

Schools Data Team

Additional Notes – Carrying out a School Census Dry Run

For: All Schools

Carrying out a School Census Dry Run

Why Carry out a Dry Run?

Ensure you have the latest SIMS Fileset, you can carry out one or more dry runs of the return.

The purpose of a dry run is to produce the **Validation Errors Summary**, which provides details about any corrections that need to be made to your data to make it acceptable for inclusion in the return. To ensure that you are aware of potential issues, it is advisable to do this as early as possible, even if you know that your data has not yet been fully prepared or checked. Whilst a significant number of errors may be generated, many of the errors that relate to pupils / students, e.g. language, can be fixed quickly using the **Bulk Update** routine.

The Dry Run Process

Select **Routines | Statutory Returns | School Census** to display the **Census Return for Summer Term** browser.

Select an existing School **Census Folder** or enter a new location in which the School Census files will be stored. You may wish to make this a temporary folder for the purpose of producing a dry run.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Due to the sensitive nature of some of the data stored in SIMS, careful consideration should be given when specifying the location of any folder into which you save sensitive data, e.g. census returns, imported and exported CTFs, etc. You should be mindful of your school's responsibilities with respect to information security.

Consider which users have access to the chosen folder, especially if the folder is shared on a server. Please refer to the government website for more information about securing your information -

(<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/technology/securing-your-information>).

Click the **New** button to display the **Census Return Details** page. By default, the return **Description** is displayed as **School Census Summer**. Edit the **Description** to any name that will clearly distinguish this dry run from the actual return, which will be generated later, e.g. Summer25Test.

Click the **Calculate All Details** button to extract the required information from the SIMS database and display the results in the various panels of the **Census Return Details** page. If there is any missing or invalid data, an error message is displayed on the Status Bar. This data must be added/corrected before you can create and validate the return.

Click the **Create & Validate** button to start the validation process, which may take some time depending on the amount of data. Any missing or invalid data is listed in the **Validation Errors Summary** panel, located at the bottom of the page.

Additional Resources:

Detailed information about completing the individual panels on the **Census Return Details** page is available in the **School Census Summer Guidance Notes** applicable to your school phase, available on the Staffordshire Learning Net.

Resolving Validation Errors and Checking Queries

After creating the return file and validating the data, any errors and queries found are listed in the **Validation Errors Summary** panel.

Type	Sequence	Message	Location	Solution
F	1500	UPN missing.	Name: Abraham, Janel Date of Birth: 2005-05-19, Female UPN:	# Go to Focus Student Student Details and add or issue a UPN.
F	1500	UPN missing.	Name: Reid, Rosiel Date of Birth: 2009-03-07, Female UPN:	# Go to Focus Student Student Details and add or issue a UPN.
F	1840	Pupils aged 5 and over Language missing or invalid.	Name: Henderson, Jacki Date of Birth: 2010-05-07, Male UPN: K823299140	# Go to Focus Student Student Details Ethnic/Cultural panel and enter First Language
F	2350	Insufficient Address information provided.	Name: Bains, Kirki Date of Birth: 2005-01-18, Male UPN: H820200109012	# Go to Focus Student Student Details Addresses and edit pupil's address
Q	1601Q	Please Check: Pupil's age is out of range for school type.	Name: Sungail, Skaistel Date of Birth: 2008-03-28, Female, Age: 12 UPN: B8	# Go to Focus Student Student Details and enter pupil's date of birth.
Q	1620Q	Please check: duplicate pupil records with the same Surname, Forename, Gender and Date of birth.	Name: Bennison, Hugo Date of Birth: 2013-02-03, Male UPN:	# Go to Focus Student Student details and check for duplicate pupil record.
Q	1620Q	Please check: duplicate pupil records with the same Surname, Forename, Gender and Date of birth.	Name: Bennison, Hugo Date of Birth: 2010-02-03, Male UPN: V823299140	# Go to Focus Student Student details and check for duplicate pupil record.
Q	1956Q	Please check: Pupil named with an address details.	Name: Baines, Fazel Date of Birth: 2013-06-14, Email UPN: P293960140	# Go to Focus Student Student Details Addresses and edit pupil's address

The **Validation Errors Summary** panel header displays the number of errors and queries found when **the Create and Validate** routine was run.

The following information is displayed:

- **Type** - the type of validation rule.
 - Failure (F displayed in red) indicates an error that must be resolved
 - Query (Q displayed in black) indicates that there are unusual data conditions. These should be considered and corrected, if necessary.
- **Sequence** - the validation error or query number.
- **Message** - the validation error or query message text.
- **Location** - the specific record in SIMS that contains the error or query.
- **Solution** - the SIMS menu route and/or instruction.

TIP: Using the Solution hyperlinks

When the pointer is hovered over an error or query row, it changes to a hand if a hyperlink is available to the area of SIMS where the problem can be checked.

A hyperlink is also indicated by a hash symbol (#) preceding the **Solution** text.

Click the required hyperlink to display the specific area in SIMS where the record(s) can be checked/corrected.

To assist in the viewing of any errors and queries:

- When the mouse pointer is hovered over a **Message**, **Location** or **Solution** cell, hover help displays the entire content of that cell.

- The Student Search functionality can be used to display all errors and queries relating to a particular student.
 - Enter all or part of a UPN, student's surname or date of birth in the **Student Search** field.
 - Select the required record from the **Student Search** drop-down list to populate the **Student Search** field.
 - Click the **Find** button to display the applicable validation records.
- Use the **Errors Search** to display the required error or query you want to view. Select **ALL, ERRORS, QUERIES** or the required number from the drop-down list. The total number of rows that relate to the selected validation is displayed adjacent to the **Error Search** field.
- By default, when **ALL** is selected from the **Errors Search** drop-down list, the errors are displayed at the top of the list.
- The order of the items in the list can be changed by clicking the appropriate column heading.
- The width of the columns can be changed by dragging the dividing line between the column headings until the required size is achieved.
- View a summary of validation failures by clicking the **Report** button (located above the **Validation Errors Summary** panel, on the left-hand side). The report is displayed in your web browser, from where it can be printed or transferred to another application, if required.

The report is saved automatically in the **Census Folder** (specified previously via the census browser). The original report, which was generated when the **Create & Validate** button was clicked is also stored in this folder.

- Your generated report file name:
Validation Errors Summary.HTML
- Original report file name:
<LACode><SchoolNumber>_<SurveyType>_<LACode><LL><Year>_<SerialNumber>_ValidationErrorsSummary.HTML

For guidance on navigating to files on your local workstation when you are working in a Hosted environment, please contact your System Manager or Local Support Unit.

Resolve as many errors and check as many queries as possible then revalidate the return details. Continue to resolve failures and revalidate the return as many times as necessary.

NOTE: All errors must be resolved, and all queries must be investigated.

If at any point you want to hide the list of error and queries, click the **Close** button located at the top right-hand side of the **Validation Errors Summary** panel. The list is displayed again when the Create and Validate process is run.

Many of the errors generated can be fixed quickly using bulk update functionality (via **Routines | Student | Bulk Update**). For more information, please refer to the **Managing Pupil/Students handbook**.

Producing Detail Reports

Detail reports can be used to check the data stored in SIMS that has been used to create the return. The following reports are currently available, depending on your school phase:

On Roll Basic Details Report

Leavers Basic Details Report

Exclusions Report

Attendance Report

Absentees Report

SEN Report

Address Details Report

Free School Meal Eligibility Report

Learner Support Report

Top-up Funding Report

Post Looked After Arrangements Report

General Report

Class Report (not applicable to Pupil Referral Units)

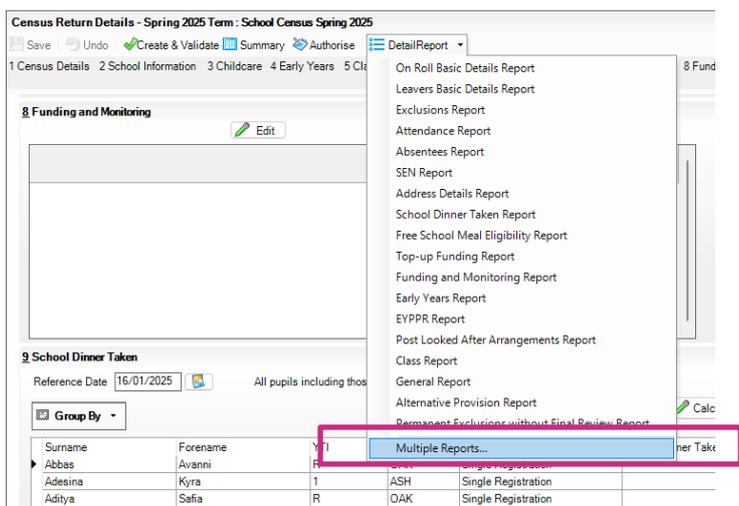
Teenage Mothers Report (applicable to Pupil Referral Units only).

Selecting a Single Detail Report

Select the required report from the **Detail Report** drop-down list, located at the top of the **Census Return Details** page. The selected report is generated automatically and displayed in your web browser.

Selecting Multiple Detail Reports

Select **Multiple Reports** from the bottom of the **Detail Report** drop-down list to display the **Detail Reports** dialog. By default, all detail reports are selected.



If any reports are not required, deselect the associated check box.

Click the **Report** button to generate the selected reports, which are displayed in your web browser.

The reports are saved automatically in the folder specified in the **Census Return for Summer Term** browser.

TIP: If required, the report can be transferred to a spreadsheet application, which enables the data to be sorted and the column order to be changed, etc. Right-click the report then select the required option, e.g. **Export to Microsoft Excel**, from the drop-down list.