



# KENT SCHOOL GOES CASHLESS WITH ONLINE PAYMENTS

## WHY THIS SECONDARY SCHOOL WANTED TO GO CASHLESS

Sharon Mills at St Anselm’s Catholic School decided it was time to look at changing the processes in school surrounding the collecting, counting and reconciling of cash and cheque payments made on a daily basis.

Sharon stated: “Our main goal was to reduce cash and cheque payments made to the school. Since introducing ParentPay, we have successfully managed to achieve this, with approximately 93% of our parents using the system to pay online, meaning we very rarely have to make a trip to the bank now.”

## DECIDING ON THE RIGHT SYSTEM

Sharon explains how they made their decision: “We looked at several systems to see what they offered before deciding on ParentPay.

There were a number of reasons we chose ParentPay, we needed a provider that linked well with our MIS, cashless catering systems and offered the flexibility we needed to add trips and other items. We also wanted to use the same system to contact parents and provide updates easily. ParentPay also offers comprehensive support, which is on hand when we need it.”

## THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE PAYMENTS

St Anselm’s have noticed positive changes since introducing ParentPay. Sharon explains: “Not only has the volume of cash and cheque payments reduced by approximately 80%, but staff like ParentPay because it cuts down the time they need to spend on trips, as reports and payee lists are easily accessible.”

Sharon added: “Our parents like paying online too, because it offers a secure way of making payments for their children. They particularly like that they are able to see what their child is eating each day from within their account.

Our parents also like that they can receive communications through ParentPay, before, letters didn’t always make it home to the parent.”

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### OBJECTIVE

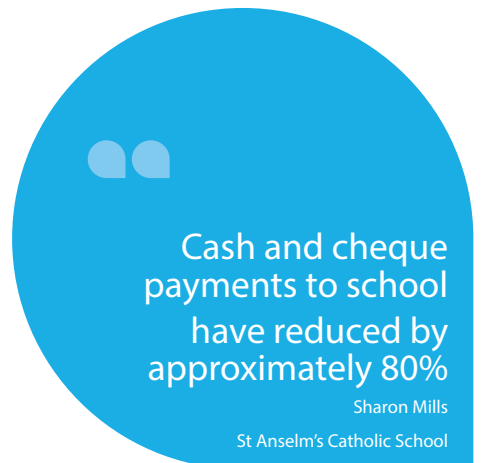
To reduce the volume of cash and cheque payments made to school.

### SOLUTION

Introduce an online payment facility to suit school requirements and link with existing systems.

### OUTCOMES

Streamlined processes, reduced admin and time spent on associated tasks. Happy parents.

Cash and cheque payments to school have reduced by approximately 80%

Sharon Mills  
St Anselm’s Catholic School

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From an administrative perspective, Sharon adds: "It is quick and easy to set up payment items, send new item alerts and reminders to parents. If we ever need any help, there has always been a good level of support from ParentPay."

## ENGAGING PARENTS

When introducing something new which will involve parents, it is important to communicate about change early. Sharon outlines how they did this at St Anselm's: "We make it a priority at the beginning of each academic year to send out activation letters to all new students. Any new starters that may join during the year are also issued with their personal activation letter."

Sharon continues: "Regular checks in the system ensure we identify those parents who have not yet activated their account, we then send them a letter to encourage them to log in and pay online."

## LESSONS TO SHARE WITH OTHER SCHOOLS

Sharon outlined the importance of clear consistent communication to maximise uptake: "All of our staff are aware they are to send a letter via ParentPay if they need to request payment for uniform, books, non-uniform days and trips."

In addition: "Once I have added the required payment item, I always update parents with a notification the new item has been added and is available to pay for via ParentPay. It is possible to tailor the recipients of the letter; so only those participating in the trip receive it and we can also choose to make the letter available to parents upon logging into their ParentPay account, which is really useful."

## 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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