

**SIMS**helping
schools
inspire

Tracking pupil progress

A clear insight for senior leaders

Saving time and money

A clearer picture of group performance

Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust

Background

Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust, was formed in May 2014 and now incorporates ten primary schools with more likely to be joining soon.

One of the Trust's key priorities when it comes to managing data is keeping things as simple as possible for schools, while giving them the tools to effectively track pupil progress. Giving Aquila Trustees a high level overview of how schools within the Trust are performing is also a top priority.

Annie Wiles, the Trust's Chief Operations Officer, sought the help of the SIMS School Improvement Team to create a bespoke tracking system to help their schools adapt to assessment without levels. They then created a customisable dashboard for the Trust's senior leadership team to see a clear overview of data from all the schools in the Trust.

Adapting to assessment without levels

"Because SIMS is in all the primary schools anyway, it made sense to continue using SIMS and to use the tracking that's already in there," says Annie. "Having decided

that, we then got to assessment without levels. We worked very closely with our school improvement consultant and a representative group of headteachers to create a bespoke tracking system for assessment that was going to work for our schools.

"We receive a lot of feedback from our heads who tell us that to make their lives easier they need more time and money," continues Annie. "While I can't necessarily give them more of either, what I can do is make sure that we continue to get value for money on the services and products that we purchase from SIMS."

For the Trust's headteachers and senior leaders, Annie feels that their level of involvement in helping to create the reports has proved particularly useful and also in helping them to understand the full flexibility of SIMS. She continues: "The heads and senior leaders felt that they were actually creating something and had buy-in to making it work rather than having something created and imposed. It was really helpful from our point of view that it was such a bespoke system – it worked really well for us.

Academy group SIMS case study

Aim:

To allow the schools to effectively track pupil progress while giving the senior leadership team a clear overview of all the schools in the Trust.

Solution:

SIMS School Improvement Programme, SIMS Customised Reporting Service

Impact:

The SIMS Customised Reporting Service has proved to be an efficient way of sharing data quickly, saving a significant amount of time.

"Using the SIMS Customised Reporting Service has proved to be an efficient way of sharing data quickly, and it saves me an immense amount of time too."

Annie Wiles, Chief Operations Officer, Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust

“All the way through creating the system, our school improvement consultant was fantastic in adding in the different functionality that we wanted to include, such as helping us to analyse data in a certain way or making particular information available at the touch of a button.”

A personalised data dashboard

Once the bespoke assessment system was in place, the Trust implemented the SIMS Customised Reporting Service, where an expert consultant worked with the Trust to identify the areas they wished to focus on. They were then given access to a personalised data dashboard, providing senior leaders with instant access to a number of key indicators and giving them a clear picture of pupil progress.

“The SIMS School Improvement Team helped us to create the data dashboard, which gives me an overview of attendance data and all sorts of other information that’s come through from our schools,” explains Annie.

“This gives me a really quick overview of key data. It means that when I’m asked for an overview of what’s going on in our schools by the Board, I don’t have to go into each school’s data and spend time trawling through to find the information I need – it’s all in one bespoke data dashboard. More importantly, it means the Board can focus on asking the questions about why something is happening, because they have all the key information to hand.



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Making the most of SIMS

Annie admits that while many of the Trust’s schools are using SIMS well, some are not using it as effectively as they would like. As a result, Annie has been running a sharing exercise to help schools support each other to use SIMS effectively. Annie continues: “As we start to have more capacity within our schools, we’ve been able to look at ways for them to support each other in using SIMS, which is more cost-effective than paying for training.”

Annie also finds the regular update sessions from their account manager particularly useful to help improve their SIMS knowledge. “That strategic overview of what’s in SIMS and the future developments can help our schools really make sure they are using the full capacity of the SIMS system,” Annie explains.

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Annie Wiles, Chief Operations Officer, Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust

To find out more about the SIMS School Improvement Programme and the SIMS Customised Reporting Service, call **0800 170 1724** or email info@capita-sims.co.uk

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