



# St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy

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Dear Parents,

17<sup>th</sup> September 2019



Parentpay is a secure online system used by over 4 million parents across the UK. It is being introduced at St Augustine's to provide parents with a simple, convenient way of receiving communications as well as paying for meals, school visits, swimming lessons and very soon, Little Stars breakfast and after school club (more information to follow).

Once you have activated your Parentpay account by following the instructions on the activation letter which will be sent home with your child on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September, with immediate effect you will be able to give permission for your child to attend a visit and pay for it online without the need to complete and return a paper form. It will be quick and easy to find out what your lunch balance is at any time and keep up to date with payments. You will also be able to find all communications from school such as newsletters and information about events in one handy *Communications* section of the Parentpay site, meaning past emails can be found quickly and easily in one place without the need to look through your inbox each time. Any payments you have already made this term for Visits, Meals and Swimming have been credited to your account and will be visible in *Payment Items* when you login. Each parent will also have a general consent form to complete to get you started, giving your child permission to go off site with their class on foot for local sports events, church visits etc.

I am working towards achieving a cashless environment in school for the majority of transactions (FOSA and Charity events will however continue to be cash only for accounting purposes). This will significantly reduce the amount of administrative time spent on banking procedures. Refunds can be quickly and easily made back onto your account in the event of a swimming lesson being cancelled for example without the need for cash envelopes to be sent home. We will significantly reduce paper waste and save money on printing. Most importantly, by paying online it will make processes more secure by reducing the amount of cash in transit around school.

Our current school bank account will no longer be accepting online payments after half term because our Multi Academy Trust has centralised the finance function so Parentpay will then become the sole method by which we can accept payments in school. **Cash and cheques will therefore no longer be accepted in school after 18<sup>th</sup> October.** However, if you do wish to pay for anything in cash you may of course still do so by using a Paypoint facility at a local Paypoint store which will in turn credit your Parentpay account.

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I hope this letter explains why we have taken the decision to move as a school to using Parentpay, but should you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to get in touch. I am committed to ensuring the transition goes as smoothly as possible and will therefore be running three sessions on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September at 9.00am, 3.15pm and 5.30pm in the main hall where I will go through how to get started if you have not already and answer any questions you may have. If you cannot make these sessions I will be available in school to help each day. Feel free to drop in with your phone or tablet and I can help to get you set up on the system. Parentpay is very user friendly and can be saved as a bookmark to the homepage of your phone, tablet or PC. I am confident that once we move across to this means of communication as a school, we will never look back!

I have attached a leaflet explaining more about Parentpay including any questions you may have about security. The website [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) contains a Help section which is also very useful.

I am committed to ensuring that the school office runs smoothly for our families and Parentpay is a vital step on this journey so that we will be able to communicate consistently and effectively with everyone. I am looking forward to this journey and very much value your support, co-operation and any feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rudkin

Office Manager

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