

## Cashless Catering - 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 that is required by today's Schools and Academies.

The Cashless Solution allows schools to be better able to provide their students 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. We will be using an algorithm based scan, which reads between 50 & 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 our provider, Nationwide Retail Systems Ltd, can access. Once an account is credited the student or staff member places their finger/thumb on the EPOS Terminal, which looks up their account details and allows them to purchase items using only this method of identification.

### **Q How does my child register on the Biometric System?**

A Your child will be registered before Morning Break on their first day on-roll at the school. At this time registration terminals will be placed in the school. Your child 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 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 Once an account has been credited the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break services.

#### On-Line Payments

We have introduced On-Line Payments in partnership with the Cashless Catering System. To make a payment on line please go to [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) (as many parents do already, to pay for school trips) to make an electronic payment.

#### Cheques/cash

Cheque payments can be accepted via the Cashless Catering System. Cheques should be made out to The Downs School and put in an envelope clearly marked "School Lunch Money" and also the student's name and tutor group. All cheques/cash must be posted though the Finance Office post box near the dining room and must be received by 9.00 am prior to that day's commencement of service. Cheques received after this time will not be credited to the relevant account until the following day.

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

A Parentpay will show you the credit on each student's dinner money account, or students can ask at the till as they make a purchase.

**Q Can I change the daily 'Spend Limit'?**

A Yes – The daily 'Spend Limit' may be changed by written request to Mrs Ambler in the finance office (via [contact@thedownsschool.org](mailto:contact@thedownsschool.org)).

**Q What happens if my child's account is not in credit?**

A A 'Lend' can be processed at the till, which will then allow a meal to be taken. Please note that a lend will only be given at lunch time and only for savoury food items such as the main meal, soup, pasta pot, baguette or a panini. A lend will not be given for items such as cakes.

An automatic overdraft can be set up, which will allow the student/staff member to go into debit at the cost of 1 meal.

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 meal amounts. Students with Free Meal Entitlements remain anonymous at all times as all account types are accessed in the exact same manner regardless as to whether paid for or not. NB. 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. If your child is using a 4 digit PIN Code, which someone obtains and attempts to use, the photograph shown on the EPOS Terminal will alert the operator and a fraudulent sale taking place.

**Q My child has an allergy, how will this be monitored**

A All allergy records registered with the school will be entered on to the Cashless System. When students attempt to purchase an item, which has ingredients that they are allergic to, the system will alert the operator.

**Q Can I dictate my child's dietary requirements?**

A The system will allow you to register any items that your child is not allowed due to dietary needs or religious beliefs. Any such items must be confirmed in writing by the parent/guardian to Mrs Ambler in the finance office via [contact@thedownsschool.org](mailto:contact@thedownsschool.org).