



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Issue 52 April 2008

# Password

The ScoMIS ICT Magazine

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...and much more!

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



## FMS MSSQL Migration for Schools

At the start of the academic year we presented an article in Password entitled the 'Road Ahead' that set out a series of major SIMS upgrades that needed to be applied to all schools during the year.

Both the SIMS SQL migration and SIMS Personnel 7 conversion were completed during the Autumn Term and are now a dim and distant memory. The other major upgrade that is still to be undertaken, however, is the upgrade of SIMS FMS from its existing SyBase SQL database structure to a Microsoft SQL database. The screens within FMS6 will remain the same and therefore there will be no requirement for users to receive further training.

We have been developing an upgrade that will enable all schools to migrate their data from FMS 6.83 to FMS 6.9x which is the new version. Alongside this ScoMIS have re-developed DTSAPPS software so that it is able to read information from the new database. These applications will therefore work in a different way. There will be changes to the way in which users of the DTSAPPS software are created but the use of the applications will remain the same.

The upgrade process will require schools to print out a number of reports and note some balances immediately prior to the commencement of the migration.

Schools will then be responsible for checking the pre and post migration balances to ensure they agree. If any discrepancies are identified the school will need to notify ScoMIS so that a restore can take place if necessary.

In view of the complexity of this upgrade and the steps that are required to integrate the new ScoMIS DTSAPPS software with SIMS FMS this upgrade will be undertaken by ScoMIS. This will take place during the summer term.

The monthly SIMS upgrades will continue to be released to schools during this period and will need to be applied by schools as usual. These monthly upgrades will be implemented by ScoMIS for schools that have purchased the ScoMIS SIMS Upgrade Service.

For more information about ScoMIS additional services please call the ScoMIS helpline on 01329 385300 or visit our website [www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/scomis/](http://www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/scomis/)

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## Welcomes and Farewells

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### We say goodbye to:

Julie Chudley

Neil Billingham

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## Helpline Performance Update

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This year has been the busiest yet for the Helpline as we've logged 42,000 new cases since the beginning of April 2007.

So far we've achieved 6 out of 7 of the Helpline targets.

	Target	Achieved
Cases actioned within 1 hr	60% or more	60.2%
Cases actioned within 8 hrs	89% or more	93.6%
Average time (hrs) to first action	2.2 or less	2.2
Cases Resolved in 8 hrs or less	63% or more	67.4%
Cases Resolved in 3 days or less	89% or more	90.5%
Average time (days) to resolve case	1.5 or less	1.4

The area that has been most difficult to achieve is concerned with how easily customers can get through to the Helpline. The following figures give the details:

	Target	Achieved
Calls answered within 30 seconds	96%	93.6%

We set a target that 96% of calls should be answered by one of the Helpline staff within 30 seconds but we've had consistent difficulties in achieving this. There are a number of reasons why this happens, but we believe that it's mainly because some months and certain times of the day are particularly busy although our staff levels remain the same. We hope that you can get through most of the time, but the busiest times for the Helpline are between 9-11am and between 2-3pm. It's obvious that you can't always choose exactly when you have a problem, but if the call isn't particularly urgent, calling outside of these times makes it easier to avoid the rush.

I'm pleased to say that, despite the high volumes, we've made strenuous efforts to maintain a quick and effective turn-round of

cases. In the last two months, this has paid off. We've been successful in taking first action on 72% of new cases within one hour, and have resolved 77% of all cases within eight hours. Our efforts are always directed at resolving problems at the time they're reported to us, and we will be trying to increase the percentage of these first-time fixes over the coming months.

So that customers can see how we're performing, the ScoMIS website has been updated. You can access full information if you go to 'Helpline' and then 'How are we doing?'

**Peter Gibbs**

*Helpline Manager*

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## Customer Service Feedback

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At ScoMIS we endeavour to deliver the best possible service to our customers and we regularly review our customer service, compliments and complaints processes. ScoMIS welcome feedback, whether suggestions, compliments or complaints. We publish an analysis of the numbers of compliments and complaints we receive, and how we respond to them and use them to develop our service. All this information is available on the ScoMIS website.

If you feel that you've had particularly good customer service, or just have a suggestion to make, please get in touch with us. Alternatively, if you feel the service you have received has not been good enough, telling us as quickly as possible gives us the best chance of correcting the situation or explaining what's happening. The best way to get a situation resolved is for you to tell the person closest to the problem why you are unhappy and what you would like them to do to remedy it. Staff are trained to help you and if they cannot do so themselves, they will refer the issue to the right person to handle your complaint. We might not always be able to do exactly what you want, but if not, we'll give you an explanation of what we can and will do.

If you are unable to resolve an issue in this way you should escalate your complaint to the

Helpline Manager who is responsible for customer care issues.

There are a number of ways you can let us know about suggestions, compliments and complaints:

- by filling in the feedback form on the website [www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/scomis/comp/index.php](http://www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/scomis/comp/index.php)
- by email to [scomis@devon.gov.uk](mailto:scomis@devon.gov.uk)
- by fax to **01392 385302**
- by phone to the ScoMIS Helpline **01392 985300**
- by phone to the ScoMIS Helpline Manager **01392 385324**

Write to us at: ScoMIS, Great Moor House, Bittern Road, Sowton, Exeter EX2 7NL.

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## South West Grid for Learning – Merlin Project

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You may be aware that the South West Grid for Learning has recently chosen RM and Netmedia partnership to deliver learning platform services.

RM, in partnership with Netmedia Education, has been appointed preferred bidder for the SWGfL Merlin project, which will provide the foundation for a school's learning platform.

Some of the key features that give you a flavour of SWGfL Merlin are outlined below:

- A simple sign-on service
- Personal Online Learning Space
- Virtual desktop
- Regional online collaborative tools
- Interoperability services
- Integration of SWGfL Services
- E-safety

ScoMIS will be working with Devon Education Services to provide the way forward for Devon Schools in terms of implementation and training.

Meanwhile, more information can be found on the SWGfL website at

[www.swgfl.org.uk/services/learning\\_platforms/](http://www.swgfl.org.uk/services/learning_platforms/)

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## E-safety

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The South West Grid for Learning plays the key role in e-safety for schools in Devon. It has recently published reports on e-safety in the region:

The SWGfL has published a new report: *The State of E-Safety – Secondary Survey*.

The report will help to complete the picture of the state of e-safety in South West schools. Ron Richards compiled the research through interviews with heads and senior leaders of secondary schools. The Executive Summary gives an outline of the key findings of the report. Findings include:

- 15% of schools had no written e-safety policy though half were in the process of writing one
- in 19% of schools an Acceptable Usage Policy did not cover the staff
- more than half of the AUPs made no reference to either mobile devices or cyber-bullying despite the advice of Becta
- in contrast, 89% of the Heads said that their school did have a mobile phone policy
- hacking was reported as an issue in 20% of schools

This survey provides *"up to date and accurate evidence of the situation in secondary schools, which may then influence the ongoing work of the SWGfL E-Safety Group and other organisations involved in promoting e-safety."* (Ron Richards, Feb. 2008)

A full version of the report is available from [www.swgfl.org.uk/safety/safetynewsdetail.asp?newsid=30](http://www.swgfl.org.uk/safety/safetynewsdetail.asp?newsid=30)

For all other new and advice on e-safety go to [www.swgfl.org.uk/safety/](http://www.swgfl.org.uk/safety/)

SWGFL SAFE *Safe*

## Exwick Heights Case Study

*'New network vastly improves ICT capability of Exeter's newest Primary School'*



### The Challenge

To design and implement a network infrastructure with a cutting-edge high-performance platform that supports a wireless solution and is capable of supporting IP telephony.

### Proposed Solution

A fast, highly-resilient local area network infrastructure using the Nortel Ethernet routing Switch 5500 portfolio for the wired network and Nortel WLAN 2300 series for wireless network, along with an RM (Research Machines) Community Connect 3 network to provide ICT in the curriculum across the school.

### Solution Benefits

**Fast and reliable** – with reliable layer 3 switching and latest RM computer hardware there is much less downtime and bandwidth heavy applications are quick to load.

**Unrestricted network access** - teachers and pupils can rely on highly available fixed and mobile connectivity wherever they are in the school.

**Cutting edge ICT** – the school can now use innovative teaching methods in ICT whilst supporting new applications and also facilitate growing pupil numbers in the future.



### The scenario

As part of the Exeter schools' reorganisation programme, Exwick Heights Primary School was formed in October 2005 out of the merger of Foxhayes First School and Exwick Middle School. The two old school sites were based on separate campuses and, as part of the new school's build programme, a new school was proposed.

Laurie Burbridge, Chair of Governors for Exwick Heights Primary School, approached ScoMIS who provide schools with IT advice and recommendations for new school projects.

The remit was to provide the new build with a 'state of the art' ICT system to enable the school to provide 'high class' ICT in the curriculum.

### The solution

The school chose to use the Nortel range of Wired and Wireless equipment for the network infrastructure, as this had been a tried and tested solution already in place across a number of new school build projects previously installed by ScoMIS.

The school chose to use an RM CC3 networked system with its suite of curriculum software to deliver ICT in the curriculum. They had confidence in RM as a successful provider of ICT in the curriculum with a track record of implementing solutions across a number of Devon schools. They were keen for local

implementation to be undertaken by ScoMIS who have many years' experience of large network installations working as an RM partner.

The solution provides them with a fully resilient layer 3 LAN that provides security

between the different functions of the school using VLAN technology

Wireless connectivity is provided across the whole school using a Nortel wireless switch in the core of the



network for high security and encryption, which controls a number of wireless access points around the school.

As well as new RM PCs that are set up in each classroom, the school purchased a number of new RM laptops with trolleys, to enable them to be mobile and used on the wireless network in any classroom around the school to deliver the same experience for a pupil as the RM-networked computers.



Dr Laurie Burbridge, Chair of Governors, explains, "Prior to the installation, we had extensive discussions with the teaching staff, the ICT support staff, our preferred supplier (RM) and ScoMIS. The result was an overall strategy which largely met our needs and which was affordable. The timescale for the completion and occupation of the new building meant that we could plan ahead with some confidence.

"The performance of ScoMIS in the commissioning of the ICT systems was exemplary and showed that with proper planning ICT projects can be delivered on time and within budget!"

### The Results

The Nortel and RM solution has brought Exwick Heights Primary School into a new age.

The school is now able to implement a cutting edge ICT experience into the school curriculum that would have not been possible without such an infrastructure and network solution.

The wireless capability has made teaching much more flexible, having coverage in all areas of the school.

Dr Laurie Burbridge adds, "We have already received a number of complimentary remarks from the teaching staff about the quality of the ICT provision and this indicates the overall success of our strategy."

## The Changing Status of Schools

ScoMIS are at the moment working with a number of schools whose organisation status is changing.

These include brand-new schools which are being created, as well as existing schools which are being merged to form new schools. Some of these new schools will have new buildings on new sites and some are having major refurbishment works on their current sites. There are schools coming together on one site to form a Learning Campus. Schools which have federated are going through the consultation period for federating and also schools that now have Trust status.

All of these different scenarios have implications for the ICT infrastructure requirements within these schools as well as the way in which their MIS data is managed.

If this applies to your school or is likely to be happening in the near future then ScoMIS is available to help you identify the issues.

We would like to work with you whilst you are in the process of planning for change to ensure that we are able to help you meet your current needs as well as look to the future

We are in discussion with the DCFS regarding MIS data and statutory returns to ensure that any advice which we give to schools currently will not have to be changed once the Schools Workforce Census comes into effect.

Other things which schools may wish to consider are the wording on their statement of particulars letters with regard to work bases, etc. Also, if you are becoming a Trust School, then currently none of the wording in the Statement of Particulars Letters produced by the ScoMIS Contract Printing Utility is appropriate for your needs.

If you would like further advice then please contact the ScoMIS Helpline in the first instance.

## Case Study

## Schools Workforce Census

As schools will be aware from previous articles, the Schools Workforce Census will have to be submitted by all Local Authorities in January 2010 for the first time.

The data will need to be collected for staff in Primary, Secondary, Special, Maintained Nursery Schools, and PRU staff. There will also be a requirement for some centrally employed staff to be included in the return but more detailed guidance will be given to schools with regard to this nearer the time.

This will be a statutory return which will mean that local authorities and schools

*"can benefit from having access to much more detailed information on their school staff (support staff as well as teachers), including information on pay, qualifications, gender, ethnicity and sickness. Because collection is through a single channel it will enable the Department and its partner organisations to drop other surveys currently carried out, thereby reducing the administrative burden."*

The above quote was taken from a letter from the DCFS to local authorities explaining the rationale for the return.

There will be 'dry runs' during the Spring, Summer and Autumn of 2009.

Each local authority will be forming cross-functional teams made up of different areas within the authority to decide how best to produce the return and where the different sources of data to produce the return will come from.

ScoMIS will be working with colleagues from Devon, Plymouth and Torbay from an IMS support perspective to ensure that the appropriate advice is given to schools in a timely manner with regard to the production of the return.

The pilot exercise, which was run in 34 local authorities, is drawing to a close after the first return was submitted in January and the results of this will obviously formulate further advice. To this end we are still not able at the moment to give hard and fast information and timelines for events until they have been confirmed by the DCFS

### Devon Schools only

Below is the proposed implementation timetable – this may be subject to change as the requirements of the return are further ratified by the DCFS.

April / May 2008	Letter to all Schools with information regarding the Schools Workforce Census
June / July 2008	Workshops for all schools – dates to be confirmed
June / July 2008	Issue of Fair Processing Notice to staff
September 2008	All schools commence maintaining the required Workforce data fields
January 2009	Data collection from all schools
Feb / March 2009	Feedback to Schools
May 2009	Possible Data collection from all schools
Sept 2009	Possible Data collection from all schools
January 2010	Workforce Census goes live

### Plymouth and Torbay Schools

ScoMIS are working with colleagues within these authorities and details of the timetable of events within Plymouth and Torbay will be made available to schools once they have been agreed.

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## Key Stage Process for 2008

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ScoMIS will shortly be placing information on their website with regard to the Key Stage processes. This will include information on how to:

- Download the 2008 Wizards for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.
- Attach the correct cohort of pupils/students.
- Complete relevant assessments on marksheets.
- Validate results.
- Return Teacher Assessments to your LA.
- Produce reports for parents.
- Look at comparative reports.
- Access individual reports from pupil/student browse.

Information on the completion of Foundation Stage Profiles and QCA Optional Tests will also be available.

Detailed information on National Curriculum assessments can be found in the Assessment and Reporting Arrangements for 2008 which all schools should now have.

You can also access this information via the NAA website.

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## Profiles 7

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Pupil reports are a vital way of keeping parents informed of how their child is doing in school, highlighting individual achievements and drawing attention to areas of the curriculum where pupils might need additional support.

Profiles 7 enables teachers to enter text freely anywhere within the report, giving them more flexibility in how they write and set out their pupil reports. If your school is using a standard set of comments for staff to choose from, teachers can include appropriate comments wherever they are needed, adapting them to reflect the achievements of individual pupils. Whether your school reports to parents annually, termly or on a monthly basis, SIMS

Profiles 7 will give teachers more choice when writing pupil reports and ensure they are completed efficiently.

From just one screen, teachers can view a helpful picture of each pupil, enter report text, and, if using a comment bank, simply select appropriate comments and insert directly into the report. Teachers can organise comment banks to suit their individual requirements by modifying the comments, saving them more time when writing pupil reports. Up-to-date attendance information drawn directly from SIMS .net can now be included instantly, and an automatic wordcount tool helps teachers keep track of the length of the report. They now also have the option to preview reports before printing them.

With SIMS Learning Gateway 2, teachers will be able to complete their reports from home using a secure web-based interface, giving the flexibility that teachers need.

### **SIMS Profiles 7 features:**

- Free text placed anywhere in the report
- A photo included on the teacher's pupil listing
- Easy access to comment banks for editing in Word®
- The ability for schools to set a maximum word count for pupil reports
- The automatic inclusion of attendance statistics
- The option to preview reports onscreen before printing
- Simple management of comment banks; dragging and dropping comments in order of preference

If you wish to use Profiles, look at the ScoMIS Course Directory for our next scheduled course, or book one of our Consultants to come to your school to work with you through the process of setting up your first reporting session.

## Assessment Manager – Primary School Vision for the Future

Assessment Manager aims to deliver new features which will make it easier for primary schools to use and support pupil tracking and analysis. These are due to be released from May 2008 and will continue into 2009.

- Create a simpler interface for classroom use – *quicker and easier to understand and use*
- Improve marksheet features – *simplify data interrogation and analysis*
- Provide new Pupil Tracking Marksheets and Reports – *encourage effective use of data*

Capita are planning to provide standard termly Tracking Progress Marksheets for core subjects (Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening, English (aggregated), Maths, Science, using NC Fine Grades.

They are also developing Tracking Grids within Assessment Manager, like the Primary Strategy Grids. Once schools have recorded termly data in the tracking marksheets the grids can be populated instantly, to give an immediate and very visual understanding of individual pupils' progress. Schools would then go through the grids to track movements and highlight names.

Tracking mark sheets and grids will also be provided for P Scales, for use in either mainstream or special schools.

Further information will be available to schools from the May upgrade. ScoMIS will be offering presentations on the new Assessment Manager Primary Vision in the summer term.

## Attendance 6 or Attendance 7: which should I use?

You will know from earlier editions of Password that SIMS Attendance 6 is to be replaced by SIMS Attendance 7 which will provide full integration into SIMS .net. Earlier indications were that the May Upgrade would replace Attendance 6. However, Capita has now advised us that support will continue until December 2008.

At present all schools have the ability to use either Attendance 6, which is accessed via the link on the launcher bar to the left of SIMS .net, or Attendance 7, which is accessed via Focus | Attendance. As far as editing marks are concerned, it really does not matter which version you use, as they will both feed back to the same database and attach the attendance code to the correct pupil/student.

The Capita development roadmap indicates that further Attendance 7 functionality will follow in future SIMS upgrades as follows:

### **Feb–08 Attendance 7.100**

OMR functionality  
Toggle functionality

### **May–08 Attendance 7.104**

Attendance Reports into Attendance 7

### **Aug–08 Attendance 7.108**

System Code Changes  
Changes to Academic Year creation  
Attendance Letters  
Archiving routines

ScoMIS have organised presentations and workshops in order to bring schools up to date and encourage them to start using the new version with its enhancements. There are still places available and it will be advisable to attend these presentations or workshops to get used to Attendance 7 before the end of the Academic Year.

As you can see from the development roadmap, the move between versions is being phased, with the attendance letters being the last to move. Attendance 7 offers some real benefits and we will demonstrate these at the presentations and workshops.



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## SIMS Learning Gateway

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You may have noticed a brief article on the BBC Spotlight News in February about South Dartmoor Community College. It showed how the college is giving parents access to Assessment Data through a secure website which parents and students can log on to.

South Dartmoor Community College is one of four schools which began piloting this project in association with ScoMIS in October 2006. ScoMIS host and manage the infrastructure providing the secure access for teachers, parents and students and work very closely with schools such as South Dartmoor to ensure that the correct level of information is displayed.

We now have nine schools using the SIMS Learning Gateway, with nearly 7000 users able to have secure access to SIMS over the Internet.

We are now looking at the next generation of SIMS Learning Gateway, which will be based on Microsoft Sharepoint 2007, and will offer more flexibility, both in the way that schools can access SIMS data, and in the way that users access the system.

Teachers working from any computer with Internet access can view test results for their class before creating assignments on the VLE so that the work set targets a group's or individual's needs. Staff will no longer have to remain in school to write pupil reports as the software allows this task to be carried out from any computer with Internet access.

Parents can access SIMS Learning Gateway to examine assessment scores, timetable information or log on during their working day to see if their child arrived at school safely and attended all lessons. This will help schools encourage parental involvement in their child's school life without creating an additional administrative burden for staff, as live SIMS information is available automatically from the school's SIMS Learning Gateway website.

If you would like to join this project, with the DCFS's 2010 deadline in mind, please contact ScoMIS for a discussion of how SIMS Learning Gateway will work for your school.

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## RM Community Connect 4

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In our last issue of PASSWORD we published details of RM's new network solution, **Community Connect 4**. Building on the CC3 network software used in many Devon schools, CC4 will offer the stability, scalability and learning-focused access of CC3, but will include many enhancements.

- Enhanced control over your network
- An enhanced wireless experience
- Avoid network disruptions with trickle-feed functionality
- Use both Windows Vista(®) and XP machines
- Support multiple devices and remote access
- Increase return on investment with thin client technology
- Monitor and manage hardware assets
- Solve simple problems with user friendly MyConnect
- Reduce disruption with Network Recycle Bin
- Stay in control with Internet Access Manager
- Total Classroom control with RM Tutor

For more information see:

<http://cc4.rm.com/>

ScoMIS will be working with RM to provide high-level advice, training and support for Community Connect 4. If you require further information please contact the ScoMIS Helpline.

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## Microsoft Software Technology Updates

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### Vista and Office 2007

We have had several enquiries regarding the use and support of Microsoft Vista and Office 2007 and would like to clarify what we recommend – we currently do not provide Helpdesk support for the products.

Becta, the education technology agency, has published a key report on Microsoft Vista and Office 2007 and on document interoperability, which analyses the suitability of both software packages for schools and colleges. They recommend that schools and colleges review the findings of the report before considering any large-scale investment or deployment.

In brief, the key recommendations from Becta's report are that upgrading existing ICT systems to Vista or Office 2007 is not recommended and mixed Windows-based operating environments should be avoided. However, Vista should be considered where new institution-wide ICT provision is being planned.

One of the main reasons for the decision not to recommend upgrading to Vista is the potential need to upgrade hardware in the existing PC equipment to get it to a level where benefits will be seen. At best, only extra RAM memory will be needed, but if an updated graphics card is required and the cost factored in, it doesn't make sense to upgrade ageing hardware.

The recommendation for new suites/wholesale replacement needs careful planning, but in line with current industry thinking, most people are waiting until the first Vista service pack fixes (due soon) are released. ScoMIS are reviewing their support for Vista, will communicate any change to our support offerings and can provide advice through the Helpline.

The Becta report also recommends that no widespread deployment of Office 2007 should take place until schools and colleges are sure they have mechanisms in place to deal with file format interoperability and the potential digital divide issues.

The limitations are due to Microsoft's implementation of the Open Document Format (ODF) international standard. Becta are trying to ensure that users of competitor's products using the international standard – which include the free open source Open Office – are given a fair chance. More people are using up these alternative solutions at home or in school and in the short term, users should continue to save files in the Microsoft compatible .doc, .xls and .ppt formats.

In the longer term, it is hoped that Microsoft's support of the international ODF format will break down the divide, but as the ICT industry is trying to facilitate easier access to 'free-to-use' office productivity software for all, the recommendation is to avoid the complication that Office 2007 introduces. ScoMIS will monitor this and provide updates when there are any changes to this support.

The licences we currently procure on behalf of schools for Windows and Office are for the newer versions. However, we recommend they are 'downgraded' and the previous versions installed.

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## RM Asus Mini-books

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There has been a lot of talk about the ASUS MINIBOOKS which one of our partners, RM, has been marketing at £169 for the entry-level model. While not offering all the functions of a Windows laptop, they are surprisingly efficient and easy to use.

The RM Asus miniBook is a possible choice for pupil use as an 'anywhere, anytime access' device at a low price. Smaller than an A5 pad and weighing less than 1kg, it combines the portability and 25 second quick-start of a PDA with the



capabilities of a notebook. Starting from only £169, the RM Asus miniBook is a new category of device, set to change ICT provision for pupils.

The RM Asus miniBook could be suited for pupils to use at home, at school or on the move. Small and light enough to be taken anywhere, the robust design offers increased protection against the bumps and grinds of mobile computing in the education environment.

There are upgraded versions offering more storage and a larger screen version will soon be available. Windows XP can be installed, although would take up most of the available 4GB and slow the machine down. Appropriate licenses would need to be purchased. It can be used as a thin client device with a Community Connect 3 or 4 network with a Client Connect Terminal Server.

Based on a free open source Linux operating system, the miniBook comes preinstalled with many applications including Open Office (compatible with MS Office). The Internet software includes the Mozilla Firefox web browser to allow access to web-based resources.

### Specification

- With a 7" screen and weighing less than 1Kg, it's smaller and lighter than many textbooks.
- Robust solid-state hard drive provides fast boot-up/shut-down and preserves pupils' files.
- Integrated webcam (4G model only), microphone and speakers for easy web video-conferencing.
- Integrated 802.11b/g wireless and optional 3G module provide great connectivity.
- Integrated card-reader and three USB 2.0 ports provide a simple way to add additional storage and easy connection for peripherals.
- Full-size VGA-output for connection to projectors or monitors.

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## ICT Network Infrastructure

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A computer network is much more than a collection of computers linked together. ScoMIS have been working over the last five years with RM and Viglen as preferred suppliers to ensure that schools have network management control systems that deliver real benefits in terms of teaching and learning. We have looked at the software schools are using, individual school ICT issues and the level of staff knowledge within the school.

ScoMIS can help you specify, procure and implement a new network or develop and integrate an existing network. Advice is available at the beginning of the project which involves coming to your school to talk about what you want to achieve in terms of pupil and staff use. From this point we can look at the various technologies to accomplish this and help you choose the correct network for your school.

We will then work with our preferred suppliers to ensure that the quotations provided match your needs, and can then install, configure, provide training and supply both telephone and on-site support.

For further information, please call the ScoMIS helpline on **01392 385300**.



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## ScoMIS Remote Backup Service

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**EASY, AUTOMATIC, RELIABLE, SECURE**

### What is Remote Backup?

ScoMIS uses Attix5 Software to deliver an automated remote backup service that sends an encrypted backup of your data across the Internet to ScoMIS at Great Moor House. Is it designed to replace the tape drive or other device that currently backs up the data on your Admin PC and/or Curriculum Network.

### What does it back up?

Everything on your Admin PC can be backed up. This includes SIMS data, MS Office documents, photos, the operating system and much more. You have control over what is and isn't chosen to be backed up. The standard configuration selects everything needed to restore your computer and all the data should the worst happen.

### How does it work?

Your Admin PC connects, via the Internet, to our file servers at ScoMIS at a time agreed with the school (usually out of school hours). It then sends your data, using Bank Level Encryption, to our file servers where it is backed up. The data is also copied to a mirror backup file server at County Hall as an additional level of resilience. Unlike a tape drive, Attix5 is all software based, so there is no need to worry about tapes or the drive breaking, and tapes being misplaced. There is also no need to remember to take and store backup tapes away from the school site.

### What our customers think of the service

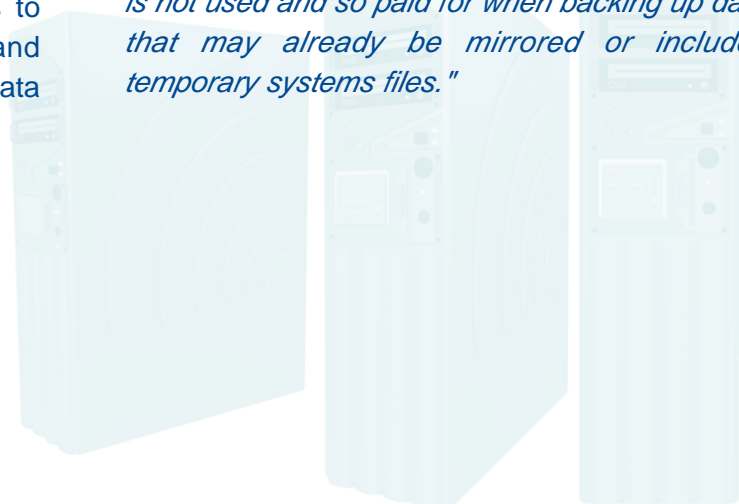
Now in its third year, this popular, cost-effective and reliable service is providing automated remote backup for schools' critical data files to over 200+ groups, including primary and secondary schools, and is also backing up data on over 300 desktops and servers.

### Paul Williamson, Network Manager, Bideford College...

*"Since the installation of Attix at the college there have been two significant outcomes. Firstly, the time not spent cataloguing tapes and changing them has enabled me to carry out much needed development work in other areas of the college. Secondly, the ability to restore documents from further back has proven easy and useful especially when a student cannot remember when they last worked on it. The way Attix runs in the background, the ability to back up totally in the silent hours and the cost-effectiveness compared to tape solutions, gives me as a Network Manager peace of mind when large amounts of student data and course work pass through the network in a normal working day."*

### Stewart R Bondi, Network Administrator, West Exe Technology College...

*"It goes without saying that a good backup strategy is vital to a business, not only to restore deleted files, but also to recover a whole system in the event of a catastrophic failure. Experience has taught that the very occasion when backups fail is when a server dies! Over the years we have used a variety of backup solutions. We have used expensive tape drives and professional backup software and media. The routines used were carefully planned and methodical, but subject to glitches such as faulty media, forgetting to change the media and not thoroughly checking the logs. Attix provides a trouble-free automated backup solution that needs little or no attention. Although we had a few issues in the early days, ScoMIS now manage it well so we are automatically informed if any backups fail, rather than our needing to monitor logs. A thoughtful manager will do well to check that unnecessary storage space is not used and so paid for when backing up data that may already be mirrored or includes temporary systems files."*





**Janet Jackson, School Manager, Shiphay School and Orchard Nursery...**

*"We use the remote backup service for both our admin and curriculum networks. The backups are run every night and go through without a hitch, I can restore any data easily should I need to do so, and it has taken from me the enormous responsibility of constantly checking the backups to make sure that they have run correctly."*

**Angela Baker, Ratcliffe School...**

*"We love the service. The feedback via email is excellent and keeps us informed. It's a weight off our shoulders as it is not our responsibility, not to mention the time it saves us. We would highly recommend it."*

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## Changes to Anti-Virus Licensing

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Anti-virus licenses for Devon, Plymouth and Torbay schools expired on March 31st 2008. In addition, ScoMIS have removed the automatic entitlement to anti-virus software licensing for subscribers to contracts A and B of the ScoMIS Service Level Agreements. This change has been made in response to requests from schools who wish to make their own arrangements and choose alternative products.

ScoMIS will still offer anti-virus software for schools but only for schools who wish to buy into the service.

Cost of new McAfee school client annual license: £1.71 (per workstation/server)

Cost of new McAfee home client annual license: £0.73 (per workstation)

Please be aware that ScoMIS have only been allocated a fixed number of McAfee school client licenses available at this cost.

If you would like further advice please contact the ScoMIS Helpline on 01392 385300.

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## SIMS Upgrade Installation Service

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This service involves the implementation of each regular SIMS upgrade remotely across the Internet by ScoMIS. ScoMIS agree a start time with schools and they allow access to the systems at that time. The upgrade is started, its progress monitored and subsequently tested. In the event of a problem ScoMIS staff will attempt to immediately resolve issues remotely to complete the upgrade in one session. These upgrades may be undertaken outside the school working day to reduce systems down time. Visits will only be made to schools where a technical issue makes access remotely inappropriate.

School subscribing to this service must have a broadband connection to their main administrative computer. The cost of this subscription is:

Primary and Special	£375
Secondary	£500

Where a broadband connection is not available or where a school is unwilling to allow access to their system remotely an on-site service is available at additional cost.

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## End of School Year 2007-2008

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Orders for all hardware (i.e. computers, backup devices, printers, scanners) for delivery and installation before the end of term must be received by ScoMIS no later than 12th June 2008.

Orders for peripherals must be received by 4th July 2008. Please note that no further orders for hardware or software will be processed after the 4th July deadline.

Please call the ScoMIS helpline on 01392 385300 if you require further information.

## ScoMIS Courses – Summer Term 2008

We will be running the following courses during the Summer Term, but if you find that the dates advertised are not convenient or you are interested in a course not advertised below please register your interest in any particular area and we will try and cater for your needs. It may be that you would like to train together with members of your own Learning Community/Academic Council and this could be arranged either as a course at one of our training centres, or as an on-site visit at one of the schools.

You can access our full training directory on the web: [www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/scomis/training/index.php](http://www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/scomis/training/index.php)

For all course bookings or on-site training enquiries please contact **01392 385301** or email [bookings@devon.gov.uk](mailto:bookings@devon.gov.uk)

Date	Course	Location	Times	Price
30/04/2008	FMS6 New Administrators Day 1	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
01/05/2008	FMS6 New Administrators Day 1	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
06/05/2008	FMS6 New Administrators Day 1	Barnstaple	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
07/05/2008	FMS6 New Administrators Day 2	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
07/05/2008	SIMS .net for New Administrators – Primary	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
09/05/2008	School Census Presentation Post-16 Learning Aims	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
13/05/2008	FMS6 New Administrators Day 2	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
13/05/2008	Introduction to Reporting from SIMS .net	Barnstaple	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
14/05/2008	FMS6 New Administrators Day 2	Barnstaple	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
14/05/2008	SIMS .net Academic Management including Printing and Reporting from Nova T4	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
15/05/2008	SIMS .net Academic Management including Printing and Reporting from Nova T4	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
15/05/2008	SIMS .net for New Administrators – Primary	Barnstaple	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
15/05/2008	Personnel 7 for New Administrators	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per school
16/05/2008	Personnel 7 for New Users (new Administrators)	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£130 per person
16/05/2008	Attendance 7 Presentation	Baylis Suite Plymouth	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
20/05/2008	Introduction to Reporting from SIMS .net	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
21/05/2008	Special Needs in SIMS .net	Barnstaple	09.30 – 13.00	£135 per school
21/05/2008	SIMS .net for New Administrators – Primary	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
22/05/2008	Assessment Manager 7 for Primary Schools Day 1 Introduction to Managing Assessment Data	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
22/05/2008	Personnel 7 for New Administrators	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
23/05/2008	End of Year Procedures in SIMS .net Presentation	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
03/06/2008	End of Year Procedures in SIMS .net Presentation	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
04/06/2008 05/06/2008 06/06/2008	Managing your RM Community Connect Network	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£610 per school

Date	Course	Location	Times	Price
04/06/2008	Key Stage 1 and 2 Wizard Presentation	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30 13.30 – 16.30	£45 per school
05/06/2008	Key Stage 1 and 2 Wizard Presentation	Baylis Suite Plymouth	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
05/06/2008	Special Needs in SIMS .net	Exeter	09.30 – 13.00	£135 per school
05/06/2008	End of Year Procedures in SIMS .net Presentation	Exeter	13.30 – 16.30	£45 per school
10/06/2008	Introduction to Reporting from SIMS .net	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person
11/06/2008	Assessment Manager 7 for Primary Schools – Day 1 Introduction to Managing Assessment Data	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
11/06/2008	End of Year Procedures in SIMS .net Presentation	Exeter	13.30 – 16.30	£45 per school
12/06/2008	End of Year Procedures in SIMS .net Presentation	Baylis Suite Plymouth	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
12/06/2008	Assessment Manager 7 Presentation – Primary	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
13/06/2008	Profiles 7 New Users – Secondary	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
17/06/2008	Behaviour Management in SIMS .net Workshop	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
17/06/2008	Maintaining and Managing your SIMS .net Data	Plymouth	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person or £215 per school
17/06/2008	Assessment Manager 7 Presentation – Primary	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
18/06/2008	Assessment Manager 7 Presentation – Primary	Baylis Suite Plymouth	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
18/06/2008	Attendance 7 Presentation	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
18/06/2008	End of Year Procedures in SIMS .net Presentation	Barnstaple	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
19/06/2008	Maintaining and Managing your SIMS .net data	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person or £215 per school
19/06/2008	Attendance 7 Workshop for New Users	Barnstaple	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
24/06/2008	Equipment Register for New Users	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
24/06/2008	Assessment Manager 7 for Primary Schools Developing use of Assessment Data	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
24/06/2008	Attendance 7 Presentation	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
25/06/2008	Maintaining and Managing your SIMS .net Data	Barnstaple	09.30 – 15.30	£145 per person or £215 per school
25/06/2008	Behaviour Management Workshop in SIMS .net	Plymouth	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
26/06/2008	Attendance 7 Workshop for New Users	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
26/06/2008	Course Manager Workshop for Secondary Schools	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£215 per school
01/07/2008 02/07/2008 03/07/2008	Managing your RM Community Connect Network	Exeter	09.30 – 15.30	£610 per school
03/07/2008	Writing more Effectively in SIMS .net	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
09/07/2008	Attendance 7 Workshop for New Users	Plymouth	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
10/07/2008	Equipment Register for News Users	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school
11/07/2008	Examinations Organiser – Results & Analysis Presentation	Exeter	09.30 – 12.30	£45 per school
15/07/2008	Equipment Register for New Users	Barnstaple	09.30 – 12.30	£135 per school

# Dear Madge



## GOOGLE-GOGGLES

**Researching a particular project using google.co.uk the other day, I searched for an image but accidentally got more than I bargained for – up popped an inappropriate picture! How can I prevent this from happening again?** *Shocked Sarah*

### *Dear Sarah*

Although your SWGfL school Internet connection includes comprehensive filtering, no Internet filtering service can give 100% guaranteed prevention from inappropriate content. To minimise any chance of inappropriate images appearing in the results page of a Google image search, you need to check that the Safe Search Filtering option is selected. Go to the Google front page and select Images. To the right of the Search Images box there is a Preferences option. Click on Preferences Option, scroll down the page to Safe Search Filtering then select Use Strict Filtering (Filter both explicit text and explicit images) option. Save this preference and this should do the trick.

## Y NO SCHOOL?

**Due to unforeseen circumstances our school had to close for the day. How do I record the day's closure as a Y code in Attendance?** *Flooded Flora*

### *Dear Flora*

Situations such as these need to be recorded as 'enforced closure days'. Log into sims.net, select Focus/ Attendance/Exceptional Circumstances/New. Record the date(s) the school was closed, whether the whole school or certain year groups were affected, and give a reason why the closure occurred. Finish by clicking on the Apply button. You

should then be able to check the Y code has been applied by going into Attendance.

## LACK OF CONTROL

**I am having problems when I try to download SIMS upgrades from the website. It starts, but then skips several steps, taking me to the end of the process without letting me download anything.**

*Puzzled Petra*

### *Dear Petra*

Basically, you are not holding the Control key down for long enough. This problem is due to the Pop Up Blocker preventing you from downloading the upgrade. Before selecting Download Option, make sure that you hold down the Control key (bottom left of your keyboard) and continue holding the control key down until the Enter Password message appears. Follow the instructions from there and the download process should commence.

## MISSING MISS

**I am trying to complete the online absence form to record a staff absence. I can complete the form up to a certain point, but then the system prevents me from going any further, and locks me out. Where am I going wrong?** *Banished Bill*

### *Dear Bill*

There may be one of two things that need to be put right. You may be using an old link for the absence form – delete the old link from your favourites and put in [www.devon.gov.uk/absenceform](http://www.devon.gov.uk/absenceform)

OR  
You may need to delete your temporary Internet files and Cookies. In Internet Explorer go to Tools – Internet Options and under the General tab delete the Temporary Internet Files and Cookies. (This should be done on a regular basis – try to get into the habit of doing it at least once a month).

When you have done this, click on the Refresh icon before attempting to complete the form again.

## SPAM, SPAM, SPAM, SPAM

**What should I do with spam emails when using SWGfL Mail (previously known as RM EasyMail)?** *Tidy Tina*

### *Dear Tina*

At the top right hand side of the email message box select the Show All Headers option. Three options will become available. Select Show All Headers, copy the text in the header which appears. Click on Forward to forward the email, then paste the copied header text into the body of the email and send to spam@rm.com. Never reply to spam emails, it just shows the sender that your email account is active and are you likely to continue receiving spam mail from the sender. RM has a Spam filtering system and reporting spam in this way will enable RM to add inappropriate email to that filter.

## FILE OVERLOAD

**Can you advise why are we having so many files to download for reconciliation at the moment? Since the migration to Securenet transfer, there seem to be several every time I go in, where there used to be only one a week. Also, why do they download to DTSapps and not FMS?** *Confused Connie*

### *Dear Connie*

The main difference is that Securenet is a much more visible process. In the old Data Transfer System many files were downloaded together and you were only presented with one file name at the end of the process which was then available for reconciliation in FMS. Now you are using SecureNet please ensure you always choose the Select All option before you download as the files are sequentially numbered and will fail to be reformatted if you don't do this. You are correct in that the initial Download goes to the Dtsapps folder, then when you click on the Close button the file is reformatted and placed in the correct folder for reconciliation when you select import and reconcile within FMS.