

INCOME CHALLENGES SOLVED BY GOING CASHLESS

WHY EDINBURGH PRIMARY WENT CASHLESS

Annette House, School Business Manager at Edinburgh Primary, East London, outlined why the school decided to go cashless by collecting online payments: "Within a short period of time we went from a small school to trebling in size. One person counting and reconciling dinner money was never going to be manageable. Management of parental debt was becoming a concern... we just did not have the time to chase up parents payments and we needed to tackle the issue quickly."

The school could not justify increasing staffing to resolve the issue, so Annette spoke to other schools with similar demographics and found that many had successfully resolved income collection issues by going cashless.

The Edinburgh SLT decided that removing cash from school by deploying an online payment and debt management system was the clear way forward.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT SOLUTION

Keen to 'get it right first time' Edinburgh appointed a project manager to evaluate whether there was a valid business case to switch to a cashless solution. The figures stacked up - cementing the need to get a solution in place as soon as possible.

Annette worked with the project manager to capture school requirements, before requesting proposals from suitable potential providers. Annette also gained stakeholders buy-in by involving them from the initial requirements gathering stage, reviewing proposals through to attending supplier presentations.

Annette says: "It was important that a future cashless school did not disadvantage any child and should also add value to all stakeholders: whether they are staff or parents. Due to the schools social demographics, some parents do not always have access to the internet at home or in some cases, personal bank accounts. The solution needed to be socially inclusive and parent friendly whilst also making income collection more efficient for school staff.

ParentPay already had over 1 million users and was the only proven solution partner with PayPoint; meaning that even parents who still 'needed' to pay cash to school could still do this through one of over 25,000 PayPoint stores across the UK."

OBJECTIVE

Make counting and reconciling dinner money and chasing parent debt more manageable. Become more efficient.

SOLUTION

Remove cash from school by deploying a socially inclusive online payment and debt management system.

OUTCOMES

Saved countless hours of valuable finance and admin time. Convenient for parents. A significant reduction in school debt.



In a short period of time the school trebled in size. One person counting and reconciling dinner money was never going to be manageable

Annette House
Edinburgh Primary school

INCOME CHALLENGES SOLVED BY GOING CASHLESS

This proven solution ensured no parent needed to send cash to school again - helping Edinburgh fulfil a cashless vision. Annette commented: "I was convinced that offering parents the ability to pay online, see live balances and obtain alerts combined with offering cash payments via PayPoint - offered total peace of mind."

ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO GET ON BOARD

It is important that parents are made aware the service exists, and how to use it, whilst also outlining the benefits the school, children and their parents gain by going cashless.

Annette outlined the steps they took at Edinburgh to get parents on board: "Before the launch we drip fed the parents with notices around the school highlighting the advantages of paying online or cash through PayPoint. We ran presentations to the parents from April right through to September - we didn't miss any opportunities to promote the use of ParentPay, we even had staff wearing T shirts with the ParentPay logo!"

Annette highlighted the importance of planning ahead: "We had a computer in the front office to encourage parents to login and activate their ParentPay accounts which ensured those without internet access at home could use ParentPay. We also made sure that every single item that parents needed to purchase was available online. ParentPay has become the one stop shop we envisaged."

ACHIEVEMENTS AS A RESULT

Annette was clear that there have already been measurable benefits gained since the school went cashless: "We have easily gained the benefits we thought we could at the outset. We have saved countless hours of time by no longer dealing with cash. Parents can access balances 24/7 and get text and email alerts; helping ensure school debt has gone from thousands to less than a hundred pounds most weeks!"

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