Service Level Agreement

Please read in conjunction with our general Terms & Conditions here: GCC Plus T&Cs

Service name: Schools ICT

Service area: Application Support

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Available to:
LA Schools, Academy Schools, Alternative Provision Schools, Independent Schools, Multi Academy Trusts

Works well with:
Schools ICT – Whole School IT

Our Service

Our **Schools Application Support** service provides friendly and efficient support, connecting you quickly via phone, email, or remote support to our team of professional, dedicated staff for guidance and troubleshooting.

Our team has **extensive knowledge** of the **SIMS** modules; however, we are more than just SIMS Support. Our close relationship with colleagues within the County Council means we are **uniquely placed** to work with you to **develop your ICT strategy**. Throughout the year we will support you with **DFE** and **LA statutory returns**, helping you maximise the **effectiveness** of **school data** and reduce your administrative burdens, including access to a suite of tools such as user guides or reporting packages.

New for Primary Phase establishments – our Schools Application Support service is a Digital Partnership Bundle, including both your accredited SIMS Support and now Training Credits. Please see the details under the heading 'Training Credits – New for Primaries'.

Our team is not run for profit - all your money goes back into Gloucestershire and developing the services we offer.

The Schools Application Support helpdesk is available between the hours of **8:30AM and 4:30PM** during term time and from **9AM to 1PM** during school holidays.

We answer 99% of calls within 7 seconds, with an average call length of 5 minutes, our team support fits in around your busy school day.

Schools Application Support – what we offer

	All Settings	Primary	Secondary	Special / APS
MIS Support:				
Access to an Accredited Support desk	✔			
Unlimited telephone support for all modules of SIMS	✔			
Support and guidance across a wide range of school processes including Common Transfer Files, DfE websites and B2B Data Exchange	✔			
Priority support for whole school outages	✔			
Upgrades carried out 3 times a year and full MIS technical support (included as part of the Core Services Bundle)		✔		✔
Full MIS technical support working in partnership with Network Managers			✔	✔
SSO Team have direct access to ESS technical support and resources for functional escalations				
Supporting Key School Events:				
Support and guidance for all Statutory Returns and key school events such as End of Academic Year	✔			
Specialist support for Secondary Setting modules such as NOVA-T6, Exams and Cover			✔	✔
Expert support on specialised Assessment solutions		✔		
Enhanced support during events such as Ofsted	✔			
Housekeeping and data retention support to ensure accurate and clean data	✔			
Helping Schools Maximise Data and Systems:				
MIS consultation – to ensure you're choosing the best MIS for your establishment	✔			
Support and guidance on parent, student and teacher engagement and communication products	✔			
Support and consultancy on reporting and dashboards	✔			
Trust level dashboard reporting and data analytics support	✔			
Emergency Support and Mitigation:				
Database recovery	✔			
Advice on disaster recovery planning	✔			
Training Credits (Scalable to School Size)				
Training Credits included to suit school needs including courses		✔		✔
Additional Services and Bundles at a Discount:				
Training Courses	✔			
School Bundles	✔			
Consultancy	✔			

Bespoke services - additional costs & charges

Specialist and accredited training courses are provided in a dedicated training room or remotely, and several bundles and packages are available each year. We also provide bespoke consultancy to focus on your individual schools needs and ensure you are making the most of your tools and data.

Training Credits – Primaries Only

We understand that funding a training course part way through the year with limited school budgets is tricky, but so is making the most of an MIS when you don't have up-to-date training on the modules that support your school's needs. This combined with the digital skills gap that the Department for Education is so keen to lessen we have decided to amend our service offering this year; our Application Support offering now provides a Schools Digital Partnership Bundle rather than just MIS Support. Our primary schools will now receive expert SIMS support and training credits to spend on training on a way that makes sense to you. For transparency, excluding minimum/maximum charges, the cost per pupil of accredited SIMS Support for your primary school is £9.50/pupil and the cost of training credits is £1/pupil.

All schools with 75 pupils or less will have 12 credits to spend, the equivalent of 2 full day training courses per year or 2 dedicated site visits. Every school above 75 pupils they are awarded an additional 1 credit for every 25 pupils on roll, rounded down to the nearest 25. We have devised this to be appropriate to the cost of our Digital Partnership Bundle to our smallest and largest schools, and suitable to the size of support and administration staff schools of larger sizes would have.

Credits will be assigned to your school using GCC+ and you will be able to spend these when booking training. The training and consultancy fees that can be purchased with credits are as follows:

Training Type	Cost
Full Day Course	6
2 Hour Site Visit	6
Half Day Course	4
Workshops (e.g. End of Year)	3
1:1 1 Hour Remote Sessions and Bespoke Services (e.g. Report creation or support, Census support)	2

Training

We offer accredited training in a professional environment, providing expert training ranging from new users to developing advanced skills. Our training courses, workshops, and distance learning options work in tandem with the school calendar and the other school facing teams at Gloucestershire County Council, providing support for school events when you need it most. As above Primary schools will receive training credits to spend on courses, but training can still be purchased by all phases, at a discounted cost for our supported schools.

Training Courses Available

SIMS Module Training		
Academic Management	Course Manager	Nova T6 Timetabling
Attendance/Lesson Monitor	Cover	Options
Assessment	Discover	Personnel
Behaviour	Exams	Profiles
Core Functionality (New User)	SENCO	Reporting
Workshops		
Advanced Reporting with Excel		Analytics with Power BI Dashboard Creation
End of Academic Year		School Census
SIMS Nova T6 Timetable Creation		School Workforce Census
Microsoft		
Excel Beginner		PowerPoint
Excel Advanced		Word Beginner
Office Tools New User		Word Advanced

Consultancy

Our consultants have years of experience encompassing all core modules in SIMS, alongside advice on external packages and analysis tools, for example Power BI. It is offered on-site or remotely depending on circumstances and is generally offered free of charge in the first instance. If further development is required in the same area, then there may be chargeable additional work. We will endeavour to provide schools with the best solution.

Bundles

We offer a selection of additional bundles that are specific to a subject or process and can include a combination of the following. Please have a look at our bundle packages on GCC+ and see how you can make savings.

- Workshops / Training
- Consultation
- Resources
- Chat Forums

Costing details

Category	Base Charge	Price Per Pupil	Minimum Service Charge	Maximum Service Charge
Primary Academy	-	£ 10.50	£800	£3780
Primary School	-	£ 10.50	£800	£3780
Secondary Academy	£ 2,400.00	£ 1.25	-	-
Secondary School	£ 2,400.00	£ 1.25	-	-
Alternative Provision	-	£11.00	-	£3780
Special School	-	£11.00	-	£3780

Limitations of this service:

- Schools Application Support does not cover hardware or network support for your schools ICT environment. We recommend purchasing complementary services from either the Schools ICT Hardware team or another 3rd Party Hardware Support provider as appropriate
- The opening hours for our service are between the hours of 8:30AM and 4:30PM during term time and from 9AM to 1PM during school holidays
- Our opening hours for our service may change or be reduced for a very limited number of days during the year to facilitate team training. This will be communicated to customers in advance
- Any emergency or out of hours support required outside of the core opening hours must be pre-agreed with the Schools Application Support team and may be deemed as an additional chargeable service
- The Helpline is closed on Bank Holidays and in the period between Christmas Day and New Year's Day
- Customer tickets raised with our Software Application Support helpdesk are managed on a 3-strike response rule – we will attempt contact to provide support via telephone or email 3 times, waiting a maximum of a week between each, at which point we will place the ticket into Closure as assumed Resolved. This ticket will remain on the school account and we will be happy to create another ticket on the schools behalf if they alert us that they require further support, but tickets cannot remain open or on-hold pending customer outside of the 3-strike rule
- Application support provides guidance on MIS and supporting software usage in-line with instruction from the DFE, GDPR legislation, Data Protection Officers, and Local Authority teams such as Attendance, Data and Analysis, and SEN. Outside of the above instruction Schools Application Support take no responsibility for providing statutory or legislation derived data being entered or amended with the MIS and supporting software.

What we need from you

- New school staff in administrative roles, unfamiliar with SIMS, must attend a SIMS New User training course to receive helpline support
- Supported software must be on systems and environments that meet the minimum system requirements of the software provider and are still in support on the appropriate technical roadmaps by the providing companies, such as ESS (formerly Capita) or Microsoft
- TeamViewer must be installed, or you must have access to our support website http://www.ssoict.co.uk/support. If your IT support is provided by a 3rd party, please make sure this website is unblocked so we can access your machine and resolve the issues.
- We ask our customers to utilise training and 1:1 sessions as appropriate to their needs. For example, if customers call our helpline for extended support, usually calls above 30 minutes, for guidance through all steps of a Census return we may ask them to instead book a scheduled 1:1 appointment using Credits or at cost to the school. Our helpline is available to support staff in use of their applications, however

our helpline support does not replace training or sessions that provide step-by-step guidance and workshops. This is out of respect to our customers who do book a 1:1 session. The same statement applies to End of Year and Bespoke Report Design.

Cancellation Policy

- A minimum of 2 months notice must be given for the termination of our contract
- Please be aware that you will need to also cancel any contracts with software providers directly.

Please note* If you are considering moving MIS, we can help you make an informed decision.

Appendices

Priority Levels

Our service will be assigning priorities to incidents raised with our team. Target response times begin when the incident is submitted to our team via phone or email and are fulfilled when your ticket is with the appropriate staff member for triage/resolution, and this has been communicated with your school. Due to the nature of the incidents this is not a target resolution time as this cannot be forecasted. Our new Helpline Supervisor position oversees all tickets and escalations.

Priority Code	Priority Definition	Target Response Times
P1 – Urgent	A critical failure in the operational activity of the Service, or an Error that causes the Services to be severely impacted or completely shut down, or Customer's use of the Services is impossible, where no workaround is available. Example – SQL failure leading to whole school SIMS outage	1 Hour
P2 – High	Errors include high-impact issues in which the Services are inoperative or seriously degraded where a short-term workaround is available. Example – Outage of SIMS Next Gen Attendance, but SIMS .net is running	3 Hours
P3 – Medium	The Error limits the functionality or usefulness of the Services, but the condition is not critical to the continued operation of the Services. A workaround is readily available and can be applied or used with little or no operational impact. Example – Reporting into Word and Excel only functional on some workstations	1 Working Day
P4 - Low	Minimal problems in the Service arising from a misleading or unsatisfactory component or feature. The problem can be circumvented with no operational impact and there are no data integrity issues. Example – Manual amendment of late times required rather than automatic input	2 Working Days