



# MILLAIS SCHOOL

A DCSF Designated Language College and Training School

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8 June 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians

## School Food - New Cashless Catering System

I am writing to let you know that Millais will be introducing and operating a new 'cashless' system for the sale of our school food from September 2009, to support the growth and development of healthy eating in the school.

Similar systems are already in use in many schools, both locally and nationally and we are excited by the many important benefits to parents, students and the school:

### *For Parents*

- Parental control of spend (daily limits can be set)
- Confirmation that students are eating in school and not buying sweets etc from local shops
- Ease of payment and payment up front means not having to find cash every day
- Free meal student anonymity
- Online information available regarding daughter's purchases

### *For Students*

- Quicker queues
- Menus more in line with healthy food preferences
- Free meal student anonymity
- No need to carry cash around
- Removes cash incentive as a target for bullies.

### *For School*

- Data available for monitoring food choices, targeted menu development, pricing, marketing, stocking and reporting on compulsory nutritional standards
- Reduced cash handling and less risk to staff
- Reduced scope for fraud and improved audit compliance
- Speeds up lunchtime service
- Scope for integrating into other school systems such as library, registration, security access and other student-focused initiatives.

Current students will be registered with an account during the weeks commencing 6 and 13 July 2009. From the start of the new school year in September, **no cash** will be accepted at any of our catering outlets in the school.

All data held on systems within the school is stored and handled under the provisions of the Data Protection Act and only used for school purposes and by parties directly involved with the implementation and operation of the relevant systems.



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We have endeavoured to answer some key questions about the new system and in addition, have arranged a voluntary meeting for any parents to attend on **Thursday 18 June at 7.00pm**, to be held in the School Library. The purpose of this meeting is to demonstrate the electronic point of sale system and answer any further questions you may have. Please let us know if you will be attending by emailing [lettings@millais.co.uk](mailto:lettings@millais.co.uk) or completing the reply slip below and returning it to Mrs Davis by Monday 15 June 2009.

We place great value on our parental support and would like to thank you in advance as we seek to deliver a more efficient service while continuing to provide wholesome, healthy and enjoyable meals prepared on our premises at affordable prices.

Yours sincerely



**Leon Nettley**  
**Headteacher**

X.....

**CASHLESS CATERING PARENTS INFORMATION EVENING**

*I will be attending the Cashless Catering Meeting at Millais School on Thursday 18 June at 7.00pm in the School Library.*

**Name:** .....

**Daughter's name**.....**Tutor Group**.....

**Signature**.....**Date:**.....

Please let us know if you will be attending by emailing [lettings@millais.co.uk](mailto:lettings@millais.co.uk) or completing the reply slip overleaf and returning it to Mrs Davis by Monday 15 June, 2009.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **What is a Cashless System?**

At the heart of the cashless system there is a software programme that allows the system to recognise each pupil, hold individual cash balances, record cash spent and cash received, record where money is spent, on what food, and on any specific date and time of day.

### **How are pupils and staff recognised by the system?**

All students and staff will be registered by biometric measurement and their identity validated by the photograph already held on the School Information Management System. The biometric measurement involves the measurement of a number of points on a finger image. This information is then converted by an algorithm and stored as a unique number. The same biometric store can function with library lending and photocopying software, and other applications in the future. The system operates successfully in other West Sussex schools, including Warden Park. Parents, staff and students can rest assured that the information held **cannot** be re-converted back into an image, or be used by any other source for identification purposes. The information will be held on a secure server in a locked room, with restricted access, as part of the internal school network.

### **How is this then used to obtain a school meal?**

Students and staff simply place their finger on a scanner at the till; a display will show the till operator the person's name and current cash balance held within the system. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised touch screen menu, leaving the amount spent and the new cash balance shown on the display.

### **How is money entered into the system?**

You can pay money in the following ways:

#### *ParentPay*

Millais is introducing a dedicated, proven and secure online electronic payment method for schools called *ParentPay*. You will be sent a letter giving a user name and password. By logging on to [ParentPay.com](http://ParentPay.com) you can credit your child's account using a debit or credit card. Any payments made via the website will be credited to the account in school within 20 minutes. At the end of each school day the accounts are updated so you can view the account balance on a daily basis. *ParentPay* can also be used to pay for other things the school may charge for such as trips, special activities, materials and books; more details will be sent with your user name and password.

#### *Other payments methods*

In addition, there will be the facility to pay by cheque direct to the school's finance office. If presented before 9.30 am the funds will be added to the account in time for lunch.

To enable the finance office to identify the pupil account in which to place any payment by 'Cheque' – you will need to write the 'Full Name and Tutor group' of the pupil on the back of the cheque. If the payment is to be shared between two pupils, please identify both with full names and tutor groups.



Students entitled to free school meals will have their account credited with the correct allowance each day. If they wish to spend more on a meal, then the parents would need to add extra funds to their child's account using one of the methods listed above.

**How will the pupil be able to check what the current cash balance is held in the system at any one time?**

A remote display at the point of sale will show the new cash balance when the food service is finished.

**If we pay for a set number of school meals, can it be spent in one day?**

No, a daily spend limit of £ 4.00 will be set for all pupils and no food above that limit can be bought. On request, an individual pupil limit of your choice could also be set, to include a school dinner and break time snacks. You will have the facility to check balances through *ParentPay* each day.

**What if the pupil does not hold a sufficient cash balance one day to pay for a school dinner?**

No 'overdraft' facilities will be allowed on the system. Students and staff must have enough money in their accounts to purchase a meal.

**What about pupils entitled to a 'free school meal'?**

The system works exactly the same for all pupils whether they pay or have a free school meal. All pupils have their own account to use in exactly the same way.

The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system by the software daily and will only be accessible at dinner break. Any under-spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance.

**How will 'healthy eating' be encouraged?**

After the new system has been operating for a while, we hope to enhance the school's 'healthy eating policy'. When the food is selected on the canteen server's keypad, it will also register points for a balanced, healthy and nutritious school dinner. This information can be used for 'healthy eating' awards: individual/tutor group/year group etc.

**Will we be able to have any information on how the system is being used?**

Information on the food eaten on a daily basis can be obtained by logging on to ParentPay with your user name and password.