

# LONDON SCHOOL SHARES BENEFITS OF GOING CASHLESS

## WHY CHELSEA ACADEMY WENT CASHLESS

Lucian Boyd Harte, Director of Finance and Operations at Chelsea Academy in London, provides an insight into his experience of becoming cashless:

“Having introduced ParentPay at my previous school, I was aware of how we could use the system to our full advantage. When I joined Chelsea Academy, ParentPay was already in place, but the Academy was not using it to its full potential to maximise efficiency, not only for the school, but for our students and parents too.”

Lucian elaborates: “Becoming cashless is more convenient for parents, they can pay for their child’s meals on their lunch break, after work or out of hours. This removes the students need to carry cash into school on public transport, and makes paying for school items more secure and safer for our students.

In addition to this, we have seen a significant reduction in administrative time and resource wasted as a result of collecting, counting and reconciling cash payments, and the system provides much more transparency.”

## GOING CASHLESS BY BEING INCLUSIVE

Reasons for going cashless vary depending on aims and requirements, Lucian outlines what these were for Chelsea Academy: “The school has a high FSM intake and didn’t wish to penalise parents that found using the internet difficult, therefore alternative payment options that didn’t involve the academy collecting cash were scored highly.

ParentPay offering integration with PayPoint facilities fitted the criteria perfectly. It is an all-inclusive option which caters for every demographic, and handles all our payment collection needs. It is also easy for parents and school administrators to use, as well as being compatible with our cashless catering facilities, whilst offering competitive payment service fees.”

## REALISING THE BENEFITS

Collecting payments online and via PayPoint can offer a number of efficiencies. Lucian explains how his previous academy, and Chelsea Academy have benefitted: “ParentPay offers accountability and transparency for all aspects of the payment process, from payment to settlement.”

### OBJECTIVE

Offer convenient and secure alternative methods of payment.  
Reduce administration.

### SOLUTION

Effectively utilise socially inclusive online payment system, compatible with catering system.

### OUTCOMES

Saves time/ resource. Streamlined, inclusive and secure processes. Happy parents.



An all-inclusive option which caters for every demographic, and handles all our payment collection needs

Lucian Boyd Harte  
Chelsea Academy

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In addition to this Lucian states: "There is virtually no need for any staff except the finance team to handle cash as it is all processed online. Security has increased with no manual banking required, this along with the automated reporting, saves the finance team countless hours of administration, valuable time which is now more efficiently utilised."

## HOW CHELSEA ACADEMY DID IT

Lucian offers advice for best practice: "In removing cash from the academy, we offered parents two other, more flexible ways to pay for all trips and meals. After a year, all trip payments are now processed online and approximately 65% of meal payments, taking into account our FSM uptake. Parents generally provide positive feedback and love the system. Some will resist initially, but they adjust to the change over time and many prefer this."

Chelsea Academy provides some useful tips and things to consider: "Making the system obligatory for non-meal payments. Inform parents they must pay online or via PayPoint if there is a trip or item available they wish to pay for."

Lucian adds: "If you have cash loaders for school meal payments, reduce their opening hours, making topping up online the quicker and easier option. Students will then encourage their parents to use the system."

Regarding administration, Lucian advises: "Appoint someone to administer and manage the system, especially if you have a large number of trips or items that require payment."

Lucian concludes: "The system does what it is designed to do. It processes payments for anything you wish to charge for, and it does so with a simple log in for parents. What's also handy is if a parent has more than one child, you can add all of the children to the same account, even if they attend different schools, providing that school also uses ParentPay. This, coupled with its competitive payment service fees, means it is an ideal online payments provider for schools."

## 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.

### 6. **REMEMBER ALERTS AND REMINDERS**

Provide balance or new payment notifications via ParentPay's email and text system to increase early payments and drive uptake

## 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.

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