CASHLESS CATERING SYSTEM – FAQ'S

What is a Cashless System?

Our cashless catering system is basically a computer controlled by software which allows the system to recognise each individual student, hold individual cash balances, record cash spent and cash received. It will also show the type of food being purchased on any specific date and time of day.

How are students recognised by the system?

Each student will have their fingerprint registered which will then be translated to an individual alpha numeric code. The image is then discarded and students entered into the system program are subsequently identified by their individual code.

How is this then used to obtain a school meal?

The student simply places their finger on a scanner at the point of sale; a display will show the server the student's name, class and current cash balance held within the system. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance will show on the display.

How is money entered into the system?

(a) Online via the secure payments portal: ParentPay. Online payments are synchronised to the cashless catering system every 10 minutes.

(b) By cash payments into an automatic cash revaluation terminal located in Robertson Building which is set to accept £20 £10 £5 notes £2 - £1 - 50p - 20p - 10p coins. (1p – 2p – 5p coins, cannot be used)

How does the revaluation station work?

The student places their finger on the scanner, or enters their pin number on the revaluation station to enter the system. This will then display the student's name and current cash balance held within the system.

Then the student inserts notes or coins into the note feeder/coin slot. Each incremental cash balance will show on the display. Press the reset button to tell the system that the transaction is completed.

How will the student be able to check what the current cash balance is held in the system at any one time?

(a) By using the revaluation station. Place their finger on the scanner or enter their pin number to display the current cash balance. There is no need to deposit any money, just press the red button to finish.

(b) Also a remote display at the point of sale will show the new cash balance when the food service is finished.

If we pay for a set number of school meals, can it be spent in one day?

An automatic limit of £5.00 per day is set on each student's account. Upon request, an individual student limit of your choice could also be set, to include a school dinner and break time snacks

What if the student does not hold a sufficient cash balance one day to pay for a school dinner?

As before, no student is refused a school dinner because they have not brought their dinner money to school with them. The school will allow for the student to loan money for one day. The student will, however, be expected to bring some money with them the next day to repay the loan and will need to re-credit the system by using the revaluation station or by top up via Parentpay.

What about students entitled to a 'free school meal'?

The system works exactly the same for all students whether they pay or have a free school meal. All students have their own account to use in exactly the same way. The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system by the software daily.

The system will then allow, on a daily basis, the required cash amount for each individual student to be allotted to their current cash balance, for spending during the lunchtime period. Whilst any daily underspend against the allowance will be identified by the system, this will not be added to the next day's balance.

The student can also add extra cash on to his or her balance in the system by using the revaluation station, to provide a greater daily spend on the school dinner than allocated by their free meal allowance.

Parents are encouraged to check their eligibility for free school meals, please contact the school office for an application form.

Data Handling

Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include your child's name, class, photo, account balance and meal entitlement. This data will be handled under the guidelines of the data protection act and only used by parties directly involved with the implementation and administration of the system.

Providing your consent/objecting

In order to be able to use your child's biometric information, the written consent of at least one parent is required. Please note that consent given by one parent will be overridden if the other parent objects in writing to the use of their child's biometric information. Similarly, if your child objects to this, the academy cannot collect or use his/her biometric information for inclusion on the automated recognition system. We would appreciate it if you could discuss this with your child and explain to them that they can object to this if they wish.

If you do not wish your child's biometric information to be processed by the academy, or your child objects to such processing, please notify us so that we can issue your child with a pin number to use when paying for school meals. Please note that it will be your child's responsibility to remember and keep this information secure.