



January 2021

Issue 15

Special Points of Interest:

- **Spring School Census** is on **Thursday 21st January 2021**
- Our phone number is 01895 717701
- You can email the Sims Team at support@simsforschools.com
- Sims Courses for the Spring Term are now available to view at www.simsforschools.com
Please email to book courses.
- The SIMS User Group Meeting for Spring Term will be on Thursday 25th March 2:30—4:00pm—all welcome.

2021

New Course Booking System

Unified Course Booker Portal

In early 2021 the course booking functionality for Schools HR (NQT Training & Development Programme and Safer Recruitment Workshops), SIMS for Schools, and the Governor Support Service will be moved to a unified course booker portal. The aim is to simplify course bookings across the different services and we will be issuing further information on the roll-out of this new system shortly.

Also, in light of the current national restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic all SIMS training courses will continue to be held via Microsoft Teams for the foreseeable future.

SIMS Autumn upgrade

Phonics Year 1 2020 Screening Check

[Routines](#) | [Data Out](#) | [CTF](#) | [Export CTF](#) | [Phonics Test Results \(For Autumn Term 2020 Screening Check only\)](#)

The DfE requires schools to provide them with a CTF file that contains data for year 2 pupils for the retrospective Phonics Year 1 2020 Screening Check.

Results should reflect the actual date of the check and not the original Summer date. Please note that only this menu route should be used to collect the Phonics Test Results (For Autumn Term 2020 Screening Check only) data.

FMS Autumn upgrade

ESFA Counterparties

- * To enable accurate recording and reporting of transactions between counterparties (Academy trusts), academies are now required to identify which of their suppliers and debtors are Academy trusts. A new heading has been added at **Level 1** for **Counterparties** and Academy schools must now map other Academy trusts into the **Counterparties** option to ensure that they are identified correctly.
- * The new ESFA Counterparties report details the transactions between Academy trusts. All supplier and debtor transactions recorded in FMS that are deemed to be counterparties must now be recorded so that they can be reported to the ESFA when requested.

DfE guidance on attendance during the latest COVID-19 lockdown

The DfE has recommended the following links for updates to attendance guidance:

[Guidance: Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) (external link);
[Registering on GOV.UK to receive updates when guidance is changed](#) (external link)

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Spring School Census 2021

- * For schools using Attendance, data will now be collected on *all* categories of school attendance, rather than just absence.
- * COVID-19 Attendance Codes 7, 8, 9 should not be used from September 2020. Registration data will return to its previous legal status and use of these codes will trigger an error on the School Census Spring 2021 return. (For removal of codes 7, 8, 9 from your SIMS database contact the Sims *for* Schools team who will apply the relevant patch).
- * With the exception of Nursery schools the Exclusions Detail report has been updated to display up to three exclusion reasons.
- * For Primary and All Through schools, to highlight classes that require you to enter the reason for the class size exception manually, the class name is now initially displayed in **bold** and with a yellow background.
- * For Secondary schools, All Through schools and PRUs with a November exams season, it is now possible for the School Census to be run during an exams embargo period.

Catholic Education Services (CES) Return

- * Schools are now required to include the number of pupils withdrawn from R.E. in the figure for pupils withdrawn from collective worship. Subsequently, the following changes have been made to the text in the **Pupil Withdrawals** panel.
- * **Total withdrawn from collective worship** has changed to **Total withdrawn from collective worship and / or R.E.**
- * **Y12 and Y13 withdrawn from collective worship** has changed to **Y12 and Y13 withdrawn from collective worship and / or R.E.**

This information is included in the Summary report.

- * **The Support Staff Detail** report now displays the **Post Category**.

Course Manager

- * For schools in England, the **Remove Programme** button has been provided, enabling the deletion of Programme of Study details for a student whose course **Status** has been set to **Withdrawn** or **Transferred** via Maintain Course.
- * For schools in England, when a student's course membership has associated work placements, the student's name is displayed in bold text in the **Memberships and Results** panel.

SIMS *for* Schools Team News

Sadly Kathleen Bentley has left the Sims *for* Schools team for a position in a local school. We would like to thank Kathleen for her contribution to the team and wish her all the best in her new role.

*Sims
Training
Courses for
spring term
are now
available to
view at [www.
simsforschools.
com](http://www.simsforschools.com)*

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