

# **Cashless Catering Service**

**Dear Parent,**

We are pleased to announce that we are installing a new cashless system for the catering service at the Nower Hill High School in **November 2009**. Our desire is to continue to provide and improve on the quality of the school meal service at your school. We are sure you will appreciate the advantages the new system will now offer the parents and pupils of the school. Also the system will also enable us to deliver a more efficient, faster service and to continue to provide wholesome, healthy, and enjoyable meals at the lowest cost. This cashless system is already in operation in over 1,500 schools across the country.

The system will start in operation on – **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November**.

From this day no cash can be accepted at the food counter 'Till Point'. There are three ways in which your child's account can be credited. **Please see below.**

## **What is a Cashless System?**

At the heart of the cashless system there is a computer controlled by I.M.P.A.C.T. - Software. This allows the system to recognise each individual pupil, hold individual cash balances, record cash spent and cash received record where money is spent, on what food, on any specific date and time of day. Should the pupil have a specific food allergy, or be a diagnosed diabetic, this medical information can be coded into the system, preventing foods with allergy ingredients from being served to a particular pupil, by automatically locking out relevant buttons on the keyboard.

## **How are pupils recognised by the system?**

Each pupil will have their fingerprint registered (as we have been doing in the library using a similar biometric system for many years now) which will then be translated to an Alpha Numeric number, the image is then discarded. This will enter them into the system program and identify them by a number.

## **How is this then used to obtain a school meal?**

The Pupil simply places their finger on a scanner at the point of sale; a display will show the server the pupil's name, class and current cash balance held within the system. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance will show on the display.

## **How will the pupil be able to check what the current cash balance is held in the system at any one time?**

A Remote Display at the point of sale will show the new cash balance when the food service is finished.

## **If we pay for a set number of school meals, can it be spent in one day?**

No, a daily spend limit of £5.00 will be set for all pupils and no food above that limit can be bought.

## **'Free school meal' children.**

Their accounts will automatically be credited with their entitlement. The system works exactly the same for all pupils whether they pay or have a free school meal. All pupils have their own account to use in exactly the same way.

The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system by the software daily and it will be accessible all day.

The system will then allow on a daily basis the required cash amount for each individual pupil to be allotted to their current cash balance. However, any under spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance.

They can also add extra cash on to their balance in the system using one of the three payment methods as described further.

### **Will we be able to have any information on how the system is being used?**

Reports can be obtained from the system giving comprehensive information on all aspects of use for each individual pupil as well as each day's service. These reports can be for a specific day or between any dates you wish, they will be dated and timed to the minute, and can be obtained from the Harrison Catering Services.

- (a) To show every item of food served and the total cost of each serving.
- (b) Individual payments made direct to the Harrison Catering Services by any of the three methods of payment. See below.

### **Data Handling**

Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include your child's name, class, photo, account balance and meal entitlement. This data will be handled under the guidelines of the data protection act and only used by parties directly involved with the implementation of the system.

## **Three ways in which to credit your child's account.**

### **1. Making secure payments online using your credit or debit card.**

Our caterers, Harrison Catering Services, have subscribed to ParentPay. ParentPay offers you the freedom to make payments whenever and wherever you like, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - safe in the knowledge that the technology used is of the highest internet security available.

You will have a secure online account, activated using a unique username and password; you will be prompted to change these, and to keep them safe and secure. If you have more than one child at our school, you can merge their accounts to create one login for all your children.

Making a payment is straightforward and ParentPay holds a payment history for you to view at a later date; no card details are stored in any part of the system. Once you've activated your account you can make online payments straight away. Further details are in the attached ParentPay information.

### **2. Paying by cash at a PayPoint.**

PayPoint payments are recorded by ParentPay and can be seen by logging into your ParentPay account and viewing your payment history online. The nearest PayPoint stores to school are:

Fine Quality Food, 531-533 Pinner Rd, Harrow,  
Premier Food & Wine 83 Station Rd, North Harrow,  
A Best Food & Wine, 46 Cannon Lane, Pinner,  
Sunrup Cash & Carry, 154-158 Pinner Rd., Harrow.

Please notify the School Office if you wish to use the PayPoint facility. A plastic card will be issued to you to make cash payments for school meals at local PayPoint stores. The first card is free of charge; however, any lost or damaged cards will be charged at £2 each. Payment cards take about 2 weeks to arrive but we can issue a barcoded letter as an interim measure.

### **3. Paying by cheque.**

The cheque can be made out to **Harrison Catering Services**, and placed into the Post Box provided in the school Canteen. - **Please write the full Name of Pupil and Class reference on back of cheque and place in an envelope.**

Any amount of money can be paid into your account held within the system, money spent on food will be taken out of the system and your child can always check at the Remote Display, at the point of sale, to see how much is left.

We hope you will support us in achieving our goal to introduce a cashless school meal service. Your support in using ParentPay will help the school enormously, thank you.

**You will receive your unique ParentPay Account activation details by the end of October 2009.**

Information will come in a letter to you. Please watch out for this letter.

For further information on ParentPay please see the FAQs overleaf or visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com).

Yours sincerely

**Magda Bychawski**  
Finance Officer

**Jackie Georgiou**  
Deputy Head

## ParentPay FAQs

### What does ParentPay do?

- enables you to pay for school meals
- offers a highly secure payment site
- gives you a history of all the payments you have made
- allows the merging of accounts if you have more than one child at school

### How does ParentPay help you?

- gives you the freedom to make payments to the Harrison Catering Services whenever and wherever you like
- stops you having to write cheques or search for cash to send to school
- gives you peace of mind that your payment has been made safely and securely
- helps with budgeting; payments are immediate, there is no waiting for cheques to clear
- ParentPay is quick and easy to use

### How does ParentPay help our school?

- reduces the administrative time spent on banking procedures
- keeps accurate records of payments made to every service for every student
- payments do not bounce
- reduces paper 'waste'

### How do I get started?

We will send you an activation letter to enable you to setup your ParentPay account. The activation letter will contain a personal activation username and password to enable you to login to ParentPay. During the activation process you will be guided through changing your username and password to something more memorable; you can also merge your accounts if you have more than one child at Nower Hill High School.

### When can I log in to my account?

Once you have received your activation letter from school with your activation login details you'll be able to activate your account and start making payments. This letter will be sent to you soon by your school.

### Which cards can I use?

ParentPay accepts MasterCard and Visa credit cards, and Maestro, Switch, Delta, Electron, Solo and Visa debit cards. Some schools may limit the use of credit cards for some transactions; you will be informed by the school directly of any such restrictions.

### Is it safe to make payments on the internet?

Yes. ParentPay uses leading technology to process your card transactions securely. All communication with the bank is encrypted and neither ParentPay nor the school have access to your card details.

### How can I check that it's secure?

Standard website addresses begin with http; the address for a secure site will always begin with https. You will also see a padlock at the bottom/top right of the screen on our login page and after you have logged into your account; never enter your card details or personal data on any web page whose address does not start https.

### What about our personal information?

ParentPay holds a very limited amount of information about you and your child solely for the purpose of administering your account; however ParentPay does not use your personal information other than for supporting the school. We do not share or give information to any other organisations. We operate under strict guidelines set out by the Data Protection Act 1998.

ParentPay will **NEVER** contact you by phone, email or mail and ask you to divulge confidential information like passwords or card numbers. If you are ever contacted by someone claiming to be from ParentPay, please contact us immediately on **0845 257 5540**.

### I don't have a home PC so how can I use ParentPay?

Why not visit your local library, internet café or see if you can get access to a computer at work. For more information please visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)