# Norfolk County Council
## @ your service

# Welcome to SIMS

**Overview for Norfolk County Council Schools**

**September 2010**

# Capita welcomes schools in Norfolk to SIMS

## 1.0 Introduction

Established, trusted and designed specifically for schools, SIMS is a **comprehensive and integrated Management Information System** (MIS) for managing whole school improvement.

Developed with a true understanding of both school and educational requirements, SIMS supports schools in raising standards of achievement and student attainment, managing their statutory returns, managing finances and sharing good teaching practices.  SIMS offers a wide range of specialist modules, which integrate seamlessly to provide a comprehensive MIS package that simplifies a school's key administrative and management activities.

- SIMS helps schools manage student registration and truancy, student performance, personalised learning, exam organisation, timetable construction, cover management and many more school activities – in fact, just about every significant business process a school is likely to undertake is supported in SIMS.

- SIMS maintains real-time, accurate information to support schools in conducting regular and comprehensive self-evaluations.  Senior leaders are able to target resources, support personal development, promote achievements and spread good practice.

- SIMS enables teachers to access information, analyse and input pupil data, quickly and efficiently through the use of powerful, integrated desktop tools.

- The solution is further enhanced by web access through the powerful SIMS Learning Gateway which facilitates teacher and parent access to the data in SIMS from home.  SIMS InTouch ensures parents/carers and teachers are kept up to date and engaged through SMS and email messages that can be quickly and easily transmitted to communicate important information. SIMS In-Touch is available as an optional module to the core suite at additional cost.

Brief details of the elements of SIMS are covered in the sections below.

## 2.0 SIMS Core Suite

SIMS Core Suite of software for Norfolk covers the following: Student Record, System Manager, Reporting, Statutory Returns, Alerts, Admissions, Attendance, Behaviour and SEN, Personnel and Dinner Money. The licence cost also includes Curriculum with Assessment and Reporting Suite (see 3.0 and 4.0), Learning Gateway, IEP Writer and Lesson Monitor (Secondary Only).

**At the centre of the SIMS system is the child's record.**  SIMS displays a complete view of the student which allows the administrator to enter information about the child to meet statutory requirements.  This information can also be entered via a CTF (Common Transfer File) or ATF (Admissions Transfer File).  From the child's record, users can link to other processes or other key items of data (for example, full attendance record, behaviour record, assessment information and exams etc).

SIMS Personnel stores personal, professional and contractual information about school staff, both teaching and non-teaching.  **It is fully integrated in the SIMS system, allowing other processes to use the same data**.  Information from Personnel integrates seamlessly with curriculum

processes – to produce timetables, profiles and assessment results – and with SIMS Core – to produce attendance and examination information.

## Key Features

- **A complete picture on all students and staff**
- **Up-to-date student records**
- **Comprehensive reports**
- **Efficient communication**
- **Statutory Returns compiled electronically**
- **Statutory Returns for Catholic Schools**
- **Staff data held centrally**

## Other Functions

SIMS Special Educational Needs (SEN) – 'Every Child Matters'
SIMS Behaviour, Achievement and Exclusions – 'Celebrate and Intervene'
SIMS Attendance – 'Tackle Truancy and Manage Absence'
SIMS Personnel – 'Crucial Staff Data at Your Fingertips'

# 3.0 SIMS Assessment & Reporting Suite

SIMS Assessment and Reporting Suite of software covers the following: Assessment and Reporting to Parents (Profiles), Analysis and Examinations (Exams Organiser)

To help students reach their full potential, there is a need to ensure every student knows how they are doing, what they need to do to improve and how they are going to get there.

Using the SIMS Assessment & Reporting Suite provides a more efficient way to record assessment data and make it work for you in **target setting, tracking individual progress, reviewing group performance and reporting back to parents**, senior managers and local authorities.

The SIMS Assessment & Reporting Suite is the focal point for all assessment data – it is where schools can; identify vital links between a pupil's attainment, attendance and behaviour, analyse trends, and focus on the progress of every child.

## Key Features

- **Tracks student progress**
- **Colour coded tracking**
- **Customise the tracking system to suit the school**
- **Teacher marksheet screen**
- **Automatic student tracking grids**
- **Creates full end of year student reports for parents**
- **Analyse performance**
- **Maintains a historical record**
- **Manage the examination process**

## Other Functions

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SIMS Assessment – 'Supports One of the Central Processes of any School'
SIMS Analysis – 'Asks and Answers Questions about the Data in SIMS'
SIMS Profiles – 'A Complete Report Writing Package'
SIMS Exams Organiser – 'Comprehensive Management of Exams Processes'

# 4.0 SIMS Curriculum Management Suite

SIMS Curriculum Suite of software covers the following: Timetabling (NOVA-T6), Cover, Course Manager and Options.

The SIMS Curriculum Suite ensures that it is **straightforward to produce a complete and organised school curriculum, created automatically in less time and with fewer headaches.** When it comes to managing the school's curriculum; from juggling students' GCSE options to organising staff cover, it can be a very complex and time consuming task. The SIMS Curriculum Suite ensures these tasks are managed and solved automatically without making it complex for users.

The software will easily design a curriculum and schedule a timetable that ensures that students' requirements are met whilst maximising the efficient use of teachers and other resources.

Staff Absence is not a problem when it comes to managing their cover. SIMS is able to automatically identify the available staff in school and assign them to cover the lesson.

The SIMS Curriculum Suite is the focal point for all curriculum and timetable management. It allows schools to **design the best curriculum and schedule a timetable that suits the majority of your students but also maximises the efficient use of teachers and other resources.**

# 5.0 Getting the Most out of SIMS

**SIMS Documentation:** There is an **extensive range of documentation** that is provided in support of SIMS. Online manuals are available within the software. Capita also provide online help files, help sheets and software viewlets (screen demonstrations) for more popular processes. Other supporting documentation includes:

- The "*What's New?"* screen that provides a quick overview of the new features in each release.
- Context sensitive online help, accessed directly from the screen that the user is working in.
- Training materials (training notes and data), which local authorities can use to save time in locally producing and maintaining resources to be used with schools.
- Quick Reference Sheets, issued in laminated format for distribution to schools and available to download online.
- Help sheets offering step-by-step guides focused around key school processes (e.g. Key Stage data processing, student admissions, exporting data to the local authority and School Census).
- The SIMS Yearbook – two large wall charts that set out the key house-keeping and data processing tasks throughout the academic year.
- Tutorials and software viewlets, offering "click-through" demonstrations to show end-users how a particular aspect of the SIMS software works. These are particularly powerful in offering reminders of how to perform infrequent tasks, such the School Census.

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## 6.0 Summary: Welcome to SIMS

Capita Children's Services is the UK's leading supplier of Management Information Systems to the education and children's services sector.  We provide a range of software and services to over 21,000 schools and over 150 local authorities, meeting their information management and administrative needs.

SIMS is designed for schools and continually evolves in response to listening to customers through a variety of forums:

- Capita holds regular software update seminars around the country where users can feedback on the product and the changes they would like to see.  The new SIMS home page was redesigned as a result of such feedback to make it easier for teachers to access pupil information in SIMS.
- Strategic partnership events run twice a year where we discuss significant issues and business performance with a group of customers.
- Capita conduct regular surveys of users, including one recently that involved 900 individuals in schools.
- In academic year 2009/10 Capita are running 4 events in conjunction with the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) to find out what school leaders want from SIMS to inform development for the next few years.

These processes ensure that that SIMS meets the requirements of every school.

As a testament to an innovative and customer centric approach, Capita Children's Services was awarded a prestigious BETT award in 2009 for the SIMS Partnership Xchange product and was also nominated as a finalist in the 2010 awards in the highly competitive **"ICT Company of the Year**" category.  The selection process for the BETT awards is notoriously rigorous and to be selected as a finalist for the ICT Company of the Year reflects how the products and services offered by Capita Children's Services "*meet the needs of schools and colleges today and demonstrate outstanding customer-care and an exceptional standard of service to education."* (The main criteria for a successful nomination).



SIMS enables **better decision-making** and allows those who work with children to spend less time on meaningless administration.  There are some impressive statistics that back up our credentials:

- 6,000,000 children – the records of an entire generation are entrusted to Capita Children's Services.
- 2,500,000 children have their attendance registered via SIMS every day.
- 250,000 teachers, administrators and school managers use SIMS every day.
- 21,000+ schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland use SIMS.

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- Over 150 local authorities choose and recommend SIMS
- 99 leading companies accompany Capita in the FTSE 100.
- 50+ partners strengthen the SIMS solution.
- 20 countries around the world use SIMS in their schools.
- 1 of a kind in R&D investment.  No other MIS supplier delivers the breadth of solution or the level of innovation, scale, strength or track-record of Capita Children's Services.

It is for these reasons that we say no one puts more effort behind its commitment to liberating the talent and time of today's educationalists – and we welcome schools in Norfolk to the SIMS community!

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