THE STONEHENGE SCHOOL

2025 Cashless Catering and Free School Meals- how it works

We recognise that your child is probably not used to managing money and budgeting for food during the school day. Now that they are at secondary school, we encourage and expect them to start making these decisions for themselves. Adjustment from a primary school to the way a secondary school works can be difficult and confusing at first. By the time they get to year 8 they are experts.

Cashless Catering

First of all, decide with your child if they want to use their thumb print instead of learning a 4-digit pin code. We call this Biometric fingerprinting – for more information please read our Protection of Biometric Information of Children in School Policy 2025 which can be found in the Policies section of the school's website.

Once you have made this decision we need to register your child on our canteen cashless payment system – so they either register their thumb print or are given the pin code.

In 2025, we aim to register their thumbprint during Transition Day on the 2nd July

Free School Meals

If your child is in receipt of FSM – this is what they need to do.

Each day our systems automatically update your child's dinner account with £2.60. This is the value of a Free School Meal. You can top-up this amount at any time using our ParentPay system – there is a daily spend limit of £5.00 on their meals account. Please note that the £2.60 will not show as a credit when you log into ParentPay – it does however show up on the tills in school.

We have breakfast time at 08:00, break time 10:55-11:20 and a lunch time 13:25-14:00 when our facilities are open for snacks and hot food.

Your child has the option of how to "spend" their £2.60 each day – they can choose to buy food in the morning and/or at lunchtime. We recommend however that they buy their main meal at lunchtime.

Sometimes we find that a child has used up all of their £2.60 in the morning break and they do not have any funds left on their account to buy food again at lunchtime. Our cashiers will tell your child if they are almost spent up – they can then offer a different choice of item for them so they don't overspend.

We always send you a Class Charts Announcement to let you know if your child's account needs topping up.

Our ParentPay system allows you to see exactly when and what food they are buying. It might be worth using this facility together for the first few days/weeks and discussing their buying habits with them – this way you can both see how best to manage the daily allowance.

<u>Information for the pupil who is new to FSM.</u>

Your parent will have told you that you can now get a free school meal each day. The process is easy – you don't even have to tell anyone that you are getting free school meals.

Every school day our computer system will automatically put an allowance of £2.60 onto your account – so you have up to this amount to spend each day to get yourself a healthy meal and drink.

All you do, is go to one of the serving hatches – this might be in the dining room or outside at one of the shacks. If you have registered your thumbprint all you do is place your thumb on the pad in front of you, if you have chosen to use a 4 digit PIN simply enter the code, or just tell the cashier your name and what food you would like. That's it! It's that simple.

The computer system will automatically deduct whatever you have "spent" from your daily Free School Meal allowance.

Sometimes you might use up all of your allowance – our cashiers will tell you if you are going to overspend – they can then offer a different choice of item for you so you don't run out of your allowance. Remember – don't spend it all at break, leave some money on your account for lunchtime. You will soon get used to how much the food costs and what you can get for your £2.60.

Your parents can top up your account with a little bit extra if it's needed. You do need to remember though that your parents can have a look at your account to see what you are spending the Free School Meal allowance on.

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