

# LANCASHIRE SCHOOL IMPROVES EFFICIENCY WITH ONLINE PAYMENTS

## WHY ST CHRISTOPHER'S CE HIGH SCHOOL WENT CASHLESS

Joanne Nutter, School Administrator at St Christopher's High School in Lancashire talks about why her school decided to collect payments online.

Joanne outlined the challenges being faced on a daily basis with cash and cheques coming into school: "Pupils were bringing cash and cheques in for trips and clubs and handing this to teachers, it wasn't very practical, convenient or secure. By deciding to take online payments we eliminated many problems associated with cash collection.

Using ParentPay has made it much easier for us to track income, the audit trail is clear meaning we don't lose track of any payments and ensures money is spent on its intended purpose."

## THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE PAYMENTS

Joanne talks about the positive changes since using ParentPay: "ParentPay has reduced the need for having to manually collect and count cash in school on a daily basis. Receipts are provided automatically for the parents upon payment, they can be easily reminded when their balance is running low and are prompted to top up."

In addition to this, Joanne feels the school is more secure: "School income is settled directly to our school bank accounts and reconciliation is easier. Reducing the amount of cash in school is safer for everyone and is far more efficient, enabling staff to spend time on other demanding tasks in the office."

## ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO PAY ONLINE

Joanne summarises how St Christopher's have encouraged their parents to get involved: "We have been proactive in promoting ParentPay in school from day one. We ensure the parents of our new intake year 7 pupils are informed of our preference for online payments at their induction meeting, so they are aware of the procedure in school.

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### OBJECTIVE

To remove cash and cheques from the classroom. Make payments easier to track. Make reporting and reconciliation easier.

### SOLUTION

Collect payments online with direct settlement to the school bank account and online reporting.

### OUTCOMES

Streamlined, efficient and more secure payment collection. Offers school and parents peace of mind.



ParentPay reduced the manual collecting and counting of cash on a daily basis.

Joanne Nutter,  
St Christopher's CE High School

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# LANCASHIRE SCHOOL IMPROVES EFFICIENCY

We send out letters to parents informing them of up and coming trips and clubs and really encourage parents to pay via ParentPay.

We offer support to parents who are a little unsure and help them to log in or activate their accounts if they haven't already done so.

Teaching staff were also keen to use the system and encourage students to use ParentPay; it helps them too as it reduces the burden of collecting cash and cheques from pupils during the day."

Joanne adds: "The majority of our parents are happy to pay online now, some still want to make manual cash payments, although we are comfortable with that, we do suggest they try using ParentPay first."

Once parents have used the system, they see how easy it is. We are also considering introducing PayPoint with ParentPay, which allows cash based payers to top up ParentPay in local stores."

## ADVICE TO OTHER SCHOOLS

Joanne shares some useful insight around getting started: "Promote ParentPay to your new intake as early and as much as possible, then work your way through the school.

Let them know the benefits and always use ParentPay as the default method of payment, only offer other alternatives if really necessary.

Paying this way will prove the best way for parents and the school. Parents can also see what their child is eating, offering the peace of mind their money is being spent on its intended purpose."

## 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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