



SIMS

helping
schools
inspire

Drive parental engagement

Simple to use and role out

Improving safeguarding arrangements



Driving parental engagement through the SIMS Parent app

Goffs Academy

Competition for places is fierce for this popular comprehensive in Hertfordshire, with the school receiving triple the number of applications to places. Fostering and maintaining close parental links are part of the school's DNA and great emphasis is placed on keeping parents informed of how their child is doing at school.

The school has a long tradition of actively using technology to engage parents and it was the first school in Hertfordshire to use SIMS Learning Gateway in 2006. Fast forward to 2017, and the school wanted to update the way they were communicating with digitally savvy parents. The SIMS Parent app fitted the bill.

Pocketing the difference – parents can access all the information they need from their smartphone

The app offers parents access to key information about their child such as timetable or homework details or achievement, attendance and behaviour information which can be viewed on a smartphone or tablet, explains Steve Floyd,

Network & System Manager at Goffs Academy. "Busy parents increasingly want access to live information about their child at a time and place that is convenient to them, which is usually on their phone or tablet.

"We want to continue to strengthen our dialogue with parents and the SIMS Parent app enables us to do this."

Secure single sign-on

The school has only been using it for a couple of months and already 70% of parents are engaging with the app. The ability to share live information with parents, is what the school really values, as it creates for more meaningful conversations at school and home.

"In the old days," recalls Steve Floyd, "an achievement postcard was sent out which tended to lose its impact for the student by the time parents received it. Teachers can now log instant behaviour records on a live basis, which parents can pick up on straight away. This leads to better motivation or

Secondary school SIMS case study

Aim:

To enable parents to access key information about their child's day and progress anytime and anywhere from their mobile or internet enabled device.

Solution:

The SIMS Parent app

Impact:

The SIMS Parent app has given parents the convenience to access accurate and live information on their child, creating better engagement between teachers and parents and pupils and their parents.

"The SIMS Parent app, offers our parents easy and convenient access to attainment, attendance and achievement records via their smartphones. We anticipate achieving even greater levels of parental engagement."

Steve Floyd, Network and System Manager, Goffs Academy

prompt intervention when needed. The SIMS Parent app makes it so simple to see, with the green and red differentiation between good and bad behaviours.”

The simple layout is proving to be a real hit with parents and the school has received only positive feedback.

Getting parents on board

“The parents most eager to engage are those with children at either end of the school. Year 7 parents are anxious to know how their child is making the transition from primary to secondary school and Year 13 parents are more focussed on attainment but all parents are getting value from it.

“We find that parent evenings are a great mechanism to promote the different ways parents can access their children’s records. Most parents are comfortable with app technology but we always have one or two who can be put off initially. The school makes it a priority to help these parents, as the SIMS Parent app is the future for parental engagement for our school.”

The school sees the single secure log in to the app as a major benefit, as parents can use their Twitter, Facebook, Microsoft or Google logins to access their account.

“The SIMS Parent app’s single sign-on is a win-win for both parents and the school!” says Steve, “It frees up staff time, as we don’t have to manage parental logins when they forget a password.”



Keeping pupils safe

The SIMS Parent app is a useful tool for safeguarding too, as parents can easily view their child’s attendance at registration times and lessons. It helps reassure parents, who might be at work before their child leaves the house, to know their son or daughter arrived safely, as they can see it for themselves from their smartphone.

Parents can also easily update medical and contact information via the app, meaning school records are kept up to date and for those parents with two or more children at the school, it provides a single point of access.

“We see the SIMS Parent app as a natural progression in the way we communicate with our parents,” says Steve.

“It’s so useful to be able to see how my daughter is progressing, without having to contact the teachers directly. I worry she might not be keeping on top of her homework and now I use the SIMS Parent app, it alerts me if a piece has not been handed in, meaning I have a much more informed conversation with my daughter at home!”

Year 7 Parent, Goffs Academy

To find out more about SIMS, contact the SIMS team on **0800 170 1713** or email info@capita-sims.co.uk

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