

INTRODUCTION TO BIOMETRICS

CASHLESS CATERING, LRC & PRINT MANAGEMENT

PARENTS AND PUPILS



What is a Biometric Cashless System?

At the heart of the cashless system there is a computer controlled by I.M.P.A.C.T. - Software. This allows the system to recognise each individual pupil, hold individual cash balances, record cash spent and payments received record where money is spent, on what food, on any specific date and time of day. In addition the Biometric data is stored in BioStore.

How are pupils recognised by the system?

Each pupil will have their fingerprint registered which will then be translated to an Alpha Numeric number, the image is then discarded, when used this will then enter them into the system program and identify them by a number.

How is this then used to obtain a school meal?

The Pupil simply places their finger on a scanner at the point of sale; a display will show the server the pupil's name, class and current cash balance held within the system. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance will show on the display.

How is money entered into the system? ParentPay

ParentPay is an internet payment system that enables you to pay for catering, school trips and other items. It offers a highly secure payment site and gives you a history of all the payments you have made. It allows you to merge accounts if you have more than one child at the school and shows you all items available for payment relevant to each of your children. It will email you a receipt of your payment and offers you the ability to set automated emails/SMS payment reminders.

ParentPay will give you the freedom to make payments to school whenever and wherever you like. It stops you having to write cheques or search for cash and gives you the confidence that money intended for a school meal is spent on food. It gives you peace of mind that your payment has been made safely and securely and helps you with budgeting. Payments are immediate, there is no waiting for cheques to clear and funds are available for students to spend immediately on food. For school trips payments can be made by instalments and with email/SMS alerts you will never miss a payment.

Using ParentPay also helps the school by reducing the administrative time spent on banking procedures and ensure accurate records of payments are kept. It reduces paper 'waste' and allows for easy and quick refunds to be made back to your account. By improving communication between the school and parent it offers a more efficient payment collection process.

ParentPay is quick and easy to use. If you do not have internet access at home, a computer in the reception area at the school will be available for you to use, or alternatively you can pay into your ParentPay account at PayPoints within local stores. More details on this are available from the Finance department.

How do I get started with ParentPay?

We will send you an activation letter containing your temporary username and password to enable you to setup your ParentPay account. During the activation process you will be guided through changing your username and password to something more memorable. Should you experience any difficulties support is available through both ParentPay direct and also via the Finance office at school.

Once activated you will be able to make an immediate payment into your ParentPay account – this will mean the funds will be ready for your child to use for their school meal almost immediately.

If we pay for a set number of school meals, can it be spent in one day?

No, a daily spend limit of £ 5.00 will be set for all pupils and no food above that limit can be bought. On request, an individual pupil daily limit of your choice could also be set by the parents, to include a school dinner and break time snacks

What if the pupil does not hold a sufficient cash balance one day to pay for a school dinner?

No pupil will be refused a school dinner because they do not have sufficient credit through the Parentpay system. Initially we will ask the student to contact you to log onto the system to credit the account as this is a very quick process. In the event that this is not possible, the school will allow for the pupil to loan money for one day. However, just as before, the parent will be expected to repay the loan the next day and re-credit the system. In specific cases of Hardship please contact the Business Manager at school.

What about pupils entitled to a 'free school meal'?

The system works exactly the same for all pupils whether they pay or have a free school meal. All pupils have their own account to use in exactly the same way. The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system by the software daily and will only be accessible at dinner break. The system will then allow on a daily basis the required cash amount for each individual pupil to be allotted to their current cash balance. However, any under spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance.

You can also add extra cash on to his or her balance via the ParentPay system, to enable a greater daily spend on the school dinner than allocated by their free meal allowance. As this allowance can only be spent on a school dinner, extra cash added into the system can also be used for break time snacks. There will be no more identification of pupils on 'free meals' at the till point.

What is meant by 'dietary control'?

Should the pupil have a specific food allergy, or be a diagnosed diabetic, this medical information can be coded into the system, preventing foods with allergy ingredients from being served to a particular pupil, by automatically locking out relevant buttons on the keyboard.

Will pupils have problems in using this system?

Some pupils may find it difficult to control their accounts for the first couple of weeks, but because of a daily spend limit, most learn this important life skill very quickly and will enjoy being in control of their account.

Will we be able to have any information on how the system is being used?

Reports can be obtained from the system giving comprehensive information on all aspects of use for each individual pupil as well as each day's service. These reports can be for a specific day or between any dates you wish, they will be dated and timed to the minute, and can be obtained from the Catering Department.

- (a) To show every item of food served and the total cost of each serving.
- (b) Individual payments made direct via Parentpay.
- (d) A total overview to show the date, time and location with cost of each purchase, value of all payments deposited and current cash balance

Data Handling

Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include your child's name, class, photo, account balance and meal entitlement. This data will be handled under the guidelines of the data protection act and only used by parties directly involved with the implementation of the system. If you have any concerns please contact the Business Manager.

Biometrics & Security

Biometrics authentication is the automatic recognition of a living being using suitable body characteristics. By measuring an individual's physical features in an authentication inquiry and comparing this data with stored biometric reference data, the identity of a specific user is determined. A Biometric feature 'an image of the fingerprint' is used by the system to create a mathematical algorithm and then discards the fingerprint; only the numbers remain and these cannot be reinterpreted back into a fingerprint image. Once the numerical data has been stored a comparison is made and if this is positive, access is granted

Students, parents and staff can rest assure that the fingerprint images cannot be used by any other source for identification purposes.

What is BioStore – how does it work?

BioStore is a central database which stores the information which identifies pupils uniquely to each of the applications used (cashless catering, LRC and print management). It requires each pupil to register only once, by placing a finger on a fingerprint scanner.

Does BioStore record images of individual fingerprints?

BioStore never stores images of fingerprints on its system, and will never do so. Only mathematical representations of certain points of a finger imager are recorded, typically between ten and sixty depending on the characteristics of the finger. The mathematical information is encrypted and is called a template. This data is extremely secure in its encrypted form, but even if it were not encrypted it would be impossible to recreate the original fingerprint image from the stored data.

Is it possible to recreate a fingerprint?

No. The BioStore system only stores a short string of encrypted numbers – too few numbers to provide enough details for the original print to be reconstructed.

How secure is the stored data? What would happen if somebody stole the data in some form?

The database is protected by a licence key, which means that the database and any backup of its contents can only be accessed on licensed hardware. The licensed hardware is stored in the school's own secure facility, so that the encrypted data is only available to the registered licensee.

If my child is fingerprinted could the police or a court of law use the fingerprint?

BioStore does not store a fingerprint image. The recorded templates are comprised of a set of numbers which represent a person. This numbers set will be unique within populations of a few thousand, people. However, in the wider population the system is not accurate enough for the templates to be usable for forensic matching with any degree of certainty. A court of law would never be able to use this information as evidence.

Does everybody have a fingerprint? What happens about twins, or people with a disability which prevents them from providing biometric data, or somebody who has hurt their finger?

Even identical twins have different fingerprints. In very rare cases there are people who are born without prints. Occasionally somebody's fingerprints will degenerate because of exposure to some chemical products, and sometimes temperature changes can cause reduction in fingerprint quality. However, a cut finger would not cause any problem for BioStore, unless it resulted in major disfigurement.

What if pupils are unable to provide biometric data for some reason?

In exceptional circumstances alternative identification methods can be arranged although the costs relating to this will be chargeable. Please contact the Business Manager at the school.

What happens when my child leaves the school?

When a student leaves school all data is deleted – this process is very simple.