

Principal: Mrs J Lowry-Johnson BA (Hons)

Frequently Asked Questions about Cashless Catering

Q. What is a 'Cashless System'?

A. A cashless catering system is an electronic accounting solution designed to allow schools to provide students and staff with a faster, more efficient service.

Q. What is 'Biometric'?

A. Biometric is simply a method of identifying an individual person. The system takes a 'finger image' and this generates a unique number used in the system to identify your child and allow them to spend money from their cashless account. The finger image is not stored and cannot be used by any other system. It is not a fingerprint in any way, shape or form.

Q. How does a biometric system work?

A. The information of a student or staff member, which has been biometrically registered is stored on a secure biometric controller within the school, which only our provider, Live Register, can access. Once an account is credited, the student or staff member places their finger/thumb on the electronic point of sale (EPOS) terminal, which looks up their account details and allows them to purchase items. The academy will abide by all relevant regulations stipulated in 'The Data Protection Act 1988'.

Q. How does my child register on the biometric system?

Your daughter/son will attend at a requested time and they will be required to place their finger/thumb on a biometric sensor twice to obtain a matching image. This process will only take a few seconds. If you have chosen to 'opt out' of this procedure, your child will be given a 5 digit PIN code to use.

Q. What methods of payment can be used to credit an account?

A. Once an account has been credited, the monies can only be withdrawn in exceptional circumstances and has to be arranged via the academy. The system will also provide a daily spend limit for each student. Any amount of funds can be credited to an account by the following methods:

Cash at the Revaluation Units

Revaluation units are located in the Houghton building and the main student entrance. These can be used to top up accounts by the student/staff placing their finger/thumb on the sensor or by entering their 5-digit PIN code followed by inserting the accepted tender below:

£20, £10, £5 notes, £2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p and 5p coins (**Please note – copper coins are not accepted.**)

On-line Payments

Online payments can be made via the School Gateway (www.schoolgateway.com), however, you have to be registered on School Gateway before you can start using it. If you require assistance signing up, then please contact the Main Office.

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Top-up at Academy Reception

Parents/carers may credit their child/childrens account by visiting Reception and paying by cash or card.

Q. How can I check the credit on an account?

A. This can be done but the student/staff member placing their finger/thumb on to the revaluation machine/balance checker or by entering their 5 digit PIN code. The current balance will then be displayed. Alternatively, parents can access the balance online via the School Gateway.

Q. How do 'Free School Meal' (FSM) 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 meal amount. Students with FSM entitlements remain anonymous at all times as all accounts are accessed in the same manner.

N.B – Any monies not spent from the daily free meal allowance will not be carried over to the next day.

Q. Can anyone else use my childs account?

A. No – due to the extensive security on the biometric templates, no-one will be able to access your childs account. As a secondary precaution, a photo image is allocated to each student (this is dependant on previous permission provided via the data collection form). If your child is using their 5 digit PIN code, which someone obtains and attempts to use, the photograph shown on the EPOS terminal will alert the operator and prevent them from selling the chosen item.

Q. Can I dictate my childs dietary requirements?

A. The system will allow you to register any items that your child is not allowed to due to dietary or religious beliefs. Any such items must be confirmed in writing by the parent/guardian to the Main Office via a data collection form.

Q. Am I able to view what my child/children has purchased using the system?

A. Yes – The cashless catering system enables parents to view online, via the School Gateway, the daily purchases on their childs account.

Further Information and guidance

For more details on the new legislation, please visit the website below:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00218617/biometric-recognition-systems>

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