

Cashless Catering

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits to the School, Parents and Students?

- Enables parents to pay for their child's School meals online and top up the account at any time
- Avoids parents searching for cash to send to School - avoids the need for students to carry cash (no lost money, no spending of dinner money on the way to School, no security issue)
- De-stigmatises free school meals by providing anonymity for students
- Reduces the queuing time for students at the canteen tills
- Avoids the need to count cash in offices and reduces security and safety risks
- provides the opportunity for healthy eating award points to promote a healthy diet

How does the cashless system work?

Each student is issued with a personalised smart-card which is used to purchase food from the dining hall at break and lunchtime.

Parents credit their child's account in one of three ways:

1. via ParentPay®, a convenient online method using a credit or debit card
2. via PayPoint™, at local stores, or
3. by cheque to the school

What about students who are entitled to Free School Meals?

The daily free meal allowance will automatically be added to the student's account. Parents are able to top this up. Any unused free meal allowance is removed daily and does not accumulate.

How do parents use ParentPay?



All parents are issued with a unique username and password to log into the ParentPay website www.parentpay.com. ParentPay accepts MasterCard and Visa credit cards, Maestro, Switch, Delta, Electron, Solo and Visa debit cards. Parents can view online the balance of their child's catering account and a record of the payments made. Parents have the flexibility to make payments online as regularly and as often as they wish. Parents may find it convenient to top up their child's account monthly or weekly. The minimum top-up is £10.

Is it safe to make payments on the internet?

Yes. In fact, it's as safe to pay online with ParentPay as it is to use your credit card in a shop or over the phone. ParentPay uses leading technology to process your credit/debit card transactions securely. All communication with the bank is encrypted. No credit/debit card details are stored in any part of the system.

What about our personal information?

ParentPay uses a very limited amount of information about you and your child solely for the purpose of administering your account; information is not shared or given to any other organisations. ParentPay and the School operate under strict guidelines set out by the Data Protection Act 1998, which ensure the protection and care of personal information.

What do I do if I am unable to log onto ParentPay?

The ParentPay internet service should be reliable and available at any time. However, if parents experience any problems they should contact the School on 01376 321813 for advice. **What do I do if I forget my ParentPay password?**

The ParentPay website has a password reset facility. Please visit www.parentpay.com

What if a parent needs to pay for their child's meals in cash?



The School is registering with PayPoint so that parents are able to take cash to their local convenience stores in order to top up their child's account.

For parents who do not wish to make payments via their bank account they can top up their child's account using cash at PayPoint facilities in their local convenience stores. Parents who choose this method will be issued with a PayPoint card. Payments made by PayPoint may take up to 2 days to be credited to your child's account.

Where can I find a PayPoint agent?

Local stores with PayPoint facilities include:

- Costcutter, 47 Stubbs Lane
- Chelmsford Star Co-Op, 174 Cressing Road
- Chelmsford Star Co-Op, 203-205 Mountbatten Road A full list can be found on the

PayPoint website: www.paypoint.co.uk

What happens if a student loses a card?

In the event of a lost or stolen card the user does not lose the money on the account. Students or parents will need to notify Student Reception and processes will be in place to stop the card and provide students with a temporary facility until a permanent replacement is provided. There will be a charge of £3 made to the account for issuing a replacement card.

Do credits to my child's account expire?

No, all payments will remain on the account until debited for purchases made.

Will there be a daily spend limit for students?

The School will set a spend limit for all students of £4. Parents can choose to set their own limit by informing the School of the amount they require.

What if parents do not have internet access at home?

Parents may wish to visit their local library, internet café or use a computer at their work, if this is permissible.

Once I have topped up, how quick will my child's account be credited?

With ParentPay (online), if the top-ups are carried out by 9.30am the student's account will be credited in time for break and if top -ups are carried out by 11.00am the students' accounts will be credited in time for the lunchtime session. With the cheque method of payment the student's account will be credited ready for the following day. PayPoint payments may take up to 2 days to be credited.

Can parents top up their child's account by cheque?

There will be a facility for parents to bring cheques into the School to credit their child's account. This method of payment will not credit an account immediately but cheques will be credited to the account ready for the following day.

My child brings sandwiches to School, can my child purchase food on the odd occasion?

All parents will be issued with usernames and passwords and will be able to access ParentPay at any time in order to credit their child's account. Therefore, students who bring sandwiches to School will also be able to make purchases using their card. It is advisable that, even if a student brings sandwiches, there is a small amount on their account.

Frequently Asked Questions for Staff

Do staff also use ParentPay?

Yes, both staff and parents use ParentPay to view their accounts and the transactions made as well as make top-up payments online.

How do staff top-up?

Staff can top-up their accounts in one of three ways:-

- 1) **via ParentPay®**, a convenient online method using a credit or debit card
- 2) **via PayPoint™** , at local convenience stores, or
- 3) **by cheque** to the School

Can staff use cash?

No. As from 6th September 2011 the catering service will be totally cash free. Therefore, all staff and students must top-up their accounts using one of the methods above and use their smart card to make purchases from the dining hall.

For Paid Additional Duty lunches, do staff still need a smart card?

Yes, the allowance for Paid Additional Duty lunches will be added to the staff's account on a periodic basis. Further information for staff will follow.