



SCHOOLS' IT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026



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FortiGate Filtering Solution:

The Fortigate Filtering Solution Is now live on the Suffolk County Council, Schools IT Services website, complete with helpful Step-by-Step 'How to' Videos.

You can find this and other useful information about all our IT Services using the link below:

[IT services for schools and academies - Suffolk County Council](#)

Alternatively, if you need additional Support or would like to speak to a member of the Team you will find our full contact details at the end of this newsletter.



A REMINDER TO ALL SCHOOL STAFF: Please use the SCC IT Service Desk for all IT Requests

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing reliable, efficient, and well-coordinated IT support across all schools, we want to remind staff of the importance of using the SCC IT Service Desk for every IT-related request. This applies not only when something goes wrong, but for all work involving your systems. To provide effective support, we need a clear and consistent process that ensures every request is logged, tracked, and managed by the right team at the right time.

Recently, we have seen an increase in staff contacting individual SCC technicians directly. While this is often done with the best intentions, it can unintentionally slow down the support process. When a request by-passes the Service Desk, several issues can arise:

- The technician contacted may be off-site, unavailable, or already dealing with other priorities
- The technician may be on annual leave/long term sick leave, leaving the mailbox unmonitored (**out-of-office replies are only sent out once, further emails may appear delivered but are not being read**)
- The message may be missed in a busy inbox
- The request may not reach the correct specialist
- The work may not be logged, meaning it cannot be tracked or prioritised
- Other team members will not be aware of the request, causing delays or duplication


This applies to all types of IT work, including:

- Access requests and account changes
- Software installations or updates
- Equipment moves or setup
- Support with systems or applications
- Guidance or advice on using SCC-provided tools
- General IT queries
- Faults, errors, or technical issues

Using the SCC IT Service Desk ensures that:

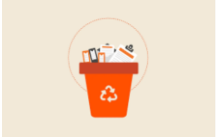
- Your request is visible to the whole IT team, not just one person
- Work is prioritised fairly and appropriately, based on urgency and impact
- Nothing is lost or overlooked, even during busy periods
- The right specialist is assigned, improving both speed and quality
- Progress can be monitored, giving you clarity and reassurance
- All activity is recorded, helping us plan resources and improve services

The Service Desk is the central co-ordination point for all IT support across schools. When every request is logged properly, we can deliver faster, more consistent, and more reliable support to your staff and students. We appreciate your co-operation in helping us maintain an organised and efficient support process. By directing all IT-related work through the SCC IT Service Desk, you help us deliver the best possible service to your school community.



NEW DATA RETENTION PAGE

Head Teachers, the person responsible for defining and managing data retention policies for students and staff.



You can now bulk manage the deletion of student data in Arbor, according to rules you set for student groups and for individual data areas, or entire student records.

Plus, no need to manually add data retention rules - [simply tell Arbor the rule you want to create](#) and it will help create it for you.

You will need specific permissions to see and edit each tab on the new data retention page. Head to *School > Users & Security > Data Retention > Student Records - New* to get started.

Learn more via [Managing data retention for your MIS data – Arbor Help Centre](#)

Arbor has released a short webinar explaining how to create data-retention rules within the MIS

[New Data Retention page | Arbor HQ](#)

To create or manage retention rules navigate to:

School > Users & Security > Data Retention > Student Records – New

Then in the tabs, select “Draft Rules”


A screenshot of the Arbor web interface. The breadcrumb trail at the top reads: School / Users & Security / Data Retention / Student Records - New. The left-hand navigation menu is expanded to 'Data Retention', with 'Student Records - New' highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Data Retention: Student Records' and features three tabs: 'Students', 'Rules', and 'Draft Rules'. The 'Draft Rules' tab is active, displaying a light blue informational box that states: 'These rules are draft rules and will not be used to control any data retention. Once you are happy with the rules, you can make them active by bulk selecting them and... To make it easier for you to distinguish newly created rules, we highlight any rule create Rules that are invalid are highlighted in red.' Below this box is a 'Draft Rules' section with a 'Bulk action' dropdown menu and a 'Hide columns' button.

Select the  button on that page and you can create a rule that Arbor follows.

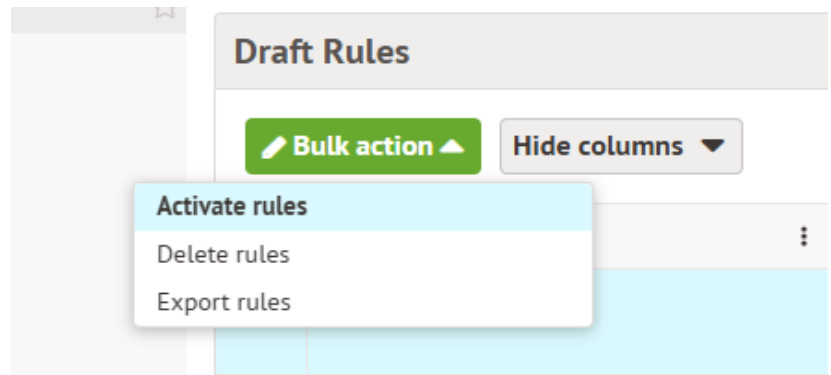
There are wizards that can be used to create a rule for the removing of the student profile, attendance, assessments and exam records. Alternatively, you can a rule manually.

This rule can then be exported and then imported to another school if you support more than one school.

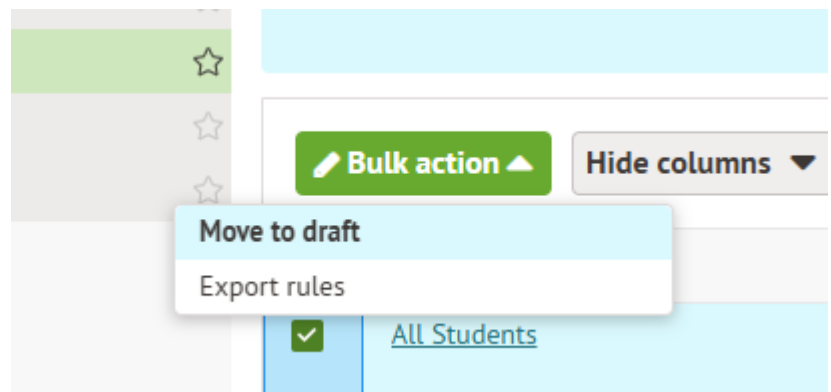
To export a rule, select the box to the left of the rule in either the “Draft Rules” or the “Rules” location then from the bulk action, select to export the rule.

This can then be imported via the  option in the “Draft Rules” location.

To activate the rule, select it in the **Draft Rules** tab, then use **Bulk Actions** and choose **Activate**.



You can delete rules while they are in **Draft Rules**, but once a rule has been activated you must first move it back to **Draft Rules** before you can delete it.



These rules should follow the school’s data-retention policies.

If you require assistance with the process of setting this up, please log a call via the IT Service Desk on 01473 265555, alternatively email ITServiceDesk@suffolk.gov.uk

Ofsted Companion

FAO Headteachers & Admin Staff



Arbor have produced a small Ofsted companion webinar.

<https://arbor-hq.circle.so/c/announcements/introducing-the-ofsted-inspection-companion>

Located:

Reporting > Report Library

If you search for Ofsted, you will locate the companion in the report library.

Report Library 🔍 Create Report

Arbor Built-in Reports My Custom Reports Other Custom Reports

All Students Enrolment Attendance Behaviour Assessments Assignments Staff Parents Interventions Cover Meals Payments Clubs

Trips Admin School Medical SEN Pastoral Child Protection Note Safeguarding In Care Notes

Ofsted Inspection Companion 🔗 >

A companion report, developed by The Key and Arbor, containing guidance, checklists and data to help your school with Ofsted inspections.

Arbor Report

Create Report from Template

Important Information - Please Read!

Please fill out the fields to customise your Ofsted Inspection Companion. You will need to specify the dates for the inspection and the date range for the data you want to present, and specific student groups you want to highlight. We have pre-filled some of the information for you, but please take the time to review and edit it to suit your own school.

Template Details	
Title	Ofsted Inspection Companion
Description	A companion report, designed by The Key and Arbor, to assist school leaders when preparing for Ofsted inspections by providing guidance, checklists, and key data for the inspection in a single document.
Inspection Dates	
The date range for the Ofsted inspection. This will be used for some specific data points, like staff absences, that need to align with the inspection period.	
Start date*	24th Feb 2026 📅
End date*	25th Feb 2026 📅
Date Range For Summary Data	
The date range for aggregated statistics and trends (e.g., attendance percentages and demographic breakdowns). We recommend selecting at least one full academic year to ensure meaningful comparisons.	
Start date*	1st Sep 2022 📅

Cancel Create Report

Each of the panels can be customised

Students With Barriers To Learning/Wellbeing

Use this to identify your students with barriers to learning and/or wellbeing. We'll use this information to highlight data and insights for these students in the toolkit. If your school hasn't decided which groups of pupils you want to discuss with Ofsted, use [The Key's article on inclusion pupil groups](#) to help you.

Students with barriers to learning/wellbeing*

EAL SEN Disadvantaged (Ofsted 2023)

Young Carer Looked After (In Care)

Child Protection

Born in June

Born in March

Born in May

Born in November

Born in October

Born in September

Born in Spring

Born in Summer

Has Medical Condition

Looked After (In Care)

Child Protection

All Enrolment modes excluding Guest

Single and Dual Registration

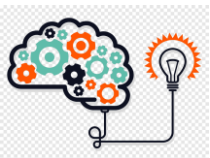
Bullying/Harassment Behaviours

Any bullying, harassment, or directly or indirectly sexist, ableist or, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic that may fit these criteria - you can change them to

Bullying/harassment behaviours*

ARBOR PRODUCT IDEAS

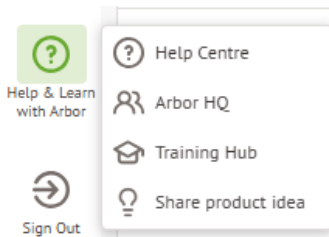
FAO HEADTEACHERS AND ADMIN STAFF



Product ideas that you would like to be included in arbor

There is no formal voting process for this item other than multiple schools putting forward the same idea.

If a school has a product they would like to raise the profile of in Arbor, please log a support call including the details of the idea and request that it be featured in the newsletter. Once it appears in the newsletter, other schools can then choose to endorse the same idea. When several schools select the same product idea, we can submit it as a bulk, block-voted request.



It is hoped that this approach will increase the visibility of ideas and make them more likely to be considered for development, given Arbor's limited development capacity.

To log a call with us on the school's team, please email it to: itservicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk

ARBOR WEBINARS



The following webinars will be available for schools in March 2026.

Arbor Workflows for schools: Product Spectacular

Tuesday 3rd March – 10:00AM – 11:00AM

Wednesday 4th March – 10:00AM – 11:00AM

Details:

What to expect from this webinar:

Get ready for a first look at Arbor Workflows, designed to put your school's admin on autopilot. In this unmissable showcase, you'll see a live demo of Arbor Workflows, led by a member of the Arbor Team, and have a chance to ask questions in our live Q&A. You'll leave with an understanding of how Arbor Workflows will transform the way you work at your school.

Register for a place via [Webinar: Arbor Workflows for schools - Product Spectacular by Arbor Education](#)

RBUSS



Now that we are not using SIMS and FMS, what are we using RBUSS for?

Now that SIMS and FMS are not being used and not being backed up by RBUSS anymore, what can we use the RBUSS service to backup.

RBUSS can also be used to backup files in the cloud. Files in Microsoft 365 (Exchange, OneDrive, SharePoint, etc) and Google Workspace (Gmail, Drive, Calendar, etc) can be backed up giving you instant recovery should something go wrong, minimising downtime.

For more information or for including cloud files in the schools RBUSS backup, please log a call with the IT helpdesk.



Contacting the IT Service Desk

To help us support you quickly and efficiently, please use the correct contact routes for different types of enquiries.

Sales & New Service Enquiries

The Schools IT Services mailbox is intended only for sales enquiries and is monitored periodically.

For questions about new services, please email:

schoolsitservices@suffolk.gov.uk

Incidents & Service Requests

All standard issues, faults, and service requests must be logged via the IT Service Desk.

Using the correct route ensures your request is tracked and resolved without delay.

IT Service Desk Contact Options:

- Phone: 01473 265555
- Email: itservicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk

Requests sent to the wrong mailbox may result in delayed responses, so please ensure you use the correct contact method.

Office Hours

Our team is available:

Monday to Friday — 8:30am to 5:00pm

