



18 January 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

After a good deal of consideration we have decided to install a cashless catering system on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February. The new system will provide us with a more efficient, faster and ultimately better quality of service for students.

This system incorporates the latest technology and eliminates the need for students to carry cash throughout the day. It is also biometric (see FAQs) so there is no need for students to carry a card as the system will recognise the thumb of your child at the revaluation (top-up) pay point 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 finger print, in the same way as the software we use in the library.

There are two payment options available to you – online payments into a student's account, and coin and note payments at the revaluation (top-up) pay-point located in Student Services. Both payment options are explained within the FAQs attached. Any amount of money can be paid into a student's account, and any money spent on food and drink will be deducted on a daily basis. A daily 'spend limit' of £6.00 will be programmed into the system. This can be increased or decreased for an individual student by making a written request to the school finance office. All students and staff will be given training on how to use the system.

As per current legislation we will be operating an 'Opt In' policy and therefore would be grateful if you would complete the attached form. We will commence operating the system on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February and as such no cash will be accepted at the till points after this date.

Cashless catering systems have proved successful in many schools and the attached information should answer any questions you may have.

Completed forms should be returned to the school finance office or main reception **by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February.**

Yours faithfully

Colin Belford  
Headteacher

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q What is a Cashless System?**

**A** A cashless catering system allows parents and carers to pay for food purchased in school online, with the funds transferring automatically to a student's secure account. This means students do not have to bring money into school unless they wish to use the top up facility in Student Services.

**Q What is Biometric?**

**A** Biometric is simply a method of identifying an individual person. It uses 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 and library systems.

**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 reader at the till, 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** Registration days will take place leading up to the 'Live' day of the Cashless System. At this time registration terminals will be placed in the school. Your child will attend at a requested time and they will place their finger/thumb on a Biometric sensor twice to obtain a matching template, which only takes a few seconds.

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

**A** Any amount can be credited to an account by the following methods. Once an account has been credited the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break/breakfast services.

### **Cash at the Revaluation (Top up) Unit**

A Revaluation (top up) unit will be sited at Student Services. It can be used to top up accounts by the student/member of staff placing their finger/thumb on the sensor followed by inserting the accepted tender below:

£20, £10, £5 notes

£2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p, 5p coins

**(Please note – copper coins are not accepted)**

## **Online Payments**

We have introduced Online Payments in partnership with the Cashless Catering System. To make a payment online please go to the parent page of our website and click on the “online payments” button to make an electronic payment.

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

**A** This can be done by the account holder placing their finger/thumb on to the revaluation machine. The current balance will then be displayed. Alternatively, this can be accessed via the online payment system.

**Q Can I change the daily ‘Spend Limit’?**

**A** Yes – The daily ‘Spend Limit’ has a default of £6.00 but this may be changed by written request to the Finance Office.

**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 one meal only to be taken. An automatic overdraft is then set up, which will allow the student/staff member to go into debit at the cost of one meal.

**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 same way. 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.

**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 and prevent them from selling the chosen item.

To: Archway School

**I/We** confirm that we wish our child / children **TO BE/NOT TO BE** (please delete where applicable) registered on the school's Biometric Cashless Catering System with immediate effect.

I understand that **I/we** may withdraw my child's registration at any time in writing.

Child's Name	Tutor Group	Relationship to Child
Name of Parent and/or Carer	Signature	Date