FMS Support Service

Contents

Service Overview and Benefits

Our SIMS FMS Support is provided by a group of highly experienced customer focused SIMS professionals based within our Systems Team, all of whom have substantial knowledge of supporting Schools with their financial management information systems. This means that we can fully appreciate the pressures school users face, and the essential requirement for you to receive a prompt and efficient response to your SIMS FMS-related issues and enquiries.

As part of Coventry City Council local authority and through a longstanding working relationship with the Local Authority finance team and Capita SIMS staff, means we are well placed to understand the demands upon schools, not only from a software perspective but also from wider education finance policy affecting schools and academies.

Through our partnership with Capita we regularly attend regional and national meetings and update seminars, we keep abreast of their software developments, updates, and plans.

We are part of the SIMS Midland User Group, where we have established relationships with other SIMS support providers meaning that we are able to utilise our collective power and expertise to learn about best practice across the education sector and to feedback to software vendors and other bodies regarding common queries and issues along with enhancements that schools would like incorporated into future software releases.

We understand that having a robust and fully supported financial management system is key to the operation of a modern school. This service provides full support of the SIMS FMS product suite, including advice, guidance, and technical support.

This service is complimented by our Training and Events service which provides full training and support for these products.

Service Description

The following is a description of the services provided as part of this service element.

We provide this service via: -

- Telephone and remote support
- On site visits where necessary
- Documentation on our website
- Face to face Training, online courses, webinars, and events

Support for FMS Modules

We provide, support, advice and guidance for the following modules and areas of FMS:

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- BACS Processing
- Budget Management
- Budget Planning
- Cheque Processing
- Equipment Register
- Finance Reporting Suite
- General Ledger
- Non-Invoiced Income
- Personnel Links

Note: Any module not specifically included is fully excluded.

Support for Statutory and Crucial School Processes

We provide, support, advice, and guidance for the following Support for the following:

- End of Year for Academy Schools
- Better Financial Reporting Return to EFSA (Academy Schools)
- End of Year for Maintained Schools
- Consistent Financial Reporting (Maintained Schools)

Data Services
We provide support for following files for import into FMS

- Salary Download information (where provided by Coventry City Council's payroll service).

Technical Support
We provide support, advice, and guidance on the following items:

- Deployment of SIMS FMS software on specific workstations using Solus 3.
- Upgrades via Solus 3 with upgrade documentation, release notes and 'What's New' webinars.
- Database patches and fixes (where necessary).
- Database migrations between SQL Servers and SQL Server versions.
- Disaster recovery – restoration of the SIMS FMS database onto appropriate hardware.

How to access the service

You can access this service to raise incidents or service requests via the ICT & Digital Service Desk.

Getting the Best out of FMS

Your FMS System is one of the most complex and expensive systems within your school not to mention it contains the financial data which is the very life blood of your school. This means getting the best out of it is essential to improve the outcomes of your school along with getting the most out of your investment.

As part of the FMS Support service we can offer a free of charge visit to school to discuss your individual challenges. Please contact us to arrange a free meeting.

We also offer training, workshops, webinars, and seminars to help you get the most of out of the service.

Training, Seminars, Webinars and Workshops

Training is provided in FMS modules. Please see the ICT Training and Events service description for further details.

Exclusions

The following exclusions apply:

Area	Item Excluded
BACS files	Transmission of BACS files to receiving bank – except where a network or software issue is preventing transmission.
Equipment Register	- Import of data from text files – advice will be given but carrying out this process is chargeable. - Inventory Inspections
Financial Advice	The following activities are not provided as part of this agreement; however, this support may be available from your school finance officer. - Advice of a financial nature - Chart of accounts advice - Budget planning advice - BCR Report content

Area	Item Excluded
Hardware	▪ Support for device software (e.g. operating systems & productivity software) and hardware issues (e.g. workstation, server, or printers); it may be covered by another service.
Salary Download	▪ Salary Download where the school does not use Coventry City Council's payroll service.
System Manager	▪ System Manager User defined permission groups – we do not recommend the use of user defined groups for SIMS FMS permissions. User defined groups – we do not recommend the use of user defined groups for SIMS permissions.

Requirements and Assumptions

To provide this service, we make the following assumptions.

- ▪ Schools hold licences for the supported products.
- ▪ Remote access will be granted to FMS database servers.
- ▪ Schools will install upgrades / or allow upgrades to be installed to the FMS products in a timely fashion.
- ▪ Staff have been adequately trained in the use of products.

Supporting Services and Dependencies

The following services support the operation of this service:

Service	Description
Admin Server Support	Your admin server supports the running of your school's administration network, it holds your files, manages printing, and contains your SIMS 7 databases (pupil database, solus upgrades database, FMS database and SIMS Discover). The Admin Server support service provides support for your admin server, its setup and configuration and operating system.
ICT Training and Events Service	Schools taking the SIMS support service are automatically entitled to the ICT Training and Events Service. Training is provided using a variety of different approaches such as face to face training, self-directed online training, trainer lead online training, webinars, workshops, and attendance at our ICT conference.
Safe Data Storage Remote Backup Service	Your data is valuable and should be protected. That is why we provide access to a remote data backup service which will backup and protect your schools most important data such as your school generated files and SIMS and FMS databases. Data is backed up off site to a secure data centre providing protection against, loss, malicious damage, fire, and flood.

Service	Description
SIMS & FMS Annual Entitlement	To use the SIMS and FMS products schools must be licenced by the software vendor Education Software Services, formerly Capita. We provide a licensing service to local Authority Maintained Schools within Coventry to ensure that your school is using SIMS and the related modules legally.
Workstation Support	For schools which take this service we will be able to provide the full range of support services, where faults relate to an individual workstation this includes troubleshooting any installation problems or problems with the SIMS .net client on that machine. Where workstation support is not purchased, we will be limited to deploying the SIMS client via Solus only. However, support for the SIMS system if installed correctly on a workstation is covered without workstation support.

Additional Services available for a charge

To compliment this service, we can offer the following additional services, which are available for a charge. The below services will be charged on a per hour basis.

Area	Description
Chart of Account Changes	▪ Inputting changes to chart of accounts
Consultancy	▪ Advising on how to use modules ▪ Staff training ▪ Setup and Configuration
Equipment Register	▪ Import of data from text files.
New Database	▪ Creation of a new Finance database due to school changes e.g. conversion to academy status.
Report Writing	▪ Creation of specific BCR Reports

Document Control

The table below shows the changes to this document.

Version	Date Released	Change Notice	Pages Affected	Remarks
1.0	April 2021	New Document	All	New document format.