

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST GOES CASHLESS

WHY THE TRUST DECIDED TO GO CASHLESS

More and more schools across the UK are joining Multi Academy Trusts. Schools are seeing the benefits of working closely together towards a shared goal. Many MATs have the shared processes and systems to gain efficiencies.

This is the case for the Avocet Multi Academy Trust.

Zoe Stewart, the Trust Finance Officer explains why they made the move to online payments: "Security was one of the main factors for us, holding cash on the premises and banking meant our processes were not as secure as we would have liked them to be. This, along with the opportunity to improve the overall effectiveness of administration time amongst staff helped our decision."

There were also other reasons the trust decided online payments would be better suited to them: "Parents are happier with this option because their child is spending money where intended; they have 24-hour access to their online account and can book school meals or pay for trips whenever they like, it's convenient for them."

HOW THE TRUST SELECTED A PROVIDER

Zoe explains: "When choosing a provider, it is important to explore options. We compared 3 providers and found ParentPay excelled on the options available to our parents. Their system was the only one to offer us a full tablet and mobile responsive option; it also offers cash payments via PayPoint for families unable to access online banking. We needed to ensure that all our parents are able to pay for their child's requirements quickly and easily. ParentPay was the perfect option for parents."

HOW HAVE YOU ENCOURAGED PARENTS

There are different ways to encourage and support parents with the change, Zoe outlines how the Avocet MAT encouraged their parents: "We have supported parents across the trust by placing an iPad in the reception area of the schools, encouraging any parents requiring help/without online access, to come to the school and log-in with our help. These have remained in place and we are happy to support at all times. The parents understand it is in everyone's interest."

OBJECTIVE

Saving time and increasing school meal uptake across our schools.

SOLUTION

Cashless collection with settlement to a shared central bank account with cross-school online sign on and reporting.

OUTCOMES

Improved efficiencies across all schools in our Trust. Increased meal uptake. Convenient for parents to pay.



The cloud based system has proved invaluable for managers to access individual school information from any location

Zoe Stewart,
Avocet Multi Academy Trust

TO FIND OUT MORE OR ARRANGE A FREE VISIT
PLEASE CALL 02476 994 870

BENEFITS FOR THE TRUST SINCE GOING CASHLESS

There are a number of benefits to schools in going cashless. Zoe says: "Payments via ParentPay are settled directly to our bank account, and with the reconciliation reports available the whole process is much more efficient for us. It's also easy for parents when booking lunches and trips online.

As a trust, benefits include more efficient and effective use of admin time across all schools. The cloud based system has proved invaluable for managers to access individual school information through ParentPay from any location, which is important as the trust grows."

LESSONS TO SHARE WITH OTHER SCHOOLS

Zoe outlines: "As with anything, change can be met with resistance. However, once we recognised the major savings for the academy, we knew it would be a huge benefit to everyone. Parents had a terms notice, we provided instructions in our weekly newsletters, and of course were always happy to offer our assistance via the school office".

USEFUL TIPS

- 1. AGREE A CASHLESS STRATEGY WITH SLT AND COMMUNICATE THIS TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS**
Your strategy could be something as simple as: From next term we'll be offering and encouraging parents to pay for items online, helping us reduce cash in school. Our aim is to be totally cashless in 5 years. Or your strategy could be more aggressive: All parents must pay online or through PayPoint from next term.
- 2. HAVE A PLAN THAT CAN DELIVER YOUR STRATEGY**
Plan key timescales including an onsite system demonstration, getting sign-off by SLT/Governors, staff training and roll-out. ParentPay advisors can help you with this.
- 3. RAISE AWARENESS AND INTEREST**
Central to your plan should be communication with parents and staff. Keep communication simple and positive. Our advisors can work with you to plan communications to suit your school. Aside from using your website, you could also use letters and emails as well as parent's evenings and events.
- 4. SPARK ACTION**
Consider a promotion to encourage parents to pay online or through PayPoint. Eg: for a specific event or school trip.
- 5. BE INCLUSIVE AND PROVIDE FOR CASH BASED PAYERS**
94% of parents prefer to pay online, but for those who don't or can't, sign-post them to PayPoint. There are over 33,000 local shops offering PayPoint across the UK.

GET STARTED, IT'S SIMPLE

Our experienced advisors are ready to help, they can answer any questions you may have; provide a quote for your school; or give a demonstration of our system. You can even arrange to see us in person; we'll visit your school and show you and your staff how it all works.

TO FIND OUT MORE OR ARRANGE A FREE VISIT
PLEASE CALL 02476 994 870