

Schools' IT Newsletter

February 2023

Included in this month's issue:

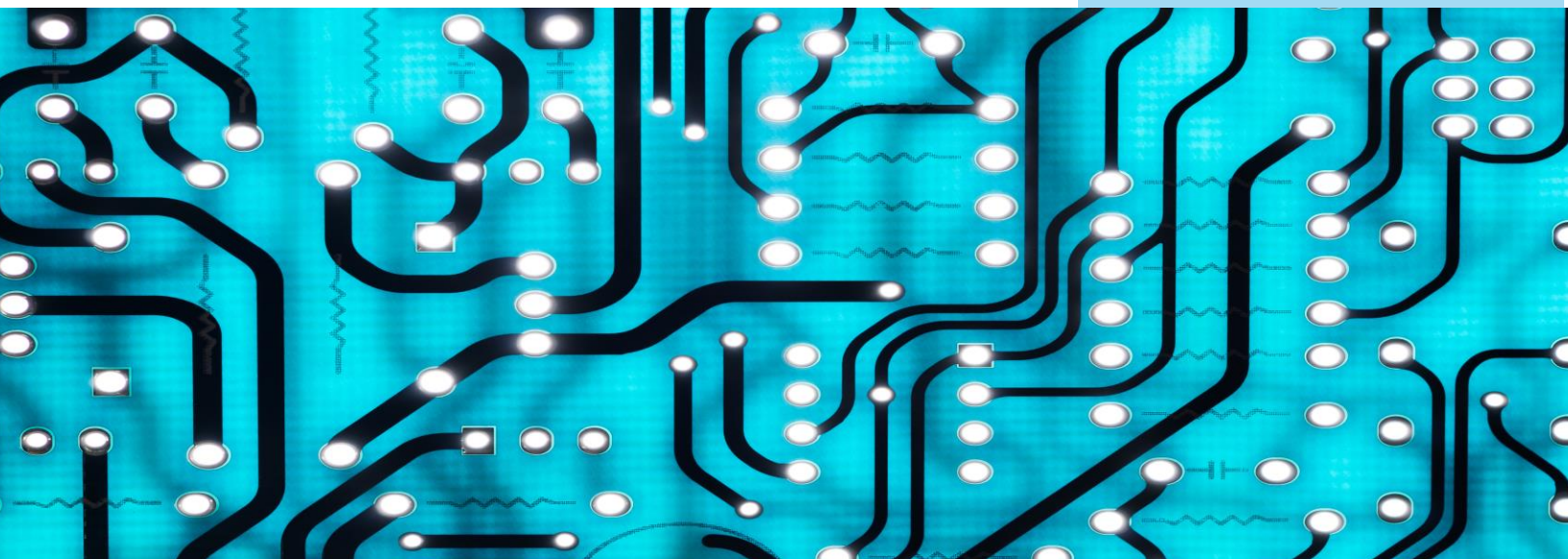
- Spring Census Reports for Academies and Free Schools
- Renewal Quotes for LA Schools
- Introduction to the Schools' IT Team
- Cyber Security
- O365 Mail Service
- Contact Details

URGENT – TEACHER STRIKES

If your school is affected by the upcoming teacher strikes and the school will be closing, for the purposes of attendance please note the following instructions:

Please use 'Exceptional Circumstances Code "Y"'

To do this in SIMS please go to 'Focus/Attendance/Exceptional Circumstances, Enter the date and choose code Y





Spring Census Reports for Academies and Free Schools

It is important that you check the accuracy of your schools' returns before you submit them. There are a number of reports in COLLECT which you should use to check your data. You can access your reports using the 'launch reports' button on the school 'source page' of COLLECT. Some reports only get updated overnight.

Pupil number report

Provides a headcount of your pupils by NC year group, headcount of your pupils minus subsidiary registrations and the number of pupils that will be used in numerous funding streams and therefore will account for funded and extended hours and unresolved duplicate UPNs.

Duplicate unique pupil number (UPN) and duplicate pupil report

The duplicate UPN report shows any pupils appearing on your census and that of another school where there is an invalid combination of enrolment statuses. Your funding may be affected if these remain unresolved at database closure.

The duplicate pupil report identifies pupils whose personal details are the same but the UPN differs.

Free school meals (FSM) report

Allows schools to check the FSM eligibility data submitted in their census return. This report only refers to FSM eligibility reported in the current census and not the FSM ever measure used to allocate the pupil premium.

Universal infant free school meals

Provides a breakdown of the infant pupils that we will use in the universal infant free school meals funding calculation.

Zero funded hours

Highlights the number of early years pupils who have 'zero' funded hours recorded on the school census return. We use funded hours to calculate the early years block of the dedicated school's grant.

Pupil premium

Allows schools to check and verify the data in their spring school census, which will feed into the deprivation, service child and post looked after children report elements of the pupil premium allocation.

Early years pupil premium

Allows schools to check and verify the data in their spring school census, which we use for the early year's pupil premium allocations.

Suffolk LA do not have visibility of census returns submitted by Academies and Free Schools, therefore we will only be able to contact you regarding any clashes if a pupil at your establishment clashes with a pupil within a Suffolk LA maintained school.

The Census blade closes on the 15th February, please ensure all necessary amendments are made prior to closure date.

If you are an academy or free school who buy into the Remote SIMS Service please feel free to contact us if you'd like assistance running the reports and advice on correcting the data.



RENEWAL QUOTES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS IT SERVICES 2023 TO 2024

We are currently working with our 3rd party partners to ensure that we obtain the best prices for your IT services, for the forthcoming financial year.

We aim to get the renewal quotes to all LA schools by the end of February and these will be sent to the email address that we currently have on record.

Please do contact us if there have been any changes to email addresses within the school so that we can update our records. You can do this by sending the new details to the schoolsITservices@suffolk.gov.uk mailbox.

Details of all our IT Services can be found on our website via the following link <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business/it-services-for-schools-and-academies>.



INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOLS' IT TEAM

Following on from an IT restructure in December 2021 there have been several changes within the IT Department, including staff leaving their roles and other staff having retired during that time.

Therefore, it was felt that, now that the Schools' IT Team (formerly known as the Service Bridge) is fully staffed this would be an excellent opportunity to introduce the staff members to you and give you a little bit of inside information as to who they are, their new job titles and what their roles involve. Some names may already be familiar to you.

Product Manager CYP & Schools: -

Adam Sessions is fairly new in role and is the overall manager for CYP & Schools' IT Team

Product Owner Schools' Team: -

Lizzie Winter is the manager for the Schools' IT Team. She has worked with SIMS for the last twelve years, you are likely to speak to Lizzie during busy periods as she likes to continue to support schools with their errors and queries.

Systems Engineers: -

Nicolas (Nic) Attwood:

Nic's role mostly involves SIMS technical problems and questions. He is also one of the people who will call you when ESS puts out an upgrade for SIMS and FMS. Nic is also a point of contact for RBUSS install and problems. Nic says if you are unlucky you will get him on the Census Helpline to log a call on your behalf.

Catherine Hudson & David Sheppard:

Catherine and David are not new to the team but, both are new to this role and were appointed last summer. They support schools with any questions on using SIMS, amending data and support schools through the Census and will be there to take your calls on the Census helpline.

Assistant Systems Engineers: -

Mo Mundy and Colin Herbert:

Colin has returned to the team following the restructure after a brief interlude, his role includes supporting schools, resolving server issues, Capita account/address management, EYPP account management, schools emails, census support and Click4Assistance.

Mo has been with SCC for over 20 years and joined the team directly following on from the restructure but has been involved with the Schools and Academies purchase of IT Services for the last 5 years this includes SIMS, RBUSS, Broadband and the school's O365 mail service. Mo is also responsible for the recharging and invoicing of the same services. Her role also includes Capita account/address management and EYPP account management and assisting with any other .

Apprentice Systems Engineer: -

We are delighted to welcome Dylan Burbage as the newest member of the team, his role is to assist the team with SIMS, Capita accounts and schools' emails. Dylan will be completing an Information Communications Technician, Level 3 apprenticeship during his time with the team.



Cyber Security – Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) protection

All schools' broadband circuits managed by our telecoms partner, MLL Telecom, include Enterprise Grade DDoS protection. We know schools in Suffolk have previously been targeted by these types of attacks and thought it would be useful to provide some detail of what they are and how we take steps to prevent them.

What is a DDoS attack?

A volumetric Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack is one of the most common forms of cyberattack. It is a malicious attempt to make an online service unavailable by flooding unwanted internet traffic from multiple sources, therefore making the online service or website unavailable.

Almost any type of internet-facing connected device could be a potential DDoS resource: Internet of Things (IoT) devices, smartphones, personal computers, and powerful servers. Simply put, a DDoS attack is like a traffic jam clogging up the motorway, preventing regular traffic from arriving at its desired destination.

How does an attack work?

For a DDoS attack to be successful, an attacker will spread malicious software to vulnerable computers, mainly through infected emails and attachments. This creates a network of infected machines called a botnet. Once the botnet has been established, the attacker is able to instruct and control the machines. Commands would be given to flood a site with traffic, causing the targeted server or network to overflow capacity, resulting in a denial-of-service to normal traffic.

The MLL Telecom Mitigation Service

The MLL DDoS mitigation service is powered by industry leading DDoS and Cyber Threat Protection Specialists Arbor Networks. The base offering is the "on demand" service which means that the service will be invoked as soon as an attack is detected.

The service constantly baselines traffic to ensure that only "out of baseline" spikes in traffic are classified as attack traffic. Once detected, the mitigation service removes the spurious traffic, sending only legitimate "clean" traffic back to the customer. The service protects against standard volumetric attacks, as well as so-called "low and slow" attacks that are designed to slowly deplete network resources and would otherwise go undetected.

If you want more details about Suffolk Cyber Security services, including the new Bronze level service please see: [Suffolk schools bronze cyber security service | Suffolk County Council](#)

OFFICE 365 MAIL SERVICE FOR SCHOOLS & ACADEMIES

A reminder that O365 mailboxes need to be requested for new starters via our website using the following link [**IT services for schools and academies | Suffolk County Council**](#). This is so that all security checks can be carried out and to ensure that there is no delay in setting up new mailboxes. All sections must be completed and ensure that the school's 3-digit code is included, the payroll number (if applicable) and the date of birth for the new user. This form can be used for all members of staff including governors. You do not need to use a separate form for each user. Once the form has been received it can take up to 3 working days for the request to be processed.

Please note that the email service is no longer connected to staff members contracts and if you do not complete the online form a mailbox will not be set up automatically.

Once the mailbox has been provisioned a notification email with an initial password link is sent to the secure mailbox that we have on record for the school/academy. We would suggest that this is a generic mailbox e.g. admin@ or office@ rather than a named person in the school, as this can lead to delays if the named person is unavailable for any reason. Please ensure that the new user will be available to access the initial link on the date the mailbox is provisioned, as the links are time limited and will expire.

All requests for permissions to access other mailboxes can be added to the request form and will be actioned once the new mailbox has been provisioned.

N.B. All requests must be sent from either the Headteacher or the Business Manager/Bursar (or equivalent) at the school/academy). New mailboxes cannot be requested by the new user. Similarly password resets for those users without payroll numbers must also be requested by means of the online form completed by the person/s listed above.

We would also like to emphasise the importance of letting us know about any members of staff that will be leaving their post in order that we can delete their mailbox in a timely manner and to ensure that the school is not charged for these mailboxes at renewal time. Please note that any requests for deletions must come from the person managing the email service within the school/academy. Again these request forms are available on our website and can be accessed using the following link [**IT services for schools and academies | Suffolk County Council**](#)

CONTACTING THE IT SERVICE DESK!

Please note that the Schools IT Services mailbox is for sales enquiries and is only monitored periodically. Therefore, if you have a query with regards to a new service, please send an email to schoolsitservices@suffolk.gov.uk.

All standard incidents and service requests **must** be raised via the IT Service Desk on 01473 265555 or via itservicedesk@suffolk.gov.uk otherwise this will result in any responses being delayed.

Our offices are open from 8.30am to 5pm Monday - Friday

