

**Capita SIMS Support  
Accreditation (CSSA) Scheme  
Accreditation Resume May 2011**



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# Accreditation Resume May 2011

<b>Support Team name:</b> SMIS (Schools Management Information Systems)
<b>LA(s) supported:</b> Sandwell and schools in Walsall, Dudley, Birmingham and Derby.
<b>Percentage school survey return</b>
<b>Primary:</b> Total schools 106 schools returning surveys 102 (96%)
<b>Secondary:</b> Total schools 40 schools returning surveys 40 (100%)
<b>Accreditation Outcome: Accredited</b>

## Key Points from the Survey Results

The survey containing 38 questions covering key areas of support was sent electronically to all schools supported by the SMIS. A satisfactory 97% of schools completed the survey with 90 of the 142 schools (63%) responding to the survey adding a free-text comment. The survey results indicating the perceptions of the schools on a scale of one to six, with four being deemed satisfactory, are shown in detail on pages 3 and 5.

The Primary survey results show the very high regard in which the service is held with all aggregated scores 5.52 or above which is in the good to excellent range (above five). The Overall value for money and Overall quality of service scores are 5.68 and 5.81 which indicate that an excellent level of service is being delivered.

The Secondary survey results again show very high satisfaction with only one of the aggregated scores below the 5.5 excellent range. Of considerable note is the 5.97 score for Lasting effectiveness of the resolution and Overall quality of requested SIMS-related on-site services which join the total of 18 responses that score 5.8 and above.

A complete set of the comments from the schools is included on pages 6 to 12. Many comments refer to the helpful and knowledgeable nature of the team which is universally perceived to be excellent. There is an overwhelming sense that the team is professional, friendly, helpful, knowledgeable, and approachable and, above all, patient and reassuring supporting a good relationship between the team and their clients.

This accreditation also included visits to four schools to further evidence the results of the survey. The outcomes from these visits have been discussed with the team and are summarised in the "Local Authority Support Accreditation - School Visits" document. A central theme from the visits was the perception that service delivery by SMIS was excellent. The views of the schools visited further enhanced the view that the SMIS is well regarded and respected by its client base. One comment from a Secondary school encapsulates the meaning of support "SMIS are outstanding in the SIMS support they provide for us and as such, we are able to make extensive use of the software at our own pace without having to worry about support implications as we know we are in safe hands."

# Survey Scores from schools

The rating scale is 1-6  
with 6 as excellent  
(4 is a satisfactory rating)

<b>Training</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	101	39	140
Appropriate to need	5.78	5.77	5.78
Timeliness of course publication	5.73	5.44	5.65
Quality of delivery	5.79	5.85	5.81
Quality of course materials	5.73	5.74	5.74
Value for money	5.76	5.72	5.75
Courses actually taking place as published	5.86	5.95	5.89
Training facilities	5.82	5.85	5.83
<b>Overall quality of the training service</b>	5.83	5.82	5.83
<b>Schools not using the service</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
None required	1	1	2
NOT provided - other supplier used	0	0	0
Provided but other supplier used	0	0	0
<b>Technical Services (hardware/network)</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	100	36	136
Range of technical services available	5.58	5.72	5.62
Quality of installation service	5.52	5.67	5.56
Quality of consultancy support services	5.62	5.75	5.65
Quality of technical advice	5.67	5.81	5.71
Response time to requests for technical support	5.6	5.69	5.63
<b>Overall quality of technical services</b>	5.65	5.78	5.68
<b>Schools not using the service</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
None required	0	3	3
Not provided - other supplier used	2	0	2
Provided but other supplier used	0	1	1

<b>Help Desk Services</b>			
	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	101	39	140
Help desk opening times (term time)	100	40	140
Initial response time to your queries	5.79	5.68	5.76
Knowledge of the help desk staff	5.86	5.73	5.82
Quality of the resolution of the problem	5.87	5.88	5.87
<b>Overall quality of the help desk services</b>	5.89	5.88	5.89
<b>Schools not using the service</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
None required	2	0	2
NOT provided - other supplier used	0	0	0
Provided but other supplier used	0	0	0
<b>Requested on-site visits</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	84	32	116
Speed of response	84	32	116
Initial effectiveness of the resolution	5.7	5.84	5.74
Lasting effectiveness of the resolution	5.79	5.94	5.83
<b>Overall quality of requested SIMS-related on-site services</b>	5.79	5.97	5.84
<b>Schools not using the service</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
None required	18	8	26
NOT provided - other supplier used	0	0	0
Provided but other supplier used	0	0	0
<b>On-site visits initiated by the SIMS support team</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	75	27	102
SIMS-related knowledge of the visiting support team member	74	28	102
School/education related knowledge of same	5.84	5.86	5.84
Timeliness of visit (e.g. to fit with PLASC process)	5.69	5.86	5.74
<b>Overall quality of SIMS support team initiated visits</b>	5.81	5.82	5.81

<b>On-site visits initiated by the SIMS support team continued</b>			
<b>Schools not using the service</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
None required	26	12	38
NOT provided - other supplier used	1	0	1
Provided but other supplier used	1	0	1
<b>Remote Support</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	103	39	142
Speed of response using remote support	102	40	142
Effectiveness of resolution using remote support	5.92	5.74	5.87
Overall quality of remote support service	5.92	5.77	5.88
<b>Other communications</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	102	40	142
Effectiveness in dealing with complaints and praise	5.68	5.71	5.68
Usefulness of user group meetings	5.71	5.6	5.69
Usefulness of advice and guidance material	5.78	5.75	5.77
Awareness of the LEA's SIMS implementation plans for installation of the latest SIMS software	5.73	5.73	5.73
Information on when your school will receive the latest SIMS software	5.71	5.63	5.68
<b>Overall quality of communications with the support team</b>	5.77	5.8	5.78
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	<b>Prim</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Schools having used the service</b>	102	40	142
Value for money of your SIMS support service	5.68	5.68	5.68
<b>Overall quality of your SIMS support service</b>	5.81	5.83	5.82

## Accreditation Client Comments

Sector	Position	Comment
Primary	IT/System Manager	I am very happy with the support provided by our SIMS Support team. Calls have always been answered very swiftly and effectively. Any requests for help either by phone or by site visit have been dealt with quickly and any problems resolved with a minimum of fuss.
Primary	Admin Officer	We, at Annie Lennard, have always found this team to be extremely helpful.
Primary	Admin Officer	The support and training that are offered by our team is second to none, nothing is too much trouble and I think they offer outstanding service.
Primary	Bursar	I would like to say how friendly the staff are and that they will always get back to me promptly if unable to answer my query immediately. The training we receive over all areas is excellent. They really do a good job.
Secondary	Bursar	I am a new business manager in the school and have been extremely pleased with our interaction with SMIS at Sandwell.
Primary	Admin Officer	Extremely please with service received and would not like to be without this support.
Primary	Admin Officer	Very pleased with the service we receive from EMU.
Primary	Admin Officer	Staff always friendly and helpful.
Primary	IT/System Manager	SIMS team has always given good professional, timely services to our centre.
Primary	Admin Officer	I have always found all members of the SIMS team to be really helpful. I know I can rely on them to help me rectify any problems which I may have. I find the service to be good.
Primary	Bursar	Secure in the knowledge that expert help and guidance is available almost instantly or informed when it will be. I cannot see how the support we get from them get be improved. It is excellent. We are always striving for best value so I hope they can continue to work on this so our continuity can continue in future years.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	SMIS are outstanding in the SIMS support they provide for us and as such, we are able to make extensive use of the software at our own pace without having to worry about support implications as we know we are in safe hands.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	The support we have received, in all areas, has been excellent and we are very happy with it and the value for money it represents.
Primary	Bursar	We are a Walsall school but buy our SIMS support from the SMIS team at Sandwell due to the far superior support and knowledge base available.

Sector	Position	Comment
Secondary	Bursar	SMIS has, and continues to provide the school will an efficient and effective service. Working relations between the school and the SIMS the team are excellent. Of particular note is the help and guidance we receive from Paul Butler and Christine Hinson.
Primary	Head	The SIMS staff and service are excellent "We believe the licences are expensive but I do believe those are CAPITA prices."
Primary	Bursar	We have always been more than satisfied with the service our SIMS team provide. They are a very friendly, professional bunch of people and do not make you feel inadequate with your own IT knowledge.
Primary	Admin Officer	Staff are always friendly and talk you through any problems, if it cannot be rectified over the telephone they will visit the school asap.
Primary	Bursar	I am always confident that the level of service and advice that I can expect to receive will be at the highest level.
Primary	Admin Officer	I am always confident that my support team will be able to resolve any problems I may have. Information regarding updates or new software is always passed on to schools and the training given for such software is thorough and delivered professionally.
Primary	Bursar	I have always found staff to be very knowledgeable and supportive.
Primary	Bursar	We are happy with the support we receive from SIMS and would like to thank you for your support.
Secondary	Deputy Head	The SMIS team are all brilliant. They are knowledgeable, supportive and the most friendly bunch of support staff I have ever encountered. All courses are well run and have great after care. I cannot speak highly enough of the whole team.
Primary	Head	We are very pleased with the service.
Primary	Admin Officer	Very professional team - someone is always available to help.
Primary	Admin Officer	We find the service invaluable.
Primary	Bursar	I have always found our support team to be very professional, knowledgeable and easy to talk to. Help is always available to resolve any problems that may arise.
Primary	Admin Officer	The team are always very helpful and if they do not know the answer they will find out. The response time to queries is very good.
Primary	Bursar	All members of the support teams are extremely knowledgeable and can talk you through a problem without having to check manuals, e.g. when building a very complex report, they can explain each section as you go while you are completing it, without them actually seeing a screen at the same time.
Primary	Admin Officer	The service is very well teamed.
Primary	Admin Officer	The SIMS support team offer invaluable support and guidance on all the software we use and it is greatly appreciated.
Secondary	Head	SMIS were recommended to us by Capita and by other schools in the King Edward Foundation. I have been extremely happy with their work - they have played a key role in our successful

Sector	Position	Comment
		transition from CMIS back to SIMS.
Secondary	Other	SMIS are the best software support company I have had the pleasure to deal with. Far superior to the support given by Capita directly.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	Service is normally excellent. Location not ideal but facilities and equipment when inside is good. Team is friendly and knowledgeable. Would perhaps like the option of more onsite/tailored training but the general time table of training has been good.
Primary	Head	Whenever I have dealt with the support team at SIMS I have been more than happy with the service provided. Courses are relevant and timely for statutory returns etc, staff are always friendly and helpful (I always feel I can ask about things I am uncertain about and nothing seems like too much trouble) and information on the website is relevant and useful. When we have any queries or issues about our system, advice and support is always available and is usually quick to resolve these.
Secondary	Bursar	Excellent service.
Primary	Bursar	We have found our SMIS team to be extremely helpful, always willing to help us above and beyond our expectations. All queries have been dealt with efficiently and we would recommend our SMIS team to any other school across the country without a doubt.
Primary	Senior Manager	I have no complaints whatsoever regarding the support received from SMIS.
Primary	Admin Officer	I am happy with all aspects of SIMS support. I have always found them to be helpful and supportive with any problems that we have and they always endeavour to help solve issues promptly and efficiently. We always have a successful outcome. Their friendly approach helps too.
Primary	Bursar	The Support Team provide high quality guidance and training in all areas. There is regularly a wide range of training available. In my experience all members of the team have sought to find solutions to any issues and provide links to other users to share experiences.
Primary	Bursar	It would be more beneficial to have earlier morning opening times for the help desk, e.g. 8am to deal with any problems before school starts, problems always seem to occur overnight.

Sector	Position	Comment
Primary	Head	The support team are friendly and supportive. They are well trained and have an excellent knowledge of the SIMS software and can be relied upon to solve queries even those that are bespoke to my setting. I whole heartedly trust the support and advice given by this service provider.
Primary	Bursar	We are a Walsall school but we buy our expert support from Sandwell. This we find is value for money.
Primary	Head	The support team is very professional, friendly and effective. They offer excellent advise and guidance.
Primary	Admin Officer	I cannot praise the team enough. I always feel that there is someone available to help whenever we need support.
Primary	Other	All staff are friendly, efficient and very knowledgeable.
Primary	Senior Manager	In my 11 years at the school I have only ever experienced excellent, prompt, efficient, consistent service from the SIMS team.
Primary	Bursar	We are a large Primary school with a children's centre attached. SMIS have provided us with additional support to enable them to be integrated with the schools system. Training sessions that use remote access are efficient and effective. I believe we receive excellent value for money in all aspects of their service.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	The SMIS support team in Sandwell provide a fantastic support and guidance serviec within Sandwell.
Secondary	Admin Officer	Overall we receive an excellent service.
Primary	Bursar	We currently buy support for SIMS from two LA's, our home LA and also a neighbouring LA for which we have completed this questionnaire. This is because of a lack in confidence in our home LA in supporting SIMS FMS specifically.
Primary	Bursar	Always available and knowledge very good. I have not had a problem they could not sort out.
Secondary	Senior Manager	Support with T6 and timetabling issues has been exemplary. As a new timetabler I could not have completed the task without the technical support and guidance received.
Primary	Admin Officer	Very reliable - if one person cannot answer query, then will find out and come straight back to you. Very supportive to schools.
Secondary	Bursar	2010-11 was the first time I have used SMIS for the initial setup and support, training and help on this software. It was quite a change for the school, I do not think that it would have gone so smoothly and professionally if it had not been for the help, support that we received from SMIS, they made the transition for us straightforward.
Secondary	Senior Manager	The support team are excellent and have always worked hard to solve any problems we encounter. I have never had any complaints about them.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	We are extremely pleased with the service we receive from SMIS.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	SMIS are very efficient and helpful in terms of providing support to all of our users, not just technical staff. They are happy to speak to any user anytime to provide further training or support.
Primary	Admin Officer	It is always comforting to know that someone is on the end of the telephone and able to solve any problems.

Sector	Position	Comment
Primary	Admin Officer	No problem is too big or small and the staff are always extremely friendly, polite and helpful and you never feel you are being a nuisance no matter how many times you ring or ask the same question. The staff are very efficient and will always ring you back if they are not available straight away. I am more than happy with their service and they more than deserve the Accreditation award.
Primary	Admin Officer	The team is very helpful, accommodating and very patient with what sometimes must be quite onerous questioning from schools. They are excellent value for money.
Primary	Head	The SMIS team have always been very efficient in all aspects of the service provided for us.
Primary	Head	Any dealings that we have had with SIMS be it for support, training or for technical support, it has always been of the highest quality.
Secondary	Deputy Head	Sandwell SMIS team are, without exception, knowledgeable, helpful and prompt to answer any query we might have. Their friendly, reassuring and supportive manner when dealing with any SIMS related issues is of great help to the staff of our school.
Primary	Admin Officer	Always very friendly, approachable and helpful.
Primary	Other	If we ever have any problems on the school systems, we know that we can phone somebody at SMIS and they will go through it with us step by step until it is resolved and we understand what had happened. On- site visits have also been arranged by the SMIS team to show individuals how to use certain things on our system, which was found very useful.
Primary	Admin Officer	I cannot fault the support we get from the support team in any aspect. They are efficient, polite and quick in solving problems.
Primary	Head	We are very impressed with the service provided and how quickly you respond to any problems.
Primary	Admin Officer	An excellent service is always provided. The staff are always patient, most helpful and informative.
Primary	Admin Officer	They are an excellent team who provide a superb quality service. We could not speak highly enough of them.
Primary	Head	As a head teacher who was new to the authority with new school administrators - the support in all aspects for our school have been excellent thank you.
Secondary	Bursar	St Michael's has always found the support given by the SIMS team excellent. They are always courteous, helpful and approachable. It is always reassuring to know we have their support.
Primary	Bursar	The support team are always helpful and knowledgeable.
Secondary	Senior Manager	A friendly team, easily accessible, always helpful, nothing too much trouble. Reliable service.
Secondary	Admin Officer	The level of support and training we receive from Sandwell is excellent. We would wish to thank them for their attention at all times.
Primary	Admin Officer	I find them invaluable for my working, I would be lost without their support.

Sector	Position	Comment
Secondary	IT/System Manager	SMIS are the best SIMS support team I have ever worked with, their team know the system inside out, they are always friendly, approachable and knowledgeable. I have been so impressed that I have recommended them to other schools who have switched to SMIS. They are excellent.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	Very informed staff. Work well with our off site ICT support team.
Secondary	Other	The staff are all pleasant, friendly and knowledgeable, from the receptionist to the hardware technician. No query is too much trouble and more importantly they get back to you when they say they will. The training set up is very informal but the equipment is first rate. A termly meeting of data managers/exam officers etc to discuss development etc may be beneficial.
Primary	Bursar	This school has always had a very professional service from SMIS in every way possible.
Secondary	Admin Officer	The service, guidance and training given is excellent all round which ensures our total confidence in the SIMS and the assurance that we are very well supported by a truly knowledgeable, experienced and professional team. Thank you.
Primary	Bursar	The support offered by the SMIS team is excellent. I have been in post for 20 years and during that time have seen the team grow from strength to strength. No problem is too minor, no question too trivial. On a personal note, all the staff are a pleasure to know and have a great deal of patience. They are always welcome in our school.
Primary	Bursar	I have been an employee within Sandwell for a number of years. Over the years I have been totally satisfied and impressed with the support our SIMS team have given the school. During our budget setting process each year, we have to consider best value. The decision to continue with SIMS support has always been unanimous.
Primary	Head	The overall service is excellent.
Primary	Other	We are lucky to have such an experienced, knowledgeable and dedicated SIMS team in Sandwell to support us. They are always friendly and helpful, the training is excellent and nothing is ever too much trouble when we ask for help. We can always rely on them to solve our problems and to offer sound advice. Well done and thank you to them all.
Primary	Bursar	I feel very fortunate to have a support team in place that has the knowledge and patience to guide our school staff through procedures or procedural changes. They offer superb support at key times such as pupil and workforce census and I value their support hugely. Everyone I speak to, from the first point of contact to the inevitable solution, has excellent customer service skills and has a genuine rapport with the staff at our school. From a Bursars point of view, this is a service I will continue to purchase as the support and knowledge of the SIMS team is a real value to our school and its staff.
Secondary	Bursar	Getting our SIMS support from Sandwell has been one of the best decisions we have ever made.
Secondary	IT/System Manager	I believe that our SIMS support team are always on the ball and

Sector	Position	Comment
		always have the knowledge or are able to get the information needed to complete our queries quickly and efficiently.
Primary	Bursar	Whenever I have contacted the SIMS team I have always been greeted by a polite and friendly voice. If this person cannot help me he always directs my call to the person who specialises in the module I need support with. Overall, I have always been offered a fast and efficient service from a friendly team.
Secondary	Other	The continuous support and guidance we receive from SMIS is second to none. All members of the team are polite and very helpful and nothing is too much trouble. CPD is excellent and there are lots of opportunities to go over to SMIS as well as school visits by them. I have not felt the need for an annual progress meeting as we are always in touch with the support team and kept up to date as and when required. The help we have received to launch our SLG to parents was excellent. The best test for the quality is that we have recommended SMIS to many local schools considering moving to SIMs. I am very grateful for the services of SMIS, long may it continue.