

South West Grid for Learning Trust
Merlin Learning Platform

Parental Engagement Toolkit

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Engaging Parents Online

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Are you ready for engaging your parents online?

The Parental Engagement release of SWGfL Merlin brings a host of information from the school Management Information System (MIS) to display key data and statistics supporting the emerging need for schools to both inform and engage parents.

Are you actively using Merlin with staff and pupils?

SWGfL Merlin can manage learning resources, homework, blogs, student areas, diaries, discussions, lesson plans extending the walls of the classroom.

Have you used Merlin to engage with your parents?

There are many ways to help parents keep in touch with their child's learning from Class pages to e-portfolios

[Top Tips for engaging with parents](#)

Are pupils using Merlin to share their work with parents?

Creating an e-portfolio is a great way of sharing work with teachers, parents and peers.

[GM3 Creating and sharing a portfolio of work](#)

Have your senior leadership team committed to the implementation of Merlin?

Merlin cannot be embedded fully in day-to-day practice until the majority of users are using it across several areas.

[Learning Platforms-Steps to Adoption](#)

Have members of your leadership team attended a Parental Engagement workshop?

The use of ICT can enhance already well-established partnership with parents and schools should consider the options for sharing information with parents and reflect on what can be...

...public and available to any audience

...non-sensitive but only relevant to school community

...sensitive and should only be seen by named individuals

[Online Reporting Guidance](#)

Has your school installed and enabled the use of a SIF agent?

In order to make use of the new online reporting modules within Merlin, schools will need to be using SIF

[SIF request](#)

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Preparing for Online Reporting

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If you have already started to engage your parents online, there are some steps you can take now to prepare for online reporting.

Create Our Places for classes

Parents can log on with their child and find out about what their children are learning, homework that has been set, links to useful sites and resources, photographs of events that have taken place in school etc.

[Create a class Our Place](#)

Help parents to help

Parental engagement is a decisive factor in determining learner achievement so why not point the way for parents to help with school work, homework and extend learning beyond the classroom?

[Parents as partners](#)

Sharing work beyond the classroom

Most parents are keen to see the view examples of their children's learning but it is not always possible for them to get into the classroom; creating an e-portfolio can be a way to share work with teachers, parents and other Merlin users.

[Adding to an e-portfolio](#)

Showcase learning at home and school

Most pupils have achievements they want to celebrate both within school and beyond. A showcase can be a powerful tool to help evidence those achievements, sharing photos, certificates, pupils work, as well as comments which reflect on how you felt at the time.

[Create and use a showcase](#)

Sharing Goals and Targets

Sharing their Goals and Targets can help pupils focus on what they want to achieve, work towards a specific skill or desired outcome and help teachers and parents to understand what students are interested in and where they are heading.

[Add and edit Goals](#)

[Add and edit Targets](#)

[Manage Targets](#)

Get your MIS data in order

Merlin displays the MIS data in parent friendly screens, it doesn't sense check or edit the data in any way. Ensuring that the MIS data is up to date and accurate is an important preparation task.

[Merlin and SIMS summary](#)

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Getting Started with Online Reporting

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So, you have been engaging your parents online and have taken steps to help parents engage with their children's learning, now you want to start online reporting.

[Merlin Engaging parents online](#)

[Merlin Preparing for online reporting](#)

Get SIF installed on your MIS

To make use of the new features within online reporting modules, schools need to be using SIF to handle the transfer of information between the school's MIS and Merlin. This will also enable the automatic provisioning of teacher, pupil, parent/guardian accounts into SWGfL Merlin, with automatic creation of the relationships between parents/guardians and their students, as defined in school MIS systems.

[SIF Request](#)

Get your data in order

Schools will need to ensure that their MIS data is in a format that can be read and understood by a range of users including pupils, parents and teacher; what and when is data recorded?

What information do you want to share with parents?

Merlin can provide both summative and formative reporting tools in addition to attendance, behaviour and timetable information, with the option to turn off certain elements. Have you consulted with parents to find out what information they want and in what format?

[Parental Engagement Questionnaire](#)

Rationale for school improvement

Schools may have a particular aspect of learning or behaviour management they want to address through working with parents and will need consider which of the online tools will be most effective at supporting these aims.

[Parental Engagement Development Template 2011](#)

Distributing parent accounts

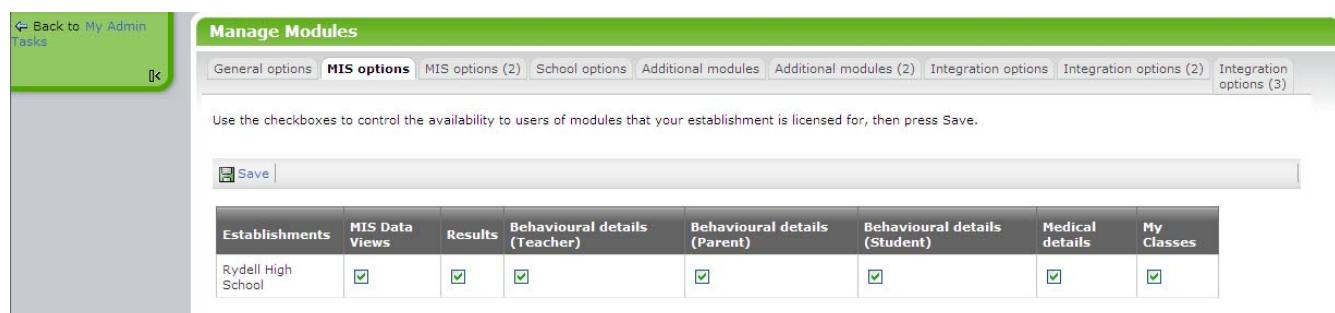
How will this information be shared and account details safely distributed? Parents may also need support to help them understand how to use and make sense of the tools? What to do if they have any queries? You may wish to send the logins and passwords separately by post, invite parents to collect them from school, or perhaps to give them out at parents' evening, where parents can immediately access the site and be given a demonstration. Schools can currently reset parent passwords and from the Autumn term a self service password reset will be incorporated into Merlin. You should have a clear process for re-setting and reissuing passwords to parents.

Merlin and SIMS summary

My Admin Tasks

The Parental Engagement Toolkit can be configured to suit your school. There are a series of new admin tasks to help you to do this easily.

Manage Modules - MIS Options



The screenshot shows the 'Manage Modules' interface with a green header. A breadcrumb trail includes 'General options', 'MIS options', 'MIS options (2)', 'School options', 'Additional modules', 'Additional modules (2)', 'Integration options', 'Integration options (2)', and 'Integration options (3)'. Below the breadcrumb is a 'Save' button and a table with columns for 'Establishments', 'MIS Data Views', 'Results', 'Behavioural details (Teacher)', 'Behavioural details (Parent)', 'Behavioural details (Student)', 'Medical details', and 'My Classes'. The row for 'Rydell High School' has all checkboxes checked.

Establishments	MIS Data Views	Results	Behavioural details (Teacher)	Behavioural details (Parent)	Behavioural details (Student)	Medical details	My Classes
Rydell High School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

MIS data views

This should be set to on, this enables teachers, students and parents accounts to view the data.

Results

This allows students results to be viewed and should be configured to suit your school. Results includes all statutory end of key stage assessment results as contained within your school MIS.

Behaviour

Merlin shows both Achievement and Behaviour under the heading of Behaviour. It allows you to configure which components of the Behaviour/Achievement logs are visible to parents, teachers and students in the admin task 'Manage behaviour information'

Behavioural details (Teacher)

Set this to on if you wish Teachers to be able to view student behaviour details.

Behavioural details (Parent)

Set this to on if you wish Parents to be able to view student behaviour details.

Behavioural details (Student)

Set this to on if you wish Students to be able to view student behaviour details.

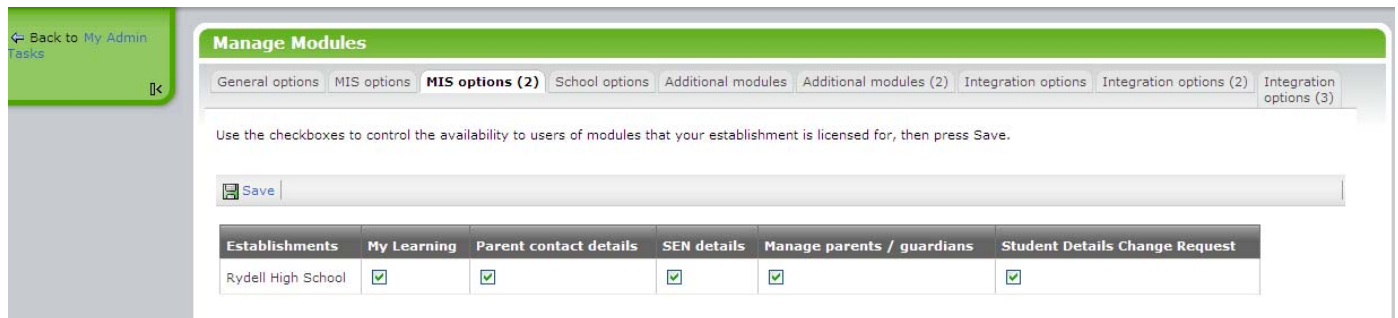
Medical Details

Set this to on if you wish to share medical information with teachers, students and parents.

My Classes

This should be set to on to enable teachers to access the Students and Groups buttons, this will give access to the student dashboards, eportfolios and ILP information.

Manage Modules – MIS Options 2



The screenshot shows the 'Manage Modules' interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Manage Modules' and several tabs: 'General options', 'MIS options', 'MIS options (2)', 'School options', 'Additional modules', 'Additional modules (2)', 'Integration options', 'Integration options (2)', and 'Integration options (3)'. Below the tabs, there is a text box that says 'Use the checkboxes to control the availability to users of modules that your establishment is licensed for, then press Save.' and a 'Save' button. Below this is a table with the following columns: 'Establishments', 'My Learning', 'Parent contact details', 'SEN details', 'Manage parents / guardians', and 'Student Details Change Request'. The table has one row for 'Rydell High School' with checkboxes in the 'My Learning', 'Parent contact details', 'SEN details', 'Manage parents / guardians', and 'Student Details Change Request' columns.

Establishments	My Learning	Parent contact details	SEN details	Manage parents / guardians	Student Details Change Request
Rydell High School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

My Learning

Once set to on this will enable students to access the parental engagement data including goals targets and progress.

Parent Contact Details

Set this to on to display parent contact details, parents will see their own contact information, teachers will see both parents contact details and students will not be able to view any parent contact information.

SEN Details

A summary of SEN information will be visible to all users once this is set to on. The SEN data that will be available to share will be: SEN Status, SEN Need, SEN Reviews and SEN Events. Schools may want to consider if all this data is currently entered into the MIS and maintained and if they will want to share it with parents.

Manage Parent/Guardians

This should be set to on and will enable the Merlin administrator to suspend and restore access to parental accounts.

Student Details Change Request

Once set to on a change Request button will be activated for parents on the student dashboard – these can be accessed via My Admin Tasks - Manage Student Details Change Requests.

Additional Modules

Establishments	Assessment - Advanced e-Portfolio	Assessment - Individual Learning Plan	Assessment - Learning Profile	Assessment - Analysis and Reporting	RM EasyMail Plus
Rydell High School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Assessment – Advanced e-Portfolio

This is defaulted to on. A showcase template is made available for students to create within their e-portfolio pages. It allows them to publish their best work, reflect on their own performance in completing the assignment or task, and receive feedback from teachers, parents and peers. Showcases can be linked into specific attainment targets to provide evidence of achievements.

Assessment – Individual Learning Plans

Switch this to on to start to use the ILP, an additional tab in my admin tasks will appear. The ILP includes:

Goals

This area can be used by students to share their long-term goals with teachers and parents. This might include what they want to achieve in the next year, or what they would like to do when they leave school. Teachers can also add to this list on behalf of the student.

Targets

Targets can be set by teachers or students, and are used to describe what a student needs to do next to progress in their learning. Targets can be general or related to a subject, drawn from a target bank or manually added. View My admin tasks – Assessment- manage target bank to add, edit and publish target banks. A set of target banks has been made available and can be downloaded from [The Parental Engagement Place](#)

Progress

The progress screen shows a student's progress in different subjects in either a tabular or graph format. The data can be added directly into Merlin or imported from the MIS and shows progress against milestone targets and related teacher comments.

Assessment – Learning Profile

This is a questionnaire completed by students to help teachers understand their learning aspirations and needs; which can be completed and reviewed at any time. The questionnaire is created by you and based upon a template within the administration screens.

Manage Behaviour Details

Merlin shows both Achievement and Behaviour under the heading of Behaviour. It allows you to configure which components of the Behaviour/Achievement logs are visible to parents, teachers and students in the admin task 'Manage behaviour information'

The screenshot shows the 'Manage Behaviour Information' page with a green header. Below the header is a blue instruction bar: 'Use this page to make changes to the behaviour information on display'. The main content area is divided into three sections:

- Availability of historical behaviour records:** A text box explaining that users can be restricted to seeing records after a specific date. Two radio buttons are present: 'Allow all behavioural records to be visible' (selected) and 'Only show events recorded on or after' followed by a date input field showing '31'.
- Control the visibility of behaviour events for parents and pupils:** A checkbox labeled 'Show negative events' which is currently unchecked.
- For each behaviour event, show the following information:** A list of checkboxes for various data points: 'Behaviour Type' (checked), 'Location Subject' (unchecked), 'Event Date' (checked), 'Event Time' (unchecked), 'Behaviour Comments' (checked), 'Action Comments' (unchecked), 'Outcome' (checked), 'Status' (checked), and 'Event Points' (unchecked).

Manage parent/guardian relationships

This page controls parents' and guardians' access to Merlin and their childrens' data. It is for removing access after a data protection issue or a court order only. In all other situations, you should use the "Control User Access" page to remove access to Merlin.

The screenshot shows the 'Manage parent/guardian relationships' page. At the top, a green header is followed by a blue warning bar: 'WARNING: This page controls parents' and guardians' access to SWGfL Merlin and their childrens' data. It is for removing access after a data protection issue or a court order only.' Below this is a search bar and a list of users. A modal dialog box is open over the list, titled 'Edit parent/guardian relationships'. The dialog contains the text: 'Alicia Armstrong (alicia.a.8794193) is the parent/guardian of: Ben Miller (bena.8794193)'. At the bottom of the dialog are two buttons: 'Suspend relation' and 'Close'. The background page shows a list of users with 'relationships' listed next to each name.

Please note that where a parent is marked with a court order in the MIS the account is also disabled when the next data extraction completes.

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Appendix

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Parental Engagement Development Plan <School Name> 2011

Area 1. Leadership and Management	Current position/Actions	Time scale	Success criteria	Person(s) responsible / person(s) monitoring
<p>How is the school developing its use of technology to support assessment / recording, communications and reporting of information some of which may be online e.g. text, e-mail, on-line?</p> <p>Have you consulted with parents about what it is they would like available?</p> <p>Have you identified the staff group that will lead on parental engagement?</p> <p>Has this group developed and shared a vision for using technology to support parental engagement?</p> <p>Have you allocated a budget to support and develop this work?</p> <p>How you made use of current expertise available via you LA, SWGfL?</p> <p>Has the school completed an information asset register and risk assessment?</p>				
Area 2. Engaging parents online	Current position/Actions	Time scale	Success criteria	Person(s) responsible / person(s) monitoring
<p>Are you actively using Merlin with staff and pupils?</p> <p>Do staff have the design skills, training and support to make lively and engaging places for pupils and parents?</p> <p>Is home access a barrier or enabler for your school?</p> <p>Are pupils using Merlin to share their work with parents?</p> <p>When using an e-portfolio are staff/pupils familiar with the process of amending permissions?</p>				

Area 3. Working with Goals and Targets	Current position/Actions	Time scale	Success criteria	Person(s) responsible / person(s) monitoring
<p>Are staff and students regularly using goals and targets to support learning?</p> <p>What are the implications of making this available online?</p> <p>Are staff are trained to enable use of Goals and targets within Merlin?</p> <p>How will you share expectations for teacher feedback on goals and targets?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency • Impact 				
Area 4. MIS/SIF	Current position/Actions	Time scale	Success criteria	Person(s) responsible / person(s) monitoring
<p>Is data held within your MIS up to date and accurate?</p> <p>How accessible is the schools information management to teachers.</p> <p>How effective is its use?</p> <p>Have you allocated a budget to purchase annual SIF licence and updates?</p> <p>Have you applied for and installed a SIF agent?</p> <p>Are staff skilled to review admin tasks within Merlin database (Lynchpin)</p> <p>How will you ensure e-safety and data security is maintained?</p>				

Area 5. Parental Access	Current position/Actions	Time scale	Success criteria	Person(s) responsible / person(s) monitoring
<p>Have to school identified a roll out plan for engaging parents online? e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher parent • governor parent • focus group • class • year group <p>How will you distribute parent account details</p> <p>How will share expectations for parental engagement with parents?</p> <p>What is the range of support that will be available to parents? How will you manage requests to reset passwords and answer queries?</p> <p>How does the school monitor the impact and value of making information available to parents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public place • Class place • e-portfolio • Goals and targets 				
Area 6. TABA data	Current position/Actions	Time scale	Success criteria	
<p>Has the school identified which additional elements of TABA data they want to make available and to whom?</p> <p>Attendance + Timetable</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Behaviour</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Assessment</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">SEN</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Progress</p> <p>Are staff trained to be able to turn on and display chosen aspects within Merlin?</p> <p>How will this information be used to inform parent /teacher consultations?</p> <p>How does the school monitor the impact and value of making TABA information available to parents?</p>				

SWGfL Merlin Parental Engagement Questionnaire

Dear Parent / Guardian

As a school, we are aiming to move forward with the use of ICT and information we make available to parents electronically, so making communication methods more effective and to be more sustainable for the environment. It is important therefore, that we can gather information on how many students/parents have access to a computer in their home to assist in developing further ICT initiatives and provide the things you would value.

Your time to complete the questionnaire below, which should take no longer than 5 minutes, would be much appreciated.

Does your child have access to a computer regularly at home?

- PC Laptop Netbook MAC No access

Does the computer have access to an internet connection?

- Yes, dial up Yes, broadband Yes, wireless No

Which software/operating systems do you have installed on your computer at home?

- Microsoft XP Microsoft Vista Microsoft Windows 7 Linux Mac
 Internet Explorer Firefox Chrome Safari
 Microsoft Office Version _____
 Other used regularly by your child _____

Do you restrict the access your child has to a computer on a daily basis?

- Yes, ___ hours per day No

What is the computer mainly used for in the home?

- Parent Work Homework Browsing the internet Playing Games
 Other, please specify _____

We are currently implementing SWGfL Merlin Learning Platform www.swgflmerlin.org.uk which can provide parents/carers with details about what their child is learning, share examples of their best work, view goals and target and also offer the ability to access information about your child's attendance, behaviour, timetable, assessment online.

Which of these aspects would you find most useful to be able to access online?

- Term times and holidays
 School events, activities and calendar
 Letters , forms, menus, timetables, communications
 Prospectus, policies and reports
 Information about extra-curricular activities
 Curriculum topics and current projects
 Links to support learning
 Homework and resources
 Information about trips and visits
 Class news, events and showcase
 E-portfolio, blog and personal showcase
 Individual goals and targets
 Individual annual report
 Individual reports on attendance, behaviour and assessment

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

What else Might be shown?

Results — a summary of end of key stage results

Goals — This area can be used by students to share their long-term goals with teachers and parents. This might include what they want to achieve in the next year, or what they would like to do when they leave school.

Targets - describe what a student needs to do next to progress in their learning, set by teachers or students.

Learning Progress—this shows a student's progress in different subjects in either a tabular or graph format accompanied by teacher comments.

Learner profile—This is a questionnaire completed by students to help teachers understand their learning aspirations and needs.

E-Portfolio—students can share examples of their learning in this area with parents, teachers and peers.

Showcase—students can publish their best work, reflect on their own performance in completing the assignment or task, and receive feedback from teachers, parents and peers.



Swiggle.org.uk is a website aimed at Key Stage 2 learners (aged 7-11). It links to a wealth of learning and e-safety resources and includes a safe search feature. It also provides children with easy access to key educational resources, either in the classroom or at home including Merlin and My First Place.

Swiggle is provided by the South West Grid for Learning.

Getting started with Online Reporting!



Logging on

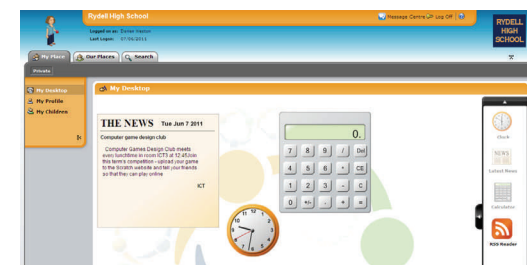
1. Open your browser and type in the web address www.swgfl.org.uk
2. Select log into Merlin from the top right of the screen.
2. Enter your user name and password



User name

Password hint

4. After a short pause you should see the My Place desktop.



Learning without Limits!

What will you see?

My Place

My Desktop area of Merlin is your virtual desktop.



My Profile area allows you to:

- create a virtual self, v-Me
- add your profile details
- reset your password

Treat your password like your toothbrush-

only you should use and it should be changed from time to time!

My Children will provide you with a variety of information about your child that their school has chosen to make available. The information available will vary from school to school.

E-Portfolio will let you view examples of work your child has chosen to share.

Go to detailed view will provide additional information made available by the school.

My Desktop Widgets from the right hand side you can pull floating widgets onto your desktop to provide you with news feeds and other virtual tools.

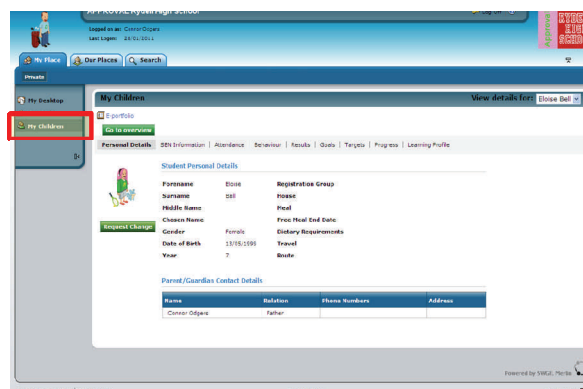
Bookmarks let you to store links to your favourite Merlin pages.

RSS readers enable feeds from a range of sources to be displayed on your Merlin desktop.

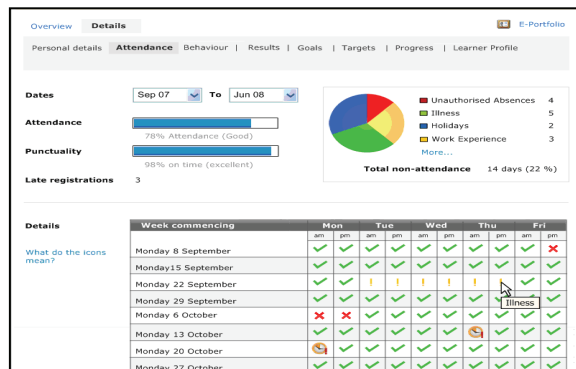
Latest News is directed to your desktop from your school.



Personal Details can be checked so you know the school has the correct information. Request for changes can be made directly from Merlin



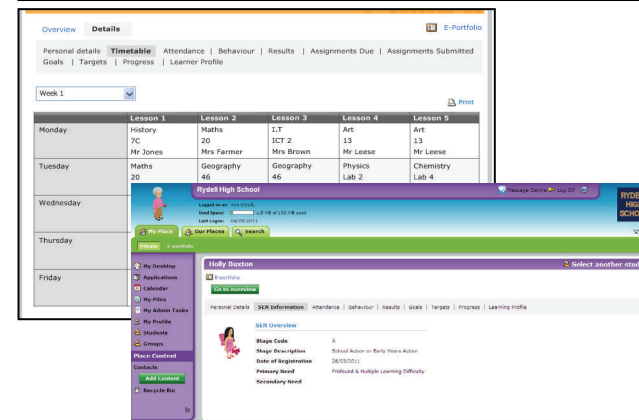
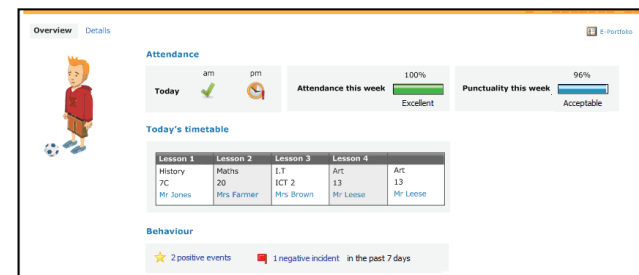
Attendance information is displayed in a way which is easy to follow and understand.



Behaviour information helps schools and parents celebrate the achievements as well as target areas for improvement

Schools may also choose to share details about your child's **Timetable** or **SEN Information** with you.

Log on with your child and get them to show you some of the work they have been doing.



Our Places

The school will have created Our Places that will enable you to find out more about what is happening. Click on the 'Our Places' tab to then select 'Browse' (in the bar near the top): you'll see a list of 'Our Places'. Choose the 'Our Place' you want to visit from the list. On the left of each Our Place you will see a list of content available to you, this may include:

- Term times and holidays
- School events, activities and calendar
- Letters, forms, menus, timetables, communications
- Prospectus, policies and reports
- Head Teacher blog, school photo gallery

Merlin and SIMS Summary DRAFT June 2011

Before a school goes live with Parental Engagement, there are several checks which need to take place to ensure that the process is smooth. This document takes you through the main considerations on SIMS data.

Checking Parental Contact data before Provisioning accounts

- **Duplicate contacts**

When you enrol the sibling of an existing on-roll student, new contacts with the same details are sometimes incorrectly added to the SIMS database instead of the new student being linked to the existing contacts. If this is not detected, both versions of that contact receive different logins when usernames and passwords are issued, each with access to just one of the siblings

Run the delete unlinked contacts routine. Run the Duplicate Contacts Check report and use it to help identify where such contacts exist. If such contacts are found, rename one to identify it as being the one you wish to delete. Attach the student to the correct version of the contact; remove the link to the incorrect duplicate contact. Run the delete unlinked contacts routine again.

- **Incorrect parental responsibility flag**

Check that Parental Responsibility flags are correctly assigned to contacts in SIMS to ensure that appropriate contacts get access to their children's data. At some schools there may be contacts shown as having parental responsibility for students who are not their own children. This may be correct but it is worth checking. If logins are issued, contacts who have parental responsibility for a student has access to details of that student.

Checking Parental Username format in Merlin

- Check format and password complexity is in line with school policy

User Provisioning and Issuing Accounts

- **Distributing Accounts**

The process of issuing and maintaining parental login details should be carefully managed. Even if the data has been checked as above, it is recommended that the following process (or similar) is followed:

Choose a year group at a time.

Send a general letter asking if parents want online access to their children's data.

Some schools first issue logins, then ask parents to apply for their password, thereby introducing an opportunity for further data checks and vetting applicants.

Send an Acceptable Use Policy to interested parents along with documents they must sign to confirm their acceptance, the accuracy of their details and details of the children for whom they have parental responsibility.

Request valid parental email addresses and enter this data into SIMS before provisioning.

Check and if necessary, amend all gathered parental data. Provision the parents and issue the logins and passwords, using adapted versions of the reports provided within SIMS.

Distribute usernames and passwords separately.

NOTE: Some schools have decided to send the logins and passwords separately by post, some have asked parents to collect them and some have given them out at parents' evening, where parents can immediately access the site and be given a demonstration. In all cases, given the potential for difficulty, especially with first-time logins, it is important to provide clear instructions and help to try to avoid problems. If a parent loses or forgets their password, the school can reset it, but must have a clear procedure as to how this happens and how the new password is delivered to the

- **Access to Data**

Develop an internal administration policy that outlines key procedures and practices. This should include identifying what data to share and what is to be kept private, and school processes to ensure that information is kept up to date and accurate. This must ensure that your school implementation adheres to the Data Protection Act, protects young children and that it follows current guidelines and UK legislation. For example: Ensure that you have acceptance or agreement with students, where necessary, to share data with their parents(s) or carer(s) in line with the Data Protection Act. Ensure that the school staff involved are aware of their responsibilities.

Data Specific Issues

- **Attendance data**

Attendance data is uploaded twice daily from SIMS.net and will only display the next day. It is a snapshot of the last three months rather than a complete attendance record for the year.

- **Achievement and Behaviour**

Merlin shows both SIMS Achievement and Behaviour under the heading of Behaviour.

Merlin allows you to configure which components of the Behaviour/Achievement logs are visible to parents

Decide whether to share behaviour and achievement information online with parents. You can change your mind or phase this in later. Consider using Merlin Configuration pages to remove the ability for parents to see entries until staff have been trained to enter incidents.

- **Assessment**

Merlin will pick up the Key Stage Validated Results in English and Mathematics. These will be displayed in Merlin as a Results tab.

- **Student Personal Details**

It is imperative that schools ensure the safety of children in their care at all times. It is necessary to ensure that data, particularly sensitive data, is safeguarded from those that should not be receiving it. Students' personal details held within SIMS are available to parents via Merlin unless the school decides to hide specific web parts. Ones which have proved to be contentious include: Student address, Student phone number and Student medical details. It depends on what data the school decides to store in, for example, the medical information fields as to whether it is appropriate to display it to parents.

- **SEN Data**

The SEN data that will be available to share will be: SEN Status, SEN Need, SEN Reviews and SEN Events. Schools may want to consider if all this data is currently entered into Sims .net and maintained and if they will want to share it with parents.

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Parental Engagement Release Notes

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Introduction

The Parental Engagement release of SWGfL Merlin brings a host of information from the school Management Information System (MIS) to display key data and statistics supporting the emerging need for schools to both inform and engage parents.

Student Dashboard

Students, teachers and parents will now all have access to a new area called the Student Dashboard. For all users this is accessed via the My Place tab and is named appropriately for the user type. Teachers access a Students link, students access a My Learning link, and parents follow the My Children link.

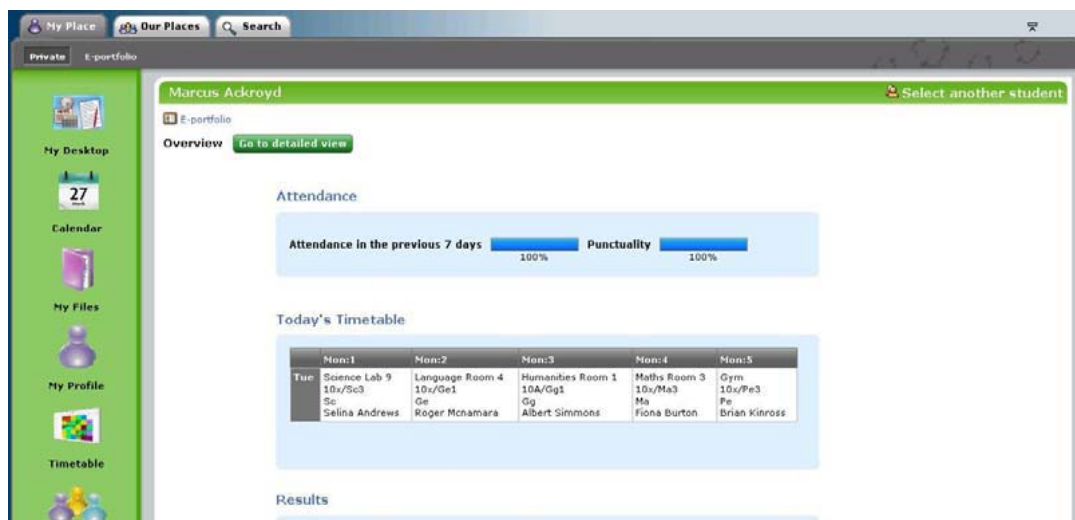
The dashboard draws information from your MIS and from within Merlin presenting it in a colourful, engaging and easy to use interface. The dashboard is viewed as a simple, 'at-a-glance' overview of recent activity, or as detailed pages for each area of interest, for example behaviour or attendance.

Visibility of much of the dashboard is controlled as a module by users with administration access, and further information about this can be found in the SWGfL Merlin Help files.

Simple Overview

The overview page gives you a summary of the latest information from the MIS and other areas of Merlin. This page displays:

- Today's attendance
- Today's timetable
- Behaviour incidents from the last 7 days
- Key Stage Results from the last 4 months
- New, updated and overdue goals and targets
- Recent progress information



Dashboard Overview page

Each of these are explored in more detail in the following section. The overview page includes the student's v-Me™ avatar and a link for parents to request a change to the details displayed, ie correcting contact details.

The Student Dashboard in Detail

From the overview page users can select a Go to detailed view button to access more information about each aspect of the dashboard. These are broken down into the following areas:

Personal Details

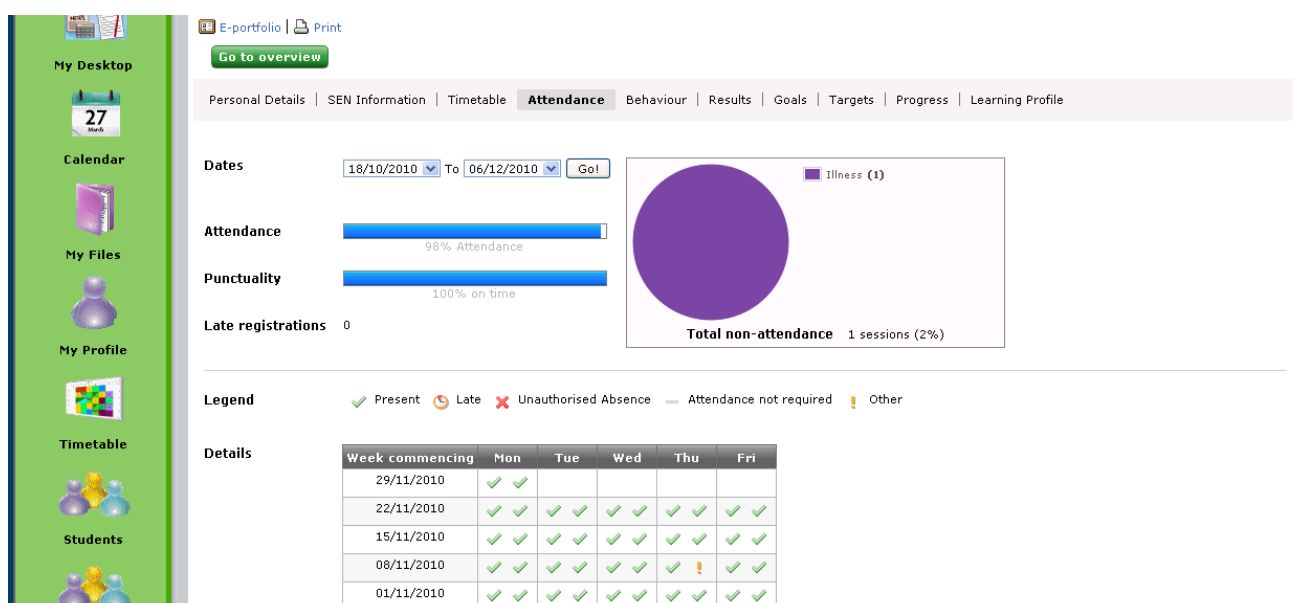
Details from the MIS about the student including registration group, date of birth and academic year, are displayed here. Parent/guardian contact information and medical details are also included (please note that parents and guardians will only see their own details and not those of the other parents or guardians).

Timetable

Showing traditional five day timetables, or alternative schedules with six, seven or more days. The information includes the lesson, the teacher and the location.

Attendance

Bar charts give a summary of attendance and punctuality, whilst a colourful pie chart shows a summary of non-attendance, for example illness or holiday. The codes for each attendance mark have been split into four logical symbols to make it easier for parents to understand. A description for each attendance mark can be seen by hovering over the symbol.



Attendance Detail Page

SEN Information

This page provides summary MIS information about whether a student has registered special education needs, details of the need and any date of registration.

Behaviour

You can choose to show MIS behaviour records to teachers, parents and/or students. A new management screen allows you to select which aspects of the behaviour records are displayed and the date range for which records should be displayed, for example selecting only the current academic year.

Results

This page displays high level information about items marked in the MIS as assessment results, for examples key stage results from within Capita SIMS.

Goals

This area can be used by students to share their long-term goals with teachers and parents. This might include what they want to achieve in the next year, or what they would like to do when they leave school. Teachers can also add to this list on behalf of the student.

Targets

Targets can be set by teachers or students, and are used to describe what a student needs to do next to progress in their learning. Targets can be general or related to a subject, drawn from a target bank or manually added.

Progress

The progress screen shows a student's progress in different subjects in either a tabular or graph format. The data can be added directly into Merlin or imported from the MIS and shows progress against milestone targets and related teacher comments.

Learning Profile

The Learning Profile is a questionnaire completed by students to help teachers understand their learning aspirations and needs; which can be completed and reviewed at any time. The questionnaire is created by you and based upon a template within the administration screens.

Advanced e-Portfolio

The Advanced e-Portfolio is a showcase template available for students to create within their e-portfolio pages. It allows them to publish their best work, reflect on their own performance in completing the assignment or task, and receive feedback from teachers, parents and peers. Showcases can be linked into specific attainment targets to provide evidence of achievements.

Parent Account Provisioning

This new functionality facilitates the provisioning of accounts for parents and their associated relationship to students. With the introduction of parent provisioning SWGfL Merlin has been enhanced to be able to clearly recognise and distinguish between student, teacher and parent roles. Administrators will also have access to a new Settings page to define the username format that is associated with creating parent accounts. By default when parent provisioning is enabled the default username format will be the same as the setting for "Other" accounts. This new provisioning is accompanied by a Review Parental Relationship functionality. This is an administrator page that will display the parent and the associated student relationship, giving the administrator the choice of accepting or declining the relationship.

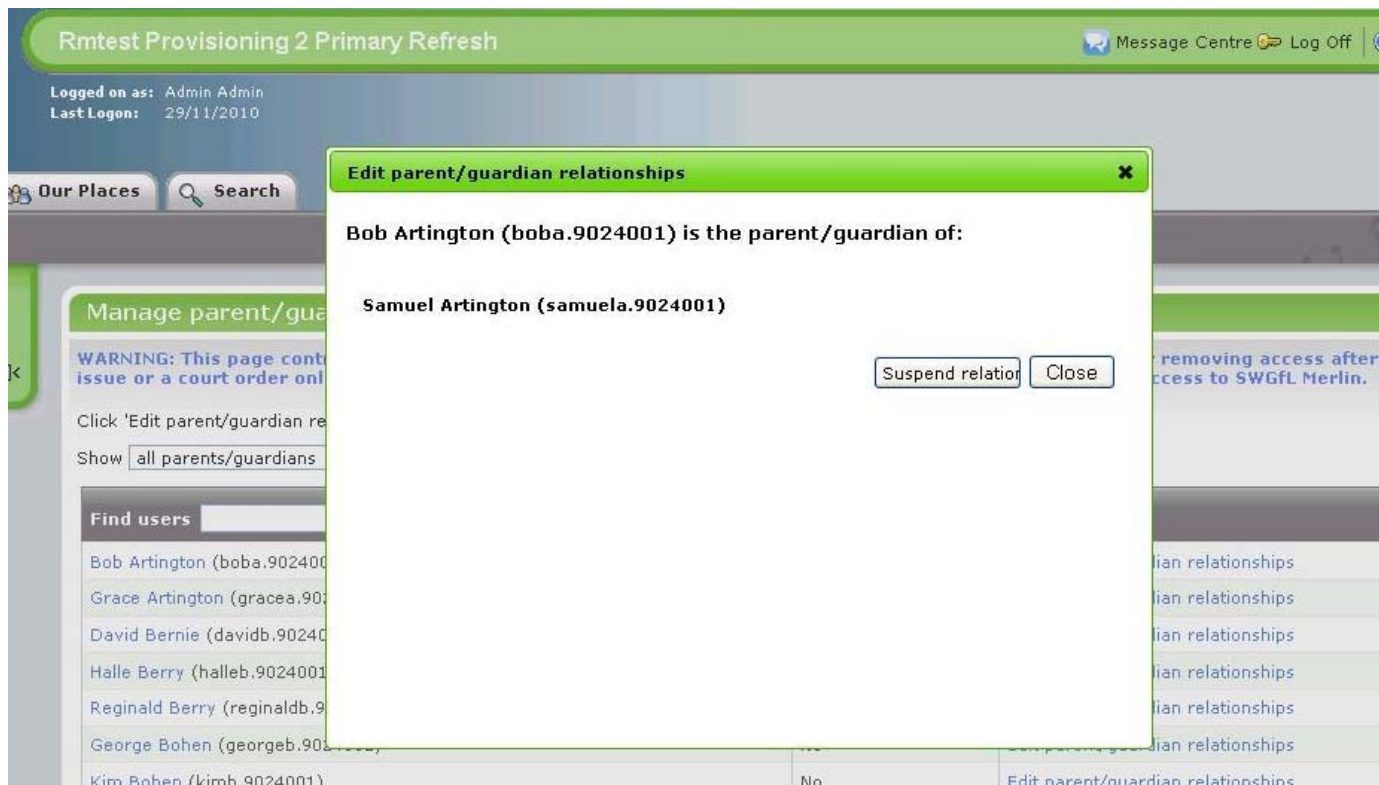
Child/Carer Relationship Management

New administrator functionality is available within the Review Parental Access administrator screen. This allows a user with administrator access to review existing relationships between parents and students and, where appropriate, suspend or unsuspend the relationship. For example where a child may be considered at risk the administrator may choose to suspend the account relationship which results in immediately disabling the parent account.

Please note that where a parent is marked with a court order in the MIS the account is also disabled when the next data extraction completes.

Find users	Suspensions	Edit
Bob Artington (boba.9024001)	No	Edit parent/guardian relationships
Grace Artington (gracea.9024001)	No	Edit parent/guardian relationships
David Bernie (davidb.9024001)	No	Edit parent/guardian relationships
Halle Berry (halleb.9024001)	No	Edit parent/guardian relationships

Manage parent/guardian relationship screen



Editing a parent/guardian relationship

Useful Information

The Parental Engagement Tools use SIF to extract relevant data direct from the school MIS. The SWGfL SIF agent is available for use with Capita SIMS and Serco CMIS. Each Local Authority has it's own arrangements for the installation and procurement of the agents. Please note that schools can purchase and install agents independently via the SWGfL ESI. [Find out more about arrangements in your Local Authority](#) or to purchase a SIF agent independently visit [SWGfL ESI](#)

Before a school goes live with Parental Engagement, there are several checks which need to take place. You should ensure that you are confident that the school's management information system is in order before you get started to ensure that the data that Merlin display is accurate and up to date. To find out more about preparing Capita SIMS please refer to [Merlin and Capita SIMS summary document](#).

The student account must be logged into before the parental account is logged into. The student account once logged into generates an e-Portfolio, the associated parental accounts will automatically access the e-Portfolio (as long as it has been created already).

You may also find the following documents useful in preparing:

Engaging your parents online

Preparing for online reporting

Getting started with online reporting

Top tips for engaging with parents

Bitesize 08 - Getting started with the ILP module












Bitesize 09 – Getting started with Online reporting

Parental Engagement Development template 2011

Appendix: Mapping data from Capita SIMS to SWGfL Merlin

The technology used to extract the data from the school management information system to display within the Student Dashboard in Merlin is the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF). If you are using the Capita SIMS Management Information System there are certain data fields or records that are not recognised by the SIF agent transferring the data. These are therefore mapped into different generic categories or not displayed. These are as follows:

- The MIS record Student school transport data will not display in Merlin.
- The Doctor and Surgery specific details will not be displayed in Merlin although any medical notes will.
- Certain attendance codes within the MIS will be displayed as Other within Merlin. A table of the known mappings is shown here:

Attendance code in SIMS	How it will appear in Merlin
M	 Other
G	 Unauthorized absence
N	 Unauthorized absence
U	 Late
W	 Present
K	 Other
-	 Other
L	 Present
O	 Unauthorized absence
/	 Present
\	 Present

- Certain location values from the MIS for recording behaviour incidents are not supported in SIF and therefore if no mapping is available the location will be set to *Other* within Merlin. The list of available locations is:

- Offsite Unsupervised
- Offsite Supervised
- Class
- School Indoors Non-Class
- School Outdoors Non-Class
- Other

The Merlin team have been hand-picked from schools, and organisations who know what schools need. Since its ambitious beginning, Merlin has undergone exciting transformations. We'd like you to get as excited about it as we are.



To find out more about the magic,
Including how to get started with the
Parental Engagement Tools visit
www.swgflmerlin.org.uk/parents

If you have any questions regarding
the new features please contact:
merlin@swgfl.org.uk