

Cashless Catering ~ Your Questions Answered

1. What are the benefits of a cashless catering system?

- The introduction of a cashless system will enable us to speed up catering services which will mean less queuing and therefore more students will have the opportunity to use the canteen.
- As a result, students get more time during break and lunchtimes to socialise, attend revision workshops, enjoy sports and take part in clubs.
- Any entitlements, such as Free School Meals, remain confidential which will encourage students to come and enjoy the food and facilities.
- Providing the link to ParentPay for online payment will also ensure that all money intended for school meals reaches student accounts and will not be lost or spent at shops where less healthy choices can be made.
- Parents will also be able to view the account balance for their child and access a report detailing purchases made.

2. Why choose biometrics and not card or PIN?

Biometric identification is very secure. Other methods can often lead to problems and misuse; cards and personal identification numbers could potentially be passed around amongst students. They can also be regularly left at home or forgotten.

3. If I choose to 'opt out' of biometrics or online payment, can my child still use the canteen?

Yes, we respect your freedom to choose and will make alternative arrangements so that your child can still purchase items from the canteen.

4. What information is actually captured?

The light on the biometric reader is used solely to illuminate the fingertip of the student or staff member and the scanning device then effectively takes a photograph. Unlike a camera, where the image would be stored so that the picture could be reproduced, a fingertip scanner discards most of the data and only a limited number (approx. 120) of random points on the fingerprint are retained. These are not stored as images but are changed using a mathematical process to convert the image data to what is essentially a string of random numbers. Therefore, it is not possible to reproduce the original 'finger print' from the data held.

5. Where is this data stored?

The data captured is held within a secure database which is in turn securely stored on the schools server; this is not taken away by anybody else or by the system suppliers.

6. Is this technology new and un-tested?

Educational establishments within the UK have been using biometric systems for a considerable length of time now. The system we have selected is being provided by Vericool, a reputable company who have been in existence for more than ten years. They are also solely dedicated to the education sector.

7. What happens to the biometric data captured when my child leaves school?

All biometric information captured will be permanently deleted after an individual leaves the school.

