



Your guide to

The new school meals payment system

www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering





Your guide to The new school meals payment system



Introduction

Welcome to your guide to the exciting new Biometric Cashless system that we are introducing to manage school meals much better.

The new system will mean that students and staff will no longer need to pay for school meals with cash. Instead they will be able to purchase their meals and snacks simply by presenting their fingerprint at the tills!

Please read this guide, which we hope will provide you, with the necessary information you need, to make a decision as to whether you would like your child(ren) to be signed up to the new system.

We need your consent to do so, so it's important that you let us know your decision, in writing via the consent form in section 10, by the deadline shown in the letter sent by your school.





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Section 1 | An intro to the biometric cashless system

So what does this fancy new 'biometric' system actually mean? The new system is an innovative online cashless approach to using the schools catering service with the very latest technology. It allows the school to provide a faster, more efficient and appealing catering service for our students and staff. Hundreds of schools across the UK are already benefiting from the system, with proven success.

We think that students will really embrace the biometric element of the system, where they will be able to pay for their food and snacks simply by scanning their fingerprint at the tills and vending machines! However, it won't be for everyone, so for those who prefer not to use this facility, they can be provided with a pin number.

The fingerprint recognition will be linked to individual student accounts. You will be able to conveniently manage and make payments into the account online or via one of the 144 'Pay

Point' facilities available across Cardiff. To find out where the nearest are visit: www.PayPoint.co.uk/locator.aspx or ask us at the reception desk at your school.

More information on the system is available at www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering





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Section 2

The benefits



Benefits for schools ✓



Benefits for Parents ✓



Benefits for Students ✓

There are an overwhelming number of benefits the system will bring including:

- If your child is entitled to free school meals, other students will not be aware that they are on the scheme, as each student will be treated the same.
- Several convenient payment options available including online at www.parentpay.com.
- No need for students to carry cash with them at school – reducing incidents of loss/theft and bullying.
- Student fingerprints can be recognised in all secondary schools in Cardiff (once the system is installed), so if they are offsite they can still purchase meals.
- You can ensure that dinner money is only spent in the school catering facility which means healthy and high quality food is guaranteed.
- The speed of the new system will reduce the time students have to spend queuing, so will have more time to actually eat their food.
- Catering staff will be able to better plan the meals, reducing the amount of food wasted every day.
- You can keep up to date with spending habits via the online accounts.
- You can put a ‘total limit’ on how much your child(ren) can spend every day.
- The scheme will promote healthy eating via our commitment to support the Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009. More info is available at wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/foodanddrink/appetiteforlife





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Section 3 Security guaranteed



Security guaranteed 

We will be holding registration sessions at your school, two weeks before the new system will go live. During these sessions students and staff will be allocated a time slot to attend a registration session. At this session they will be asked to place their finger/thumb onto the biometric sensor twice to achieve a matching record. This process is painless and will take a few moments to complete.

Will data be protected?

Absolutely. We take data protection very seriously and the new system aims to improve how we manage students data; taking care of that data is given the highest priority.

We hold a lot of the information already via our Management Information System (MIS). This information will be securely transferred over to the new cashless system and kept up to date with regular secure automatic transfers. Fingerprint images will NOT be stored. A technical

description of how the biometrics system will be implemented is available on our website www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering. The school will remain responsible for the information and will be in control of accessing, managing and updating students' data on the system.

Information will not be sold, distributed or leased to third parties. The information will be used solely for the cashless payment system. Please note that when your child leaves the school, or if he/she opts out using the biometric system, their data will be deleted. More information on this can be found at www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering

How will the new system be explained to students?

All students and members of staff will attend an awareness and training session as part of the registration process to clearly explain the process and how the new system will work. These sessions will take place before the new system goes live.





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Section 4

Managing a students account



Simple payments 

How do I top up and monitor a students account?

You can manage accounts online or by using the Arbor Parent App.

How to Top Up via the Web Portal (Click link)

Mary Immaculate Parent Portal

Log in: Open your school's Arbor web portal page and sign in with your email and password.

Go to Payments: Click the menu icon and select Payments, or go to Quick Actions and select Payments.

Select Child: Check that you have selected the correct child profile if you have more than one student linked.

Choose Account: Click on the specific account you want to fund, such as meals or trips.

Enter Amount: Click the green top-up button, input the desired money amount, and proceed.

Pay Securely: Enter your debit or credit card details on the secure checkout panel (Visa or Mastercard) and complete any bank authentication steps if prompted

Top Up an Account via App

Open the Arbor App on your phone or log into the Parent Portal on a computer.

Go to the Quick Actions menu or select the Payments section from the main menu.

Choose the specific child if you have more than one student linked to your account.

Select the account type you want to fund, such as Meals. Click the Top up account button.

Enter the amount you want to pay, then choose Pay now or add it to your basket.

Enter your debit/credit card details, Apple Pay, or Google Pay information to finish the transaction

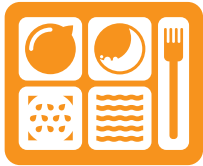




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Section 5 | Free school meals



Access to free school meals 

If a student is entitled to free school meals, they will be included as part of the new system. The good thing about the new system is that all students will be treated the same when purchasing their meals and snacks at school.

If you would like to find out if a student is entitled to free school meals, please email freeschoolmeals@cardiff.gov.uk or telephone 2087 2873.

The new finger/thumb print recognition will mean that students will no longer be identified who are on free schools meals, which we know from experience will be welcomed by both students and parents/carers.

Each student entitled to free school meals will be provided with an account, which you will be able to manage. The account will be credited per day as part of the free school meals scheme. If you want to top up this amount, you can do so as explained in section 4 of this booklet.





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Section 6

Your options, your decision

The new system has an 'opt in' policy for the biometric element. So this means that we need a parent/carers permission to set students up on the system.

If you are happy for your child(ren) to be included, then please sign the form at the end of this booklet and return it to us by the deadline shown in the letter set by your school.

What can I do if I don't want my child (ren) to be on the scheme?

If you would prefer your child not to be included in the biometric part of the system i.e the fingerprint recognition, then please ensure you let us know in writing. This means that your child(ren) will be provided with a pin number to purchase their meals/snacks instead. The pin number will have to be remembered and kept secret by the student.

Can students bring in their own packed lunch?

Yes, although we recommend that students still register with the new system so that they can use the biometric vending machines and buy a healthy drink or snack from the school catering service.

Use of biometric systems in schools is regulated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, for more information please visit www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering





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Section 7 | Technology

What would happen if there was a technical failure with the system – would students still be able to receive their meals?

Whilst we are not expecting the system to fail, with the system established in 100's of schools across England and Wales, the tested back up procedures have proven reliable. However, in the case of an emergency where the technology did go out of action, we would resort to a manual log system for that day of what the students purchased, and log their details against each account for debit purposes. Rest assured we will ensure the students receive their food on that day.

Is the system accessible for all students?

Yes it is. One of the benefits of the new system is that it does not distinguish between students. We have carried out a full equality impact assessment to ensure accessibility is of a very high standard.

For example, those entitled to free school meals cannot be identified. Also, those who have accessibility considerations can also be catered for to ensure that all students and staff receive the same quality service.

If students have special requirements, let us know and we can make sure the system is set up to cater for these needs before it goes live.





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Section 8

New system, new menu?

There will not be changes made to the menu following the roll out of the new system. We are committed to support in the Welsh Government's Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009, which encourages healthy choices for students and staff.

Every day there is also a main meal option, a Chef's special and vegetarian option, catering for all dietary needs. To provide you with an idea of what's available visit www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering

All our vending machines will be stocked with healthy options, including water, low sugar fruit juices, low fat milkshakes and a selection of hot beverages.

You can view the school's menu in full at www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering

Some schools may have a smaller selection of products.





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Section 9

Contact us

If, after reading through this booklet, you still have questions, please email your queries to cashlesscatering@cardiff.gov.uk.

There is also lots more information available at www.cardiff.gov.uk/catering.





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Section 10

Consent form

Please consider the options and return it back to us, signed, by the date shown on the letter sent by your school. I agree to the terms and conditions and authorise my child(ren) to be included in the Biometric Cashless System.

Name of child 1		Year	
Name of child 2		Year	
Name of child 3		Year	
Name of child 4		Year	
Name of parent			
Signature			
Date			
Comments			

