

# NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOL BECOMES CASHLESS

## BERKELEY PRIMARY ON GOING CASHLESS

In 2016 North Lincolnshire Council decided to utilise ParentPay as a means for schools to collect income online from parents for school meals. Now, ParentPay is used by 30+ schools in North Lincolnshire, and is helping save time and improve processes.

Sukhi Dhinsa, Administration Assistant at Berkeley Primary School shares their experience of ParentPay: "Our school launched ParentPay in January 2017 and going cashless with dinner payments has been amazing! Dinner money is centrally banked and settled directly to the LA, making the process so much more efficient for everyone. We can record meal attendance, and pupil balances are automatically debited to reflect this. The system also recognises which pupils are eligible for UIFSM or FSM and ensures they are not charged."

Sukhi continues: "Parents love it too. They can log in when ever they like, select as many items as they like, and make one single payment, it's easy.

We also use the system to collect income for our breakfast club. In future, we'd like to add other items as we become more familiar with all the system has to offer."

## PREPARING PARENTS FOR THE CHANGE

Sukhi outlines the steps they took to prepare parents for the move to become cashless; "Be sure to notify parents in advance, before making the move. We sent out a letter explaining our plans to parents so they were aware of the up and coming changes. Parents will need an email address in order to activate their account and make payments, so if they don't have one, they're advised to create an email account first. We notified parents of this and it worked well, as they knew what was initially required."

## HOW HAVE YOU ENCOURAGED PARENTS TO PAY ONLINE?

Sukhi explains: "Ensure parents have support. ParentPay has parental guidance available for those who prefer to set up their accounts on their mobile or at home if required. I help parents in the office for those few that struggle to follow instructions. Parents realise they're able to make easier, faster, and more convenient payments to school now, and we like ParentPay it's very user friendly!"

### OBJECTIVE

Become a cashless school. Make paying more convenient for parents and the process more efficient for school.

### SOLUTION

Introduce online payment system via Local Authority agreement.

### OUTCOMES

Paying and processing payments is easier for parents and staff.



Going cashless with dinner payments has been amazing!

Sukhi Dhinsa  
Berkeley Primary School

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

In terms of banking, this has been one of our biggest changes, as I no longer need to! ParentPay has helped massively, as there is no need to spend hours on finance and admin tasks associated with collecting and reconciling cash and cheque payments. Using ParentPay saves us about 2 days a month, which is great as it means we can put this to better use elsewhere.

Personally, a big benefit for me is that the end of term is no longer a stressful time, it's so much easier to keep on top of payments. I can log in and view the small list of accounts in debt, then send reminders via the system to those parents within minutes. It's been great!"

## ADVICE TO OTHER SCHOOLS

Maria reiterates the importance of communicating the change to parents: "It's important parents know what they can expect and what it means if they don't activate their accounts. They need to book their child's meals and pay for trips so they don't miss out.

If you have or work with a pre-school or nursery attached to the school, get them paying online too. This may only be for milk or meals initially, but by the time they join the school, parents will already be familiar with the system and how it works.

There have been parents that have not found it as easy as others, but we tackled this head on and invited them into the office to take them through the process. This takes a bit of time, but is worth it in the long run, as they become more confident paying this way, and now we're 100% cashless."

## 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