Cashless Catering - 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 pupil or staff member, who has been biometrically registered, is stored on a secure biometric controller within the school, which only your provider, Nationwide Retail Systems, can access with permission from the school. Once an account is credited, the pupil 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?
Your child will be required to place their finger/thumb on the Biometric Reader twice to obtain a matching template, which only takes a few seconds; this is completed in the dining room at the start of each term. If you have chosen to opt-out of this procedure, your child will still be able to purchase food by telling the kitchen staff their name.

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 pupil. The photograph shown at the EPOS Terminal will alert the operator of a fraudulent sale.

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 Once an account has been credited, the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break services.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 card payments - via Parentmail
- PayPoint - cash and card payments accepted

How can I check the credit on an account?
This can be accessed via the schools online payment facility – https://pmx.parentmail.co.uk/#core/login

Can I change my child's 'daily spend limit?'
Yes – the amount your child can spend throughout one day can be changed by written request to the office.

What happens if my child's account is not in credit?
An automatic overdraft has been set up, which will allow the child to go into debit at the cost of £2.30 - 1 meal. The Cashless Catering System has a debt tracking facility and the ability to send debt letters to overdue account holders.

How do 'free meal' entitlements work?

All free meal entitlements will be entered on to the system. The Cashless Catering System will, on a daily basis, automatically allocate the appropriate accounts with the free school meal amounts. Pupils 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 I see what my child has eaten each day?

Yes – the Cashless Catering Solution allows numerous reporting facilities, including dietary habits. These can be seen when you login to your child's Parentmail account.

Parentmailpmx FAQ - http://parentmail.co.uk/help/parenthelp/

How do I pay using PayPoint?

You will be sent a barcode that you will need to take to a PayPoint. You can request another copy of the barcode from the school office.

PayPoint is available in over 29,000 quick and convenient places across the UK. Most are open early 'til late, 7 days a week. You can pay in cash, card or contactless.

There are 5 stores within 1 mile of the Academy –

- BP Spar Biggleswade, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EJ
- The Co-op, Saxon Centre, 6 Kingsfield Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8AT
- City Point, 53 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JH
- Asda Superstore, Church Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JS
- Costcutter, 45 Potton Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0DX

How do I top up my child's Dinner Money account from my computer?
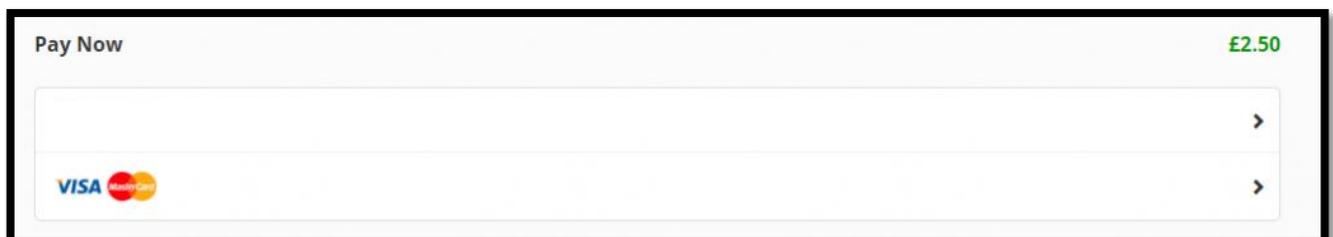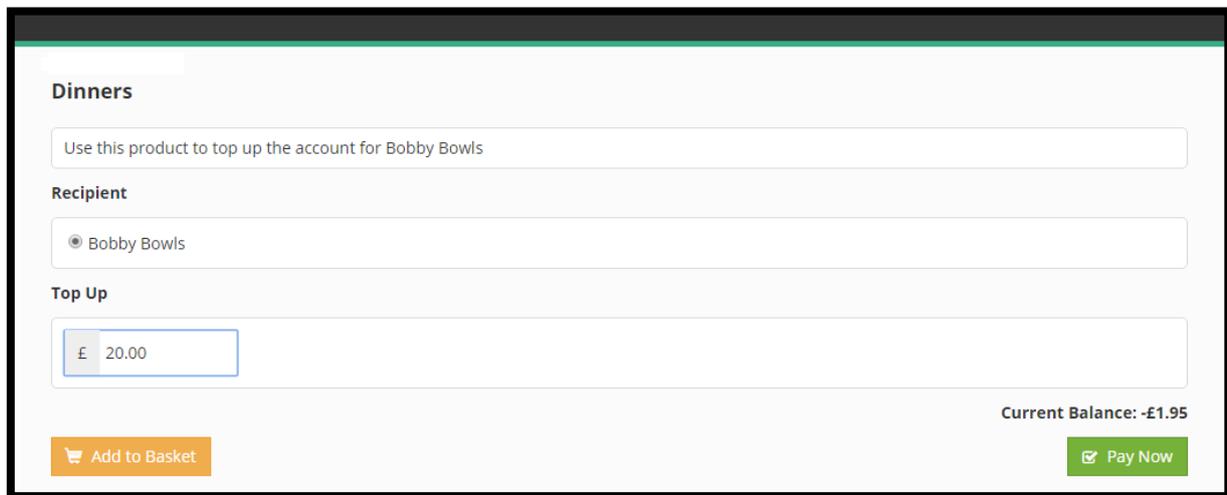To top up a child's Dinner Money balance, please log-in to your ParentMail account and select 'Payments', then 'Shop'. (*Note: If the child's balance is negative, or below the school's pre-set minimum balance, you will see the option to top-up under 'To Pay' as well as 'Shop'*).
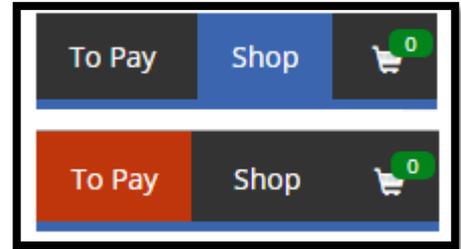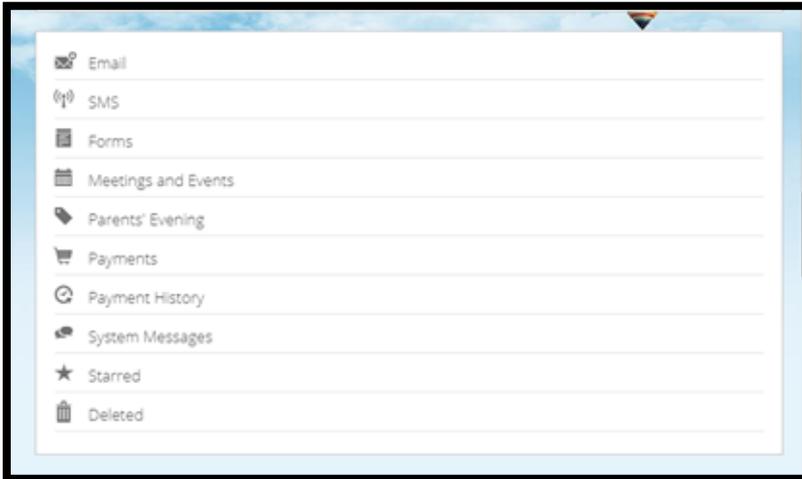
Under the Accounts section, you will see the current balances for any children that you are linked to. Select one of these to enter the top up screen.

Once you have selected the top-up recipient, you can type in an amount to top up. Please note, Biggleswade Academy has a £5.00 minimum top up amount.
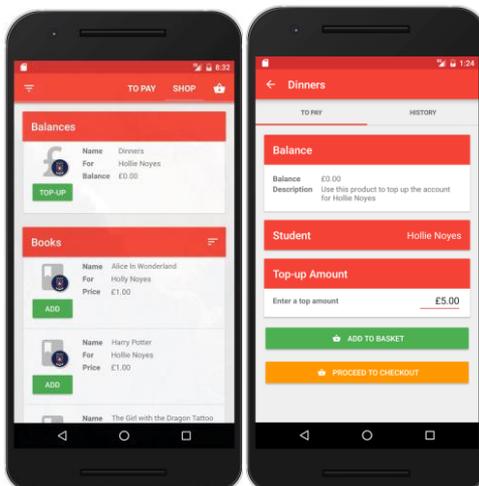
How do I top up my child's Dinner Money account on the App?

Android
To top up a child's Dinner Money balance, within the App select 'Payments' then select 'Shop' from the top bar. (*Note: If the child's balance is negative, or below the school's pre-set minimum balance, you will see the option to top-up under 'To Pay' as well as 'Shop'*).
Under Balances, select Dinners and a new screen will appear. From here you will be able to see the current balance, the student name and then will be able to select the amount you would like to Top-up. You can then select to Add to Basket and continue shopping or Proceed to Checkout.

iOS
To top up a child's Dinner Money balance, within the App select 'Payments' then select 'Shop' from the bottom menu bar (*Note: If the child's balance is negative, or below the school's pre-set minimum balance, you will see the option to top-up under 'To Pay' as well as 'Shop'*).
Under Balances, select Dinners and a new screen will appear. From here you will be able to see the current balance, the student name and then will be able to select the amount you would like to Top-up. You can then select to Add to Basket and continue shopping or Proceed to Checkout.