

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>

SIMS news and updates

Preparing for the Next Academic Year



Education Support Services are hosting a webinar to help schools prepare their SIMS system for the next academic year.

Wed, May 19, 2021 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM BST

In this Webinar we cover the steps you need to take to ensure moving to the new academic year is smooth and pain-free! We will look at each process and discuss any pitfalls you might encounter. Setting term dates, changing the pastoral structure, dealing with both staff and student leavers and starters, promoting students – both pastorally and academically, transferring and applying the new timetable, setting up Lesson Monitor, assigning students to their forms and to their academic classes. We'll also touch on the implications for Fees and for Assessment and we'll include a few housekeeping processes to keep your database neat and tidy.

Register for a place using the following link;

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1213521500297521423>

Summer census overview and details

The date for the summer census is **Thursday, May 20, 2021**.

The ESS (Education Software Solutions – formally known as Capita) team are hosting a Census overview webinar on **Wed, May 5, 2021 11:00 AM BST**

This 30-minute webinar, from your Customer Success team, will provide a brief overview of the processes involved relating to the Summer census return including how to:

- Create a statutory return
- Find information required for the return
- Resolve errors and to ensure your data is correct with regards to queries

Please use the following link to register for this webinar;

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/6967539628677106192>

The Census Help Line will be open as usual from 17th to 21st May 2021

8.30am - 5.00pm Monday to Thursday

The number is 01473 260666.

You can find Summer Census guidance documentation [HERE](#) under FAQs at the foot of the web page.

Course Manager and Post 16 Learning Aims Update

The SIMS Support team will be facilitating a presentation from Capita to assist with Course Manager upkeep, and the Post 16 Learning Aims section of the Autumn Census.

We facilitate this regularly as we are aware that some schools and academies have lost tens of thousands of pounds worth of funding in making errors in this area of the Census in the past.

This year the presentation will be web based to ensure compliance with any government guidance around Covid19 at the time, it will be delivered in 2 sessions on July 14th, and 20th 2021.

Please follow this [LINK](#) for further details.

Should you have any queries, please contact the IT Service Desk on 01473 265555 or ITServiceDesk@suffolk.gov.uk

National Insurance Table for 2021-2022

[How to add National Insurance Tables for 2021/2022](#)

The published table is as follows:-

National Insurance Tables 2021/2022

The following table shows the figures that should be entered in SIMS Personnel for employer contributions for National Insurance. The table is based on our interpretation of the guidance offered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) on Rates and thresholds for employers: 2021 to 2022. This resource can be found at <https://www.icaew.com/insights/tax-news/2020/dec-2020/national-insurance-thresholds-for-2020-2021>.

In summary, the columns in the following table are in the same format as the columns in the National Insurance table in SIMS Personnel.

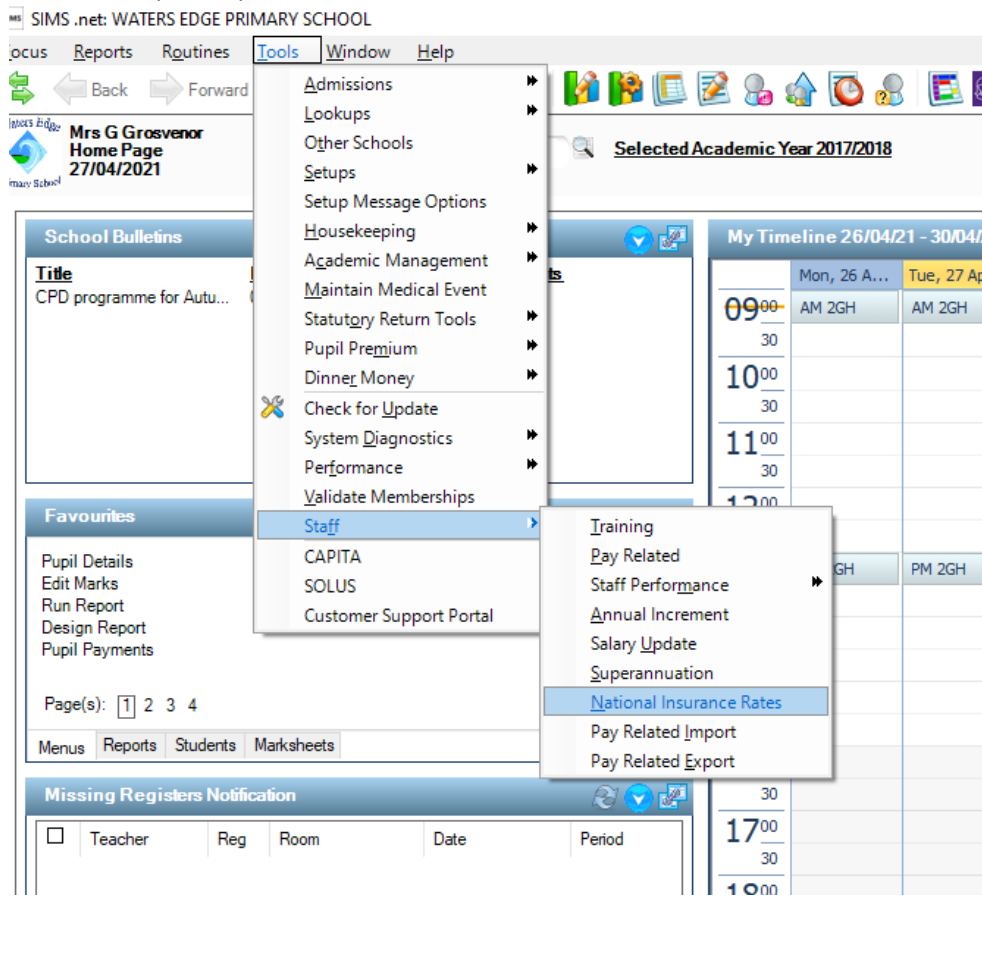
Band	Monthly Earnings		Employers Contribution	
	Upper	Lower	Contracted In Rate 1	Contracted Out Rate 2
1	520.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	737.00	520.01	0.00	0.00
3	4189.00	737.01	13.80	13.80
4	0.00	4189.01	13.80	13.80

NOTES: A 'rounding' difference of approximately £1-2 per month may arise for some employees.

If this table is entered in SIMS Personnel with a start date of 06/04/2021, the April 2021 National Insurance projections will be slightly different to those in the following months. To avoid this situation, enter the table with a start date of 01/04/2021.

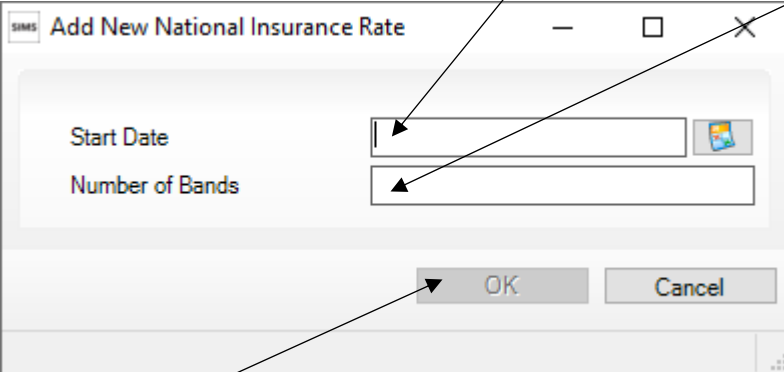
Please see guidance below for adding the data to SIMS.net
You may find that the SIMS upgrade has populated this area already.

Go to Tools | Staff | National Insurance Rates



The screenshot shows the SIMS.net interface for Waters Edge Primary School. The 'Tools' menu is open, and the 'Staff' sub-menu is selected, which has opened a secondary menu where 'National Insurance Rates' is highlighted. The interface includes a top navigation bar with 'Reports', 'Routines', 'Tools', 'Window', and 'Help'. A sidebar on the left contains 'School Bulletins', 'Favourites', and 'Missing Registers Notification'. The main content area shows a 'My Timeline' for the period 26/04/21 to 30/04/21, with a grid of time slots and activity icons.

Click New, add a Start Date of 01/04/2021 and Number of Bands 4



Add New National Insurance Rate

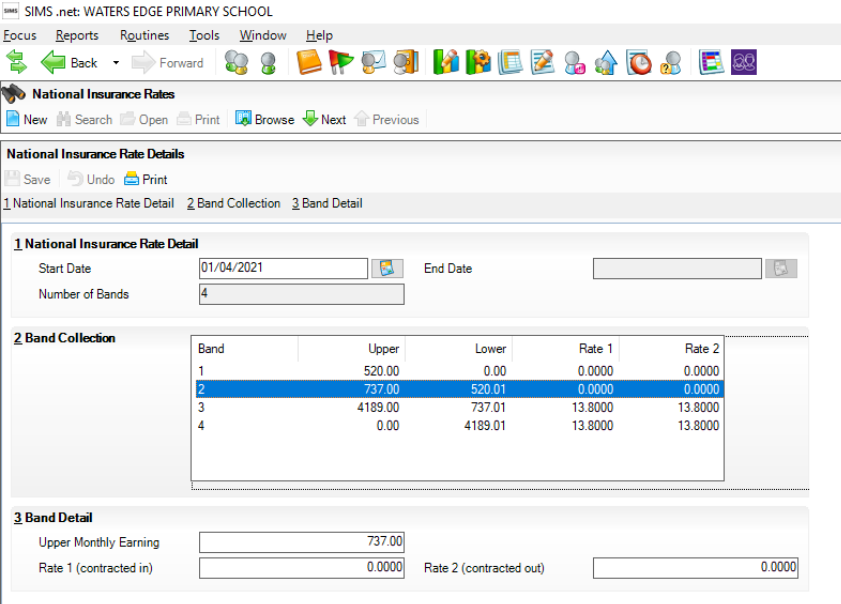
Start Date:

Number of Bands:

OK Cancel

Then click OK.

Complete the details by highlighting each band in panel 2 (Band Collection) and adding the data in panel 3 (Band Detail).



National Insurance Rate Details

1 National Insurance Rate Detail

Start Date: End Date:

Number of Bands:

2 Band Collection

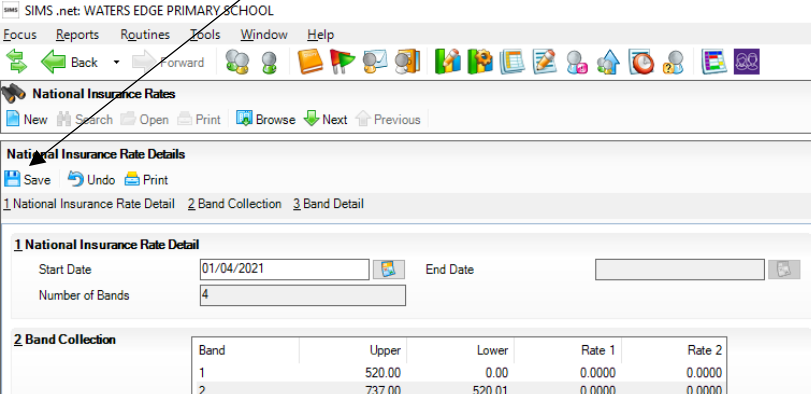
Band	Upper	Lower	Rate 1	Rate 2
1	520.00	0.00	0.0000	0.0000
2	737.00	520.01	0.0000	0.0000
3	4189.00	737.01	13.8000	13.8000
4	0.00	4189.01	13.8000	13.8000

3 Band Detail

Upper Monthly Earning:

Rate 1 (contracted in): Rate 2 (contracted out):

Then Save your changes.



National Insurance Rate Details

1 National Insurance Rate Detail

Start Date: End Date:

Number of Bands:

2 Band Collection

Band	Upper	Lower	Rate 1	Rate 2
1	520.00	0.00	0.0000	0.0000
2	737.00	520.01	0.0000	0.0000

Suffolk County Council – O365 Emails – Initial Password Link

For those schools and academies that purchase the O365 mailboxes from SCC you will have been receiving an email containing your password link, that directs you to the Schools' choice website for retrieval of the password.

Since the service returned to the management of SCC this email has continued to go out and informs that a single sign-on has been set up for you. However, this is not the case and it is purely the link to enable you to access your emails.

Emails provided by SCC are no longer connected to the Schools' choice single sign on and we are working now to change the automated message to schools. You should however continue to use the link at this time but, if for some reason the initial password has expired or does not work you will need to contact the IT Service Desk by email ITServiceDesk@suffolk.gov.uk or by telephone on 01473 265555.

For any issues or information regarding your single sign-on you will need to contact Schools' choice directly by email to services@schoolschoice.org.

New Smoothwall certificate – Update required by July 2021

As detailed in last month's IT Newsletter, schools using the Smoothwall web filtering service need to add a new Smoothwall certificate by July 2021. Smoothwall web filtering is provided as part of the schools' broadband service.

The new certificate has a 2-year lifespan and can be installed now and must be installed by 1 July 2021 to ensure continuation of service.

The old certificate will continue to work until this date and should **not** be removed until after the changeover has completed. There are no issues with running the certificates in parallel and it would be our recommendation to do so to ensure that you are ready for the cut-over.

The new certificate is available to download from:

https://sccwebassets.blob.core.windows.net/public/schools/https_interception_2021-2023.crt

Documentation of how to install the Smoothwall certificate is available at:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/Business/IT-services-for-schools-and-academies/smoothwall-certificate-guide.pdf>

You can find more details about the Smoothwall service at:

[Smoothwall web filtering services | Suffolk County Council](#)

Ask IT – Mail encryption

We often get calls from schools asking us about the use of encryption when sending emails. This month we have put together some of those commonly asked questions and posed them to our IT Security Manager and one of our Senior Technical Leads and Suffolk County Council.

What is encryption?

Encryption is a way of securing data so that only authorised parties can read the information.

What data is encrypted?

Considerations need to be given to the data being shared and whether it needs to be encrypted as, data in transit and data at rest, these are defined below:

Data in Transit - A simple example would be sending an email and ensuring the content can only be read by the recipient. For email and data in transit there are a few methods of encryption, both can be used together or only one depending on the requirement:

Secured in transit - When the email is sent or received the email connection is encrypted. This is normally achieved using TLS (Transport Layer Security) where a secure encrypted tunnel is created between sender and recipient's mail systems. All email is sent/received over this secure tunnel.

Secured in content - When the email is sent the content is encrypted. This is achieved using a message content encryption service. In Office 365 this service is called Office Message Encryption (OME)

Data at Rest - Where the data or email is stored. The email could be stored on an email server or an email downloaded to a PC or laptop hard disk (called caching), using an email client such as Outlook. Sometimes the email is stored on a mail server and PC/laptop for performance reasons and it might not be obvious that is the case. Wherever the email is stored data at rest encryption ensures only authorised parties can gain access to the data. An example of a data at rest encryption technology is Microsoft Bitlocker, a hard disk encryption feature that integrates with the Windows operating system.

Why is encryption needed?

Sensitive information often needs to be protected to ensure that only authorised parties can read the information. Different classifications of data may require different levels of protection. For example, a general email between colleagues that does not contain sensitive information may not need to be encrypted but sensitive information about a child might need to be. Depending on the way the email encryption technology is deployed all content might be encrypted regardless of if it is sensitive or not.

How do I implement encryption?

For Schools using the Suffolk IT managed mailbox service the following applies:

Data in Transit

Secured in transit – When most email is sent or received using modern email systems the messages are secured in transit by default using TLS, however this is not guaranteed, and it may be sent unencrypted. Configurations can be implemented by Suffolk IT to

ensure email is always sent secured in transit or a per recipient email domain basis (i.e. who you are sending to). If the messages cannot be secured in transit the message will not be sent. It is important to note that this is implemented on a domain basis and will not work with public mail services like Gmail or Hotmail.

Secured in content – OME is not currently configured as part of the schools' mail service, but is something that we are looking at.

Data at Rest – Email stored on Microsoft's email servers is always encrypted at rest. If an Outlook client is being used to access email in Office 365 and the client is configured to download or cache email on the local PC/laptop, a hard disk encryption product is required. This is not provided as part of the schools' mail service.

[What does Suffolk County Council use?](#)

Data in Transit - Suffolk County Council use both TLS and OME.

Secured in transit - Generally for partner organisations where lots of email is sent and received, SCC use TLS only to setup a secure tunnel between our partners mail systems. This means we do not use Office Message Encryption in these cases; OME can cause some capability issues between email systems.

Secured in content - For other organisations or members of the public where there is a requirement to send email securely SCC use Office Message Encryption (OME).

Data at Rest - SCC use Office 365 as the email service so email is always encrypted at rest on the mail servers. SCC uses Microsoft Bitlocker hard drive encryption software to secure content on hard disks and so any email cached on an SCC hard disk is encrypted at rest.

You can find more details about how we secure emails at:

[Secure emails | Suffolk County Council](#)

New schools' cyber security services

With the ever-increasing number of attacks being directed at education establishments we have been looking at how Suffolk County Council IT can support Suffolk schools in the challenges that this presents. We have been working with our IT Security team at Suffolk County Council who have developed a range of new cyber security offerings for schools. This first of these that we will be launching is the Bronze schools' cyber-security service which will include the following:

- NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre) CiSP (Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership) - Cyber advice and forum sign up referral
- NCSC - Early warning system reports, Webcheck & Mailcheck
- Weekly Cyber News, including latest threats and vulnerabilities
- On-line Information Management training

We are finalising all the details on this service and aim to launch it in July 2021. In the next couple of months, we will provide more details on the different elements of this service and the cost of buying into it. What we can say now is that the Bronze service will be

available at no additional cost to all schools that purchase a school's broadband circuit from Suffolk County Council. To coincide with this launch we are planning on a cyber-security specific survey to enable the sharing of best practice between schools. We will provide more details of this in next month's newsletter.

Free cyber security training from the National Cyber Security Centre

The National Cyber Security Centre has developed a new school staff training resource in partnership with the education sector. [This blog](#) explains the product and directs you to the [training page](#) where you can access the two school staff training formats. This free training package joins the list of [cyber security for schools resources](#) developed specifically for the sector.

Cyber PROTECT webinars

Alongside this the national Cyber PROTECT team are running a series of weekly webinars beginning this week and running until the end of the school year in July. They are aimed at school or education staff and people need to sign up using an education email address, as access will be vetted and anyone who joins using a different email address will not be admitted. All events will be using the same slide deck, provide the same information and be open to people from anywhere in the UK. These events are separate from the NCSC schools' materials highlighted above (the NCSC tool is a 'self-delivery' package intended to be run internally within schools). You can register for these events using the Eventbrite link below.

[Cyber Security Awareness Webinars: Schools and Education Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)