



ABBEY PARK SCHOOL

15th October 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers

Re: Catering technical issues

I am writing with regards to the catering technical issues we have experienced since we went live for hot food purchases on Monday 5th October, and to apologise for any inconvenience this has caused to you and our students.

Just to give you a bit of background, during the summer break our School Catering cashless till system was updated. We have had a number of technical issues relating to this upgrade which only came to light on Monday 12th October, which related back to the start of service. We are happy to confirm these issues have now been resolved, but this has meant that some of our pupils have had to be charged manually for some meals taken since 5th October. This has in turn caused an automatic ParentPay gentle debt reminder letter to be sent.

As part of the changes we were advised by the software provider to apply an automatic overdraft facility of £2.50 for each pupil. This is because in cases of emergency where a child does not have enough money on their finger for lunch, we do not have time during the 30 minute lunch break to contact parents to put money onto their child's finger. We believe this to be a sensible solution which ensures no pupil will go without lunch.

We do have cash revalue machines on site which in normal times allow pupils to upload cash or check their school dinner money balance, however, due to current Covid restrictions these are out of service. In the meantime, parents can check their balances on ParentPay regularly and use the auto top up facility if a child's balance is low and let their child know what the current balance is. Some children have had no money on their account and have purchased food which has caused them to go into debt. The overdraft is purely there as a buffer, as presently it is difficult to call parents to put money on a child's finger, we are relying on you and your child to keep an eye on it.

If you do not wish your child to have the overdraft facility during this time, please email Finance@abbeyparkschool.org.uk with your child's full name and tutor group, we will ensure the option is removed for you but it may mean your child goes without food in an emergency.



Executive Principal:
Operational Principal:
Vice Principal:

Mr C Zimmerman
Mr J Young
Mrs L Hunter

The Learning Campus, Redhouse Way, Swindon, Wiltshire SN25 2ND
Tel: 01793 705400 Fax: 01793 707596
email: admin@abbeyparkschool.org.uk



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There is also a daily purchase allowance limit, which limits the spend in the canteen to £7.50 a day regardless of the balance, (normally to allow purchases at breakfast, breaks and lunch.) This allowance can be reduced at your request – again please email Finance@abbeyparkschool.org.uk with the amount you wish your child to be allowed to spend on a daily basis.

Once again, we do sincerely apologise for any inconvenience the technical issues have caused some parents, and ask that you please be patient and bear with us whilst we and our catering provider, Sodexo, become accustomed to this new way of providing a safe and more varied catering provision.

Kind regards

Mrs Nicola Pursey
Operations Manager



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