Cashless Catering Frequently Asked Questions

Why use cashless catering?

- A faster and more efficient meal service
- Students do not need to bring cash to school
- Parents can be confident the money is being used as intended
- It removes the stigma of Free School Meals (FSM); their accounts are topped up automatically each day
- Detailed food and spending reports are available to parents through their ParentPay account

How are students recognised by the system?

- **Biometrics** - providing we receive parental consent, thumbprints are scanned; or
- **PIN number** - a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) is allocated

Do all students need consent to use biometric recognition?

No, only students under 18.

Where do I send completed consent forms?

Consent forms may be handed in at Wingfield Reception or sent direct to the school The John of Gaunt School, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge BA14 9EH. Forms can be downloaded from the school website.

How are accounts charged for school meals?

- **Biometrics** - at the checkout, the student places their finger on a scanner or
- **PIN** - at the checkout, the student enters their unique PIN using a numeric pad

A screen will show the student's name, photograph, class and current cash balance. The food items will be entered into the system from an itemised touch screen and then the amount spent and the new cash balance will be displayed.

How is money paid into meal accounts?

Every student and member of staff will have a meal account and purchases must be paid for in advance.

- Online via ParentPay, the School's on-line payment system. ParentPay will accept debit card and credit card payments. Please note funds added this way could take up to 30 minutes to appear in meal accounts. If you would like information about using ParentPay, please contact Mrs Surgey or Mrs Gray in the Finance Office on 01225 711165/4.
- Students may top-up their meal accounts using cash (coins and notes) at the cash loader machine located in the canteen. The cash loader will only accept: £20, £10 and £5 notes and £2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p and 5p coins. Cash is not accepted at any till

How will parents and students check balances?

- Parents can log onto their ParentPay account to view the balances on their children's meal accounts

office@jogschool.org   01225 762637   www.jogschool.org

The John of Gaunt School, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 9EH

The John of Gaunt School is a Limited Company registered in England - Company Number 7990655
Registered Office - Wingfield Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 9EH

Ofsted
Good
Provider

Headteacher: Mr M. Woodville

- Students can see their balances on the cash loading devices. They are not required to deposit funds to view balances.

Is there a limit on the amount students can spend each day?

The default daily limit is £5. Parents may instruct the school to set a higher or lower limit in one of the following ways:
- Indicate the preferred amount on the biometric permission letter
- Send a signed letter or note addressed to the "Finance Office"
- Email payments@jogschool.org

How much should I pay into meal accounts?

Meal accounts can be topped up daily, weekly, monthly or termly. It is up to you to decide the amount that is sufficient for your child. If you are giving your child cash, they will need to use the cash loader machine before they can make any purchases, so it may be advisable to do this weekly as we only have one cash loader on site. A daily spend limit can be set to ensure funds added to the meal account last for the intended period (see previous question). Again, please bear in mind that payments via ParentPay can take up to 30 minutes to reach meal accounts.

What if the student does not hold sufficient balance to cover their purchases?

The school retains the right to refuse a school meal if a student has insufficient credit or if they forget to bring their lunch money to school. We will endeavour to make allowances on the understanding that parents will ensure the account is settled by the next day or contact the school if there is a delay. Please contact Mrs Gray in the Finance office in this instance.

Why does the school want parents to use ParentPay instead of cash?
- Online payment is more convenient and secure
- Parents can pay in advance: by the week, month, term, whatever suits them best
- Parents can see how much is left on meal accounts at any time either from home, work or smartphone – anywhere they have access to the internet
- Students cannot lose or forget their dinner money
- Students do not have to use their free time to queue at cash loader machines to top-up meal accounts
- Funds can only be spent at the school catering outlets and parents can be confident that dinner money is not used for other purposes
- Parents are able to see what their children are buying, parents without internet access can request a print-out at any time from the Finance office

Why does the school prefer students to use biometric recognition?
- Security – biometric recognition is more secure than a PIN number
- Convenience – students do not need to remember their PIN
- Efficiency – quicker than using PIN numbers

What about students entitled to Free School Meals (FSM)?

The amount allocated for FSM will automatically be credited each day and may be used whenever the catering facilities are open. Any underspend or missed dinner will not be accumulated. Students may add extra cash to their meal accounts by using the cash loader devices; enabling a greater daily spend than allocated by their free meal allowance. Parents may also top up funds using ParentPay. The system will first deduct the free school meal allowance before deducting funds added by students and parents. There is no difference in the way the system is used by FSM students and anyone else. They will remain completely anonymous and catering staff and other students will not be able to identify FSM students who use the catering facilities.

What about Data Protection?

Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include your child's name, class, account balance and meal entitlement. This data will be managed in compliance with the Data Protection Act (GDPR from May 2018) and Protection of Freedoms Act and will only be used in the operation of the cashless meal system. Fingerprints are not stored on the system and none of the information is made available to third parties.

Tell me more about Biometrics

Biometrics are widely used and accepted in thousands of schools in the UK.
New laws on the use of Biometrics in Schools were introduced in September 2012, under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The Biometric system at The John of Gaunt School complies with the provisions and requirements of the new legislation.

Your child's thumbprint is scanned; the software selects several points of the thumbprint; like landmarks on a map. It then takes the co-ordinates of only these specific points and passes them through software that turns them into a numeric code. The image of the thumbprint is never stored. It is impossible to recreate a thumbprint using the code. The codes are only recognised by The John of Gaunt's cashless catering system and are useless to any third parties.

The school must obtain the permission of parents and students to enable students to use the biometric recognition system. The school uses a secondary system (PIN numbers) for students who do not opt-in to the biometric system.

The data will not be transferred to any third party and will be automatically deleted once your child leaves The John of Gaunt School.

office@jogschool.org   01225 762637   www.jogschool.org

The John of Gaunt School, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 9EH

The John of Gaunt School is a Limited Company registered in England - Company Number 7990655
Registered Office - Wingfield Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 9EH

Headteacher: Mr M. Woodville

Ofsted
Good
Provider