

King Edwin Primary School

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2nd November 2017

Dear Parents / Carers,

Our school has made the decision to move to a cashless system and as of Friday 17th November we intend to only accept payments for school meals, visits, music etc. through our 'School Gateway App'.

Becoming cashless is reportedly more convenient for parents, they can pay for their child's meals on their lunch break, after work or out of hours. This in turn removes the need to carry cash into school and makes paying for school items more secure. In addition to this, we expect to see a significant reduction in administrative time and resource at KEPS as a result of collecting, counting and reconciling cash payments with our system.

We have also negotiated with our app developers so that we can potentially text parents in emergency situations – at no cost to school or parents. Currently we pay for that service and we would rather spend money directly on teaching and learning rather than communication.

Our new 'Gateway' system is already being used by some parents and many have said how pleased they are with it. There are a few parents that have had issues with the app and we always knew that there could be a few problems to start with. Ms Coleman has offered personal support to any family not able to access the **Gateway App** and she has spent considerable time working with the App developers to 'iron out' any of these difficulties.

As of Friday 17th November we expect that all payments for school meals and all meal choices (including if your child brings a packed lunch) to be booked in via the Gateway system. Our school visit payments will also be made in this way.

It is very important to note that even if a child receives universal free school meals in Foundation, Year 1 or Year 2, the gateway must still be used. This is because many children will have a packed lunch or school meal on different days. This is also helpful when children are choosing the alternative school meal of a jacket potato or rolls. We must reiterate that all children in school will need to book their meals using the gateway as of **Friday 17th November**. Ms Coleman is very happy to show parents and talk them through how to get set up with the Gateway and if you have any questions regarding this matter, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Can we also ask that parents ensure that their child is aware of what meal they are having every day. We often have many children that are not sure what they are booked in for, they are sometimes booked in for meals that they say they don't even like. We strongly advise parents to discuss meal choices with their children as a matter of good practise and we know this clearly happens with many children as they tell us regularly about their food choices and preferences. Thank you for your continued support with this.

The **School Gateway App** can be downloaded as an app on any smart phone, iPad or tablet. It is under the name of either **School Gateway** or **School Comms**. Once on the app, a parent must use their email and telephone number that is on our school contact list. You will then be sent a pin code. This will allow you to make payments and once you have paid using your debit/credit card future payments will not require you to repeat the process. If your details do not match those held at school, the App will not recognise the parent. In this instance you must contact school to update details.

Mr Bandy has offered to produce help guides to support with use of the App and these will be available shortly. Thank you for your support regarding this development at our school.

Kind Regards

Mr Callaghan-Wetton, Ms Coleman and Mrs Armitage