18 May 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

We are pleased to announce that we are improving our cashless catering system. This new system will include facial recognition in addition to the current fingerprint method, which will speed up the service allowing your child to spend less time in the queue and more time enjoying their break and lunch.

The school currently uses the fingerprint biometric method which parents/carers consented to during the admission process. This letter is to inform you we are adding facial recognition as the preferred method to look up your child's record whilst using the cashless catering system.

Why are we using biometric recognition?

Biometric recognition converts physical characteristics into a unique digital signature that can be used to quickly and securely locate your child's cashless catering account. This helps speed up service and eliminates the requirement to carry cash or an alternative method of access, such as a card that can be lost or stolen.

How does it work?

When the user places their finger on the scanner or looks at the camera, the software reads key features (unique patterns on a fingerprint or distance between facial features for facial recognition) and compares this against the database of registered users. When it finds a match it automatically opens their cashless catering account allowing the operator to complete the sale of their school meals.

Can these biometrics registrations be used by any other agency?

No, the software turns your child's physical characteristics into an encrypted string of characters known as a template (no fingerprint image is ever stored). Even if someone were to be able to gain access to the data and break the encryption, this template does not contain enough information to reverse engineer into a usable fingerprint.

What happens when my child leaves the School?

When a student leaves school all data will be deleted.

What if I don't want the school to hold biometric data on my child?

You can opt-out at any time by contacting the school and we will remove the permission from the system which will automatically remove any biometric data associated with your child and provide your child with an alternative method of authentication. However please be aware that this could make purchasing food/drink slightly slower for your child.

Regards

Mr S Atkin
Deputy Headteacher