Schools IT News

Welcome to the Suffolk County Council Schools IT Newsletter.

A range of the services we offer can be found on our new website, which can be visited by clicking on the following link:

https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business/it-services-for-schools-and-academies

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CAPITA SIMS — SIMS news and updates

Suffolk County Council moving the education management system to the cloud

You may have read an article in last week's Suffolk Headlines advising our SIMS users of the move of the Suffolk County Council education management system to a cloud-based solution.

How do these changes affect my school?
The changes are to move our current SCC EMS platform over to a Capita cloud-based solution and this will not affect SIMS users or the way your SIMS database currently works. However, any data that normally transfer to SCC via B2B will not be transferred until the relevant URLs are amended within the SIMS database.

How do I make the necessary amendments to SIMS.net?
Please find attached guidance of how to make these changes yourself.
See 'EditingURLSinSIMS (003).docx'

What do I do if there is no one in the school with the relevant skills to make the changes in SIMS.net?
If you do not have an IT Technician within your school and you are not confident in making these changes, please do not worry. Suffolk County Council will have a dedicated member of staff who will be contacting schools from 1st December to make these changes for them, all we need is for a member of staff to allow our employee access to the SIMS server to make the amendments and test the connection.

If you no longer use SIMS.net as your MIS within the school, these changes will not affect you.

If you are having problems with the amendments, please do not contact the IT Service Desk. We will be in contact with each school that requires these changes over the next few weeks.

Suffolk County Council

Autumn Phonics Screening Check Year 2 Pupils

Please find attached the Phonics check 2020 data collection manual as written by the Suffolk County Council assessment team.

The deadline for returning your data to the LA is **Monday 14th December 2020.**

For questions regarding the submission of assessments, please contact the Data Collection mailbox in the first instance via data.collection@suffolk.gov.uk
Or call 01473 260668/264556/263809 to speak to a member of the team.

For SIMS specific questions please contact the SIMS team via the IT Service Desk on 01473 265555 or email ITServiceDesk@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk Cloud network upgrades

SUFFOLK CLOUD NETWORK

As part of the DCMS funded Suffolk Cloud Partnership, MLL Telecom have built a brand-new core public sector network In the Suffolk region. This will enable the provision of full fibre to the premise's circuits to around 150 Suffolk schools.

On 14th and 15th December there is planned work to migrate the sites currently connected at Newmarket Exchange on the old core network over to the new core network. This will affect a number of schools connected to the exchange and full details can be found on the Suffolk County Council schools service live reporting page at:

https://suffolkschools.freshstatus.io/

You can also subscribe to this page to receive notifications of incidents.

For further details on the Suffolk Cloud programme please contact:

Louis Gorham
Schools IT Customer Relationship Manager
Louis.Gorham@suffolk.gov.uk

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Smoothwall infrastructure

There are also planned works on the Suffolk County Council Smoothwall infrastructure on Saturday 5 December. The works window will run between 5/12/2020 8:00 - 5/12/2020 20:00, however we anticipate no impact to services before 14:00. Schools using the Smoothwall internet solution will experience intermittent access to external sources such as general internet use from 14:00 during the works window.

Details of this work can also be found on the Suffolk County Council schools service live reporting page at:

https://suffolkschools.freshstatus.io/

The Increasing Ransomware threat in Education – Redstor webinar

Did you know that most cyber-attacks on schools are launched at the start of a new term or when exam results are due? Last month Redstor ran a webinar which provided useful insight like this to help schools protect their systems and important data. The session lasts for just under an hour and includes discussion about an actual cyber-attack on a school

Redstor ran the session with Detective Inspector Chris White (Head of Cyber & Innovation) and Detective Superintendent Nick Bell (National Policing Director) for the Cyber Resilience Centres. The webinar covered key areas for schools including:

• Recent trends in cyber-threats
• Real-world examples
• Recommended strategies to stay protected
• How the cyber resilience centre network can support you and your customers

This session is now available on-line at:

https://fast.wistia.net/embed/iframe/5l548beyfw?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=99189259&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9FAd4eU3HrlhXZTtwAQw7ExN7phIL4dZ9vLyVN8hjeZOY45tG8ass42vEssEM7sFclvsNey79fa9m_X5xx09oaO-OVkl38omjtgTVSbRfkJ2ZxrdY&utm_content=99189259&utm_source=hs_email

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If you have any questions about Redstor service or another IT service, contact the IT Service Desk on **01473 265555** or email **ITServicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk**

Requesting a firewall change for your school

Firewalls create a buffer zone between the Internet (and other untrusted networks) and the network used at the school. Firewalls provide protection against outside cyber attackers by shielding your network from malicious or unnecessary network traffic. Firewalls can also prevent malicious software from accessing a computer or network via the internet.

Firewall rules are set to filter traffic and allow only authorised protocols, ports and applications to exchange data across the boundary. This helps reduce the exposure of systems to network based attacks. It is therefore hugely important to have an effective process in place to manage changes to firewall policies.

While Suffolk County Council provides a managed service and reviews all firewall change requests, it is important the Headteacher fully understands the risks and potential impacts of the requested change. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure they have fully considered the implications of the requested change and have implemented any mitigation actions required or have a suitable rollback plan should this be required.

If your school subscribes to the Schools Internet Service and you would like a change made to a managed firewall, then you can request this by completing the firewall change request form at:

https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business/it-services-for-schools-and-academies/internet-and-broadband-services/

If you have any questions about broadband services or another IT service, please contact the IT Service Desk on 01473 265555 or email ITServicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk

How to contact us

You should continue to raise all standard incidents and service requests via the IT Service Desk on 01473 265555 or via itservicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk, our offices are open 08:30-17:00, Monday-Friday.

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We have setup a new mailbox for non-standard queries, e.g. enquiring about a new service, please email us at Schoolsitservices@suffolk.gov.uk

Schools IT Pricelist and Order Form

Local Authority (LA) maintained schools who buy into the Enhanced SIMS Service can order hardware from our IT procurement team. The price list and order form are available on request by contacting the team on itservicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk.