



**Meadowhead School**

**Academy Trust**

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26<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

We are very pleased to announce that we are installing a cashless catering system at Meadowhead in May 2019. The new system will provide our students with a more efficient, faster and ultimately better quality of service.

This system incorporates the latest technology and eliminates the need for students to carry cash throughout the day thus reducing the risk of bullying. It is also biometric (see FAQ's overleaf) so there is no need for students to carry a card as the system will recognise the thumb of your child at the balance check points and at the tills.

We will commence operating the system on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**. We will continue to accept cash at one till point through to the end of the summer term but the provision at Meadowhead will be fully cashless from September 2019 and as such will not accept cash payments in the new academic year.

All students and staff will be given training on how to use the system.

Any amount of money can be paid into a student's account, and any money spent on food and drink will be deducted on a daily basis.

Payment can be made to your child's account via the SIMS Pay online payment platform. Options to access this system are explained within the FAQ's overleaf.

A daily 'spend limit' of £5.00 will be programmed into the system. This can be increased or decreased for an individual student by making a written request to the school finance office.

As per current legislation we will be operating an 'Opt In' policy and therefore require you to complete the attached form. If you choose not to have your child registered on the Biometric System the only option will be for the till operator to find them by name and form group and confirm visual recognition against the photos we have registered on our student information management system.

More information is available on the school website which should answer any questions you may have. If this is not the case please email your questions to:

[cashless-catering@meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:cashless-catering@meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk) this email account will be monitored daily.

Yours sincerely,

Kam Grewal-Joy  
Headteacher

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is a cashless system?

A Cashless Catering System is a solution which is purpose designed to meet the ever evolving needs and demands of the catering provision, required by today's schools and academies. The Trust-e Cashless Solution allows schools to be better able to provide their students and staff with a faster, more efficient and more appealing meal service.

## What is 'biometric'?

Biometric is simply a method of identifying an individual person. The Trust-e Cashless System uses an algorithm based scan, which reads between 50 and 130 points on the finger/thumb. It is not a fingerprint in any way, shape or form and is of use only in the Cashless System.

## How does a biometric system work?

The information of a student or staff member, who has been biometrically registered, is stored on a secure biometric controller within the school, which only your provider, Civica, can access with permission from the school. Once an account is created, the student or staff member places their finger/thumb on the EPOS Terminal Biometric Reader, which looks up their account and allows them to purchase items using only this method of identification.

## How does my child register on the biometric system?

Registration days will take place during the week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> May. During these days, registration terminals will be placed in the school. Your child will attend at a requested time and will be required to place their finger/thumb on the Biometric Reader twice to obtain a matching template, which only takes a few seconds.

## How do 'free meal' entitlements work?

All free meal entitlements will be entered on to the system prior to the 'live' day. The Cashless Catering System will, on a daily basis, automatically allocate the appropriate accounts with the free school meal amount. Students with FSM entitlement remain anonymous at all times as all account types are accessed in the exact same manner, regardless of whether paid for or not. Please note that any monies not spent from the daily free meal allocation will not be carried over to the next day.

## Can anyone else use my child's account?

No – due to the extensive security on biometric templates, no-one will be able to access your child's account. As a secondary precaution, a photo image is allocated to each student, the photograph will be shown at the EPOS Terminal.

## What methods of payment can be used to credit an account?

Any amount can be credited to an account by way of any of the following methods. Once an account has been credited, the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break services.

## Online Payments

We have introduced online payments in partnership with the Cashless Catering Solution. To make a payment online please go to [www.sims-pay.co.uk](http://www.sims-pay.co.uk)

## PayPoint

You can choose to be issued with a PayPoint card, which can be used to top up your child's account at your local PayPoint stores. Payments via PayPoint will take up to 48 hours to be credited to the appropriate account. You can find your local stores by visiting the website below:

<http://www.paypoint.co.uk/locator.aspx>

## How can I check the credit on an account?

This can be done by the account holder either placing their finger/thumb on the Balance Checker scanner. The current balance will then be displayed. This can also be accessed via the schools online payment facility, if applicable.

## Can I change my child's 'daily spend limit'?

The school has set a daily spend limit of £5. This can be changed by written request to the school.

## What happens if my child's account is not in credit?

A 'lend' can be processed at the EPOS terminal, which will then allow a meal to be taken. This facility will allow for one transaction only. The debt must be cleared by topping up online before the student accesses the system again.