April 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Cashless Catering and Biometric Registration

Having a cashless catering system provides us with an efficient, fast and quality service. This system incorporates the latest technology and eliminates the need for students to carry cash throughout the day thus reducing the risk of money being mislaid. It is also biometric (see FAQ's) so there is no need for students to carry a card as the system will recognise the thumb of your child at the cash loaders and at the tills. Please be assured that this information remains within the school and that the biometric information taken is an algorithm and not the actual fingerprint.

All students and staff receive training on how to use the system.

Any amount of money can be paid into a student's account, and any money spent on food will be deducted on a daily basis.

We have three payment options available to you – online payments or coin and note payments at the cash loaders. All payment options are explained within the FAQ's attached.

A daily 'spend limit' of £5.00 will be programmed into the system. This can be increased or decreased for an individual student by parents making a written request to the school finance office.

As per current legislation we will request your consent for biometric registration, and this will be via the enrolment form that you complete for your child. Consent for Biometric registration can also be given directly on Arbor under 'Student profile'.

If you choose not to have your child registered on the biometric system a 4-digit PIN code will be allocated. Please note that PIN codes do not have the same level of security, and it will be your child's responsibility to remember the code and keep it secure at all times.

Yours sincerely

Mr Chris Phillips
Principal

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. **What is a cashless system?**
A. A Cashless Catering System is a solution which is purpose designed to meet the ever evolving needs and demands of the catering provision, required by today's schools and academies. The Trust-e Cashless Solution allows schools to be better able to provide their students and staff with a faster, more efficient and more appealing meal service.

Q. What is 'biometric?'
A. Biometric is simply a method of identifying an individual person. The Trust-e Cashless System uses an algorithm-based scan, which reads between 50 and 130 points on the finger/thumb. It is not a fingerprint in any way, shape or form and is of use only in the Cashless System.

Q. How does a biometric system work?
A. The information of a student or staff member, who has been biometrically registered, is stored on a secure biometric controller within the school, which only your provider, Nationwide Retail Systems, can access with permission from the school. Once an account is credited, the student or staff member places their finger/thumb on the EPOS Terminal Biometric Reader, which looks up their account and allows them to purchase items using only this method of identification.

Q. How does my child register on the biometric system?
A. Registration days will take place leading up to the 'go live' day of the Cashless System. During these days, registration terminals will be placed in the school. Your child will attend at a requested time and will be required to place their finger/thumb on the Biometric Reader twice to obtain a matching template, which only takes a few seconds. If you have chosen to opt-out of this procedure, your child will be presented with a 4-digit PIN code.

Q. What methods of payment can be used to credit an account?
A. Any amount can be credited to an account by way of any of the following methods. Once an account has been credited, the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break services.

Q. How can I check the credit on an account?
A. This can be done by the account holder either placing their finger/thumb on the Revaluation Machine scanner or entering a 4-digit PIN code. The current balance will then be displayed. This can also be accessed via the school's online payment facility, if applicable.

Q. Can I change my child's 'daily spend limit?'
A. Yes – the amount your child can spend throughout one day can be changed by written request to (insert name of school contact). Please contact your school for information on the current spend limits in place.

Q. What happens if my child's account is not in credit?
A. A 'lend' can be processed at the EPOS terminal, which will then allow a meal to be taken. Alternatively, money can be taken from an automatic overdraft account. (This is at the discretion of each individual school.) An automatic overdraft can be set up, which will allow the student/staff member to go into debit at the cost of 1 meal (again at the discretion of the school). The Cashless Catering System has a debt tracking facility and the ability to send debt letters to overdue account holders.

Q. How do 'free meal' entitlements work?
A. All free meal entitlements will be entered on to the system prior to the 'live' day. The Cashless Catering System will, on a daily basis, automatically allocate the appropriate accounts with the free school meal amounts. Students with FSM entitlement remain anonymous at all times as all account types are accessed in the exact same manner, regardless of whether paid for or not. Please note that any monies not spent from the daily free meal allocation will not be carried over to the next day.

Q. Can anyone else use my child's account?

A. No – due to the extensive security on biometric templates, no-one will be able to access your child's account. As a secondary precaution, a photo image is allocated to each student (at the school's discretion). If your child is using a 4-digit PIN code, which someone obtains and attempts to use, the photograph shown at the EPOS Terminal will alert the operator of a fraudulent sale.

Q. My child has an allergy. Will this be monitored through the Cashless System?

A. Yes – all allergy records registered with the school will be entered on to the Cashless System. When students attempt to purchase an item, which contains ingredients that they are allergic to, the system will alert the operator and prevent them from selling the chosen item.

Cash at the cash loaders

Cash loaders will be sited at different locations within the school. These can be used to top up accounts by the student/member of staff placing their registered finger or thumb on the Biometric Reader; swiping or tagging their registered card or by entering their 4-digit PIN Code followed by inserting the accepted tender: £20, £10, £5 notes or £2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p or 5p coins. Please note that copper coins are not accepted.

Online Payments

We have introduced online payments in partnership with the Cashless Catering Solution. To make a payment online please go to https://www.scopay.com/

Principal: Mr C Phillips BSc (Hons)

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