Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/OAQ51615

Joyce Watson AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

5 February 2018

Dear Joyce,

During the plenary session on 23 January 2018, you raised some concerns surrounding the cashless payment system for children whose school lunches are paid for by their family. You explained that a situation had arisen whereby children who haven't had their payment cards credited were unable receive their school meal.

You will be aware that the First Minister expressed during the plenary session he felt there should be a system in place where parents are reminded in a timely fashion as to what the balance is on their children's account. I would expect schools and local authorities to ensure that where instances arise where there is insufficient funds in the pupil's account, they make every effort to have contacted the parent and consider the individual needs of that pupil and their family before making a decision not to provide a meal.

My officials will take this issue to the Welsh Local Government Association's working group on cashless payments with a view to finding out whether the suggestion above is something that can be taken forward.

I will write to you again in due course to provide you with an update on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education