information is encrypted if located in a public place – e.g. school office or staff room. Currently HfL use TrueCrypt to achieve this, moving forward we will be using Microsoft's in built BitLocker solution.

Where equipment cannot be encrypted, for example Curriculum and MIS/ SIMS servers they should be stored in a secure location within the school.

The same principle applies to your backup of sensitive data. If you are using the HfL cloud backup solution then it is encrypted as part of the process. If you are using a tape or hard drive based backup system then you must ensure that these are stored in a secure location away from the server. For example a correctly rated fire-proof safe or offsite.

If you are unsure whether your school is complying with these recommendations please contact your support provider.

SIMS Reports

Are your SIMS Reports taking a long time to run or timing out?

Some data hungry SIMS reports require lots of resource to generate, often causing performance issues for other users or the report itself timing out or producing an error.

Scheduled Reporting could help!

This allows users to schedule reports at a time when SIMS is not being used by others i.e. through the night. The report is available to the user in the morning from the SIMS Home Page.

Guidance will be available shortly. Watch out for it on the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning.



SIMS Activities

Effective management of school clubs and trips

You can now make scheduling activities before, during and after school easy, using SIMS Activities. Use it to send email invitations, manage consent, create registers and keep parents regularly updated.

Attendance of clubs and trips is properly managed electronically, you have visibility of pupils' whereabouts and can instantly report back to parents.

Want to know more?

Call Information Services at SITSS, Herts for Learning on:

01438 844777 Opt 1, Opt 1,

Or email:

sitss.mis@lea.herts.sch.uk



HfL Primary Computing Scheme

From September 2016 we will be expanding and improving the Herts for Learning Primary Computing Scheme. We have listened to your feedback and, as part of the service, subscribers will have access to a new online area where additional materials will be provided, and regularly updated, to support teachers in delivering the computing curriculum. Schools will continue to receive their personalised copy of the scheme, as both a printed and electronic copy, as before. Benefits of subscribing to the scheme (from September 2016) include:

- The same creative approach to delivering the 2014 computing curriculum, with learning themes for EYFS, KS1, lower KS2 and upper KS2.
- Learning themes regularly revised to meet the needs of teachers and schools.
- Extensive assessment materials which follow the Primary PA+ assessment approach.
- Examples of medium term plans donated by Hertfordshire schools.
- **New** theme guides to provide deeper explanations and guidance for each KS1 and KS2 learning objective.
- A **new** bank of supporting materials, which will continue to grow, containing software and activity guides, links to online resources which can be used for classroom activities and other tools to support computing in your school.
- A **new** banded pricing structure based on numbers of pupils on roll, with subscriptions running for a calendar year.

New subscribers in Hertfordshire will be introduced to the scheme through a half-day session with a HfL Computing Adviser. This session can include a one hour staff meeting so that all teachers may be introduced to how the scheme works.

Existing subscribers will receive a communication, when their current subscription is nearing an end, with their options to re-subscribe.



End of Year Procedures

End of Year 2015/16 and Start of Year 2016/17 Nursery, Primary Special

By now you should have received a hard copy of the documentation for completing the End of Year 2015/16 and Start of Year 2016/17. Procedures for Nursery, Primary and Special Schools. You can also download an electronic copy from:

www.thegrid.org.uk/info/traded/sitss/data/yearend/index.shtml

We have separated the End of Year document into two documents this year, you must complete the End of Year document before 01/09/16 and should retain the Start of Year document and work on it from 01/09/16.

There are still places available to book for the End of Year on School Data (Primary) on 14/06/16 and 11/07/16. These courses can be found on the School IT System Support page on the grid under Training Courses. Both of these courses allow delegates to complete their End of Year processes on their own school data with guidance from a SITSS MIS Consultant and have the added benefit of being able to complete the process in an environment with no interruptions. Please contact the Service Desk (01438) 844777 Option 1 – Option 1 for more information.

We have updated the End of Year and Start of Year documents to include Entering Year R Exit Data in Assessment Manager, Guest Pupils Moving to Single Registration and Downloading and Importing the DfE CSV File for your Pupil Premium children.

Please don't hesitate to give us a ring if you need any assistance with the documents and don't forget that the Service Desk is open all day during the holidays so if you come in on an inset day or during the break we will be available to give you support.

Secondary Assessment

Are you looking for a solution to Assessment without Levels in KS3?

In the latest release of SIMS, Capita have introduced new functionality in the Programme of Study Tracking area, making the resources more customisable than ever before. We have put together a document to give an overview of what is possible in this area, which you can find at:

<http://tinyurl.com/assess-sec>

There will also be a demonstration of the functionality at the **SITSS SIMS Manager's Conference on Wednesday 6th July 2016**. Further details about the conference are available from:

<http://bit.ly/HertsUG>



HICS Update

The initial set up costs have now all been paid off and schools are seeing savings of 25% on their HICS subscription. As well as this cost reduction, where available, primary schools are having their bandwidth increased using fibre to the cabinet technology.

The contract with HICS' broadband provider expires in September 2017. We will soon be commencing the procurement process to see who we will be partnering going forward. This could be Udata or it could be another company altogether.

For a more in depth HICS update, please click on this link:

<http://hics.lea.herts.sch.uk/hics-update/>



Primary Assessment

End of Key Stage Returns

Documents for returning EYFSP, Phonics, KS1 and KS2 data are now being sent out to all schools. These contain detailed instructions on importing the 2016 Wizards, entering data, returning the data, reporting to parents and analysing the results. There are many changes to the Key Stage 1 and 2 instructions this year, in light of the removal of levels, so please ensure that you follow each document carefully. The deadline for returning EYFSP data is 17th June and although the official DfE deadline for the other returns is 30th June, schools are strongly encouraged to return by 24th June in case of any data issues.

HfL PPA+ AM7 reports

An update to the SIMS AM7 reports was made during March, and although no further updates to current reports are currently anticipated for the Summer term, new reports for analysing EYFSP, KS1 and KS2 data will this year be made available on the PPA+ website (not on the Grid as in previous years). There will also be changes to the existing templates and reports in the Autumn term. Any updates to the resources are always communicated to subscribing schools by email, but if you are not sure whether you have the latest versions, you can check the PPA+ subscription area at any time. To do this, you will need to log into the Herts for Learning website using the school's username and password, then click on 'My Groups' at the top right of the page, then on 'Primary PA Plus' in the list of groups that are displayed. This leads to a page with a link at the bottom to the 'Assessment (including SIMS) resources' page – all the required templates, reports and accompanying documentation can be found at the bottom of this page.

End of Year - Dinner Money

By now you should have received a hard copy of the documentation for completing the End of Year Procedures in Dinner Money for 2015/16. You can also download an electronic copy from:

www.thegrid.org.uk/info/traded/sitss/finance/dinners/

It is vital that these procedures are carried out before the start of the new academic year, 01/09/16. There are some changes to pupil meal definitions that will need to be reflected in SIMS.

Schools that do not complete this document before entering meals in the Autumn term will need help from SITSS – Please note that this may take some time and may be chargeable.

Please don't hesitate to give us a ring if you need any assistance with the documents and don't forget that the Service Desk is open all day during the holidays so if you come in on an inset day or during the break we will be available to give you support.

If you have any suggestions or feedback for this newsletter please contact:
sitss.admin@lea.herts.sch.uk

"Tell us what you think!"



SITSS Autumn Courses

Course Title	Phase	Dates (2016)
SIMS for new users	A	Wed 14/09/16
Dinner Money for new users	A	Fri 16/09/16
SIMS Reporting (basic)	A	Mon 26/09/16
SIMS Attendance	A	Tue 27/09/16
SIMS Attendance reporting	A	Tue 27/09/16
SIMS Personnel	A	Mon 03/10/16
SIMS Personnel Reporting	A	Mon 03/10/16
School workforce training	A	Wed 12/10/16
Using SIMS to manage SEN	A	Mon 07/11/16
SIMS staff performance module	A	Thu 10/11/16
SIMS Reporting (advanced)	A	Thu 17/11/16
SIMS for new users	A	Wed 23/11/16
SIMS student list reporting	P	Fri 11/11/16
SIMS AM7 Primary	P	Tue 22/11/16
SIMS AM7 Primary - School data	P	Tue 22/11/16
Making effective use of AM7 for SENCO's	P	Thu 24/11/16
Post 16 and course manager	S	Mon 12/09/16
Post 16 and course manager	S	Mon 12/09/16
Post 16 and course manager	S	Tue 13/09/16
Post 16 and course manager	S	Tue 13/09/16
Exams Organiser	S	Wed 21/09/16
Managing student 'Options' using SIMS	S	Fri 21/10/16
KS4 Assessment	S	Mon 14/11/16
Exams Basedata	S	Fri 18/11/16
Maximising use of Exams Organiser	S	Mon 28/11/16
Nova-T6	S	Fri 02/12/16

For more information and to book online please go to:
www.thegrid.org.uk/info/traded/sitss/services/training