

OUR REF: XTK



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

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Dear Parent/Carer

NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO PROCESS STUDENTS' BIOMETRIC INFORMATION FOR CASHLESS CATERING

Ridgewood School operates a cashless catering which allows us to continue to develop the catering service within school and also provide students with a more efficient, faster and ultimately better quality of service.

This system incorporates the latest technology by using biometric information and eliminates the need for students to bring cash to school on a daily basis, but ensures they are always able to purchase food at school for your peace of mind. This is also a help to parents as if/when a child misplaces or forgets their lunch money, there is no need to make special arrangements in order for them to buy lunch or snacks at break.

There are two payment options available to you – online payments or coin and note payments at the revaluation pay-points. A daily 'spend limit' will be programmed into the system (**e.g. £5**).

The information from your child that we wish to use is referred to as 'biometric information' (see next paragraph).

Under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (sections 26 to 28), we are required to notify each parent of a child and obtain the written consent of at least one parent before being able to use a child's biometric information for an automated system.

Biometric information and how it will be used

Biometric information is information about a person's physical or behavioural characteristics that can be used to identify them, for example, information from their fingerprint. The school would like to take and use information from your child's fingerprint and use this information for the purpose of providing your child with access to cashless catering.

This system will take measurements of your child's fingerprint and convert these measurements into a template to be stored on the system. An image of your child's fingerprint is not stored. The template (i.e. measurements taken from your child's fingerprint) is what will be used to permit your child to access services.

You should note that the law places specific requirements on schools when using personal information, such as biometric information about students, for the purposes of an automated biometric recognition system.

For example:

- (a) The school cannot use the information for any purpose other than for that which it was originally obtained and made known to the parent(s) (cashless catering);
- (b) The school must ensure that the information is stored securely;
- (c) The school must tell you what it intends to do with the information;
- (d) Unless the law allows it, the school cannot disclose personal information to another person/body – you should note that the only person/body that the school wishes to share the information with is Nationwide Retail Systems. This is necessary in order to maintain and operate the cashless catering system.



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Providing your consent/objection

As per current legislation we will be operating an 'Opt in' policy in order to be able to use your child's biometric information, where the written consent of at least one parent is required. However, consent given by one parent will be overridden if the other parent objects in writing to the use of their child's biometric information. Similarly, if your child objects to this, the school cannot collect or use his/her biometric information for inclusion on the automated recognition system.

Should you opt in to the scheme, but then change your mind at a later stage, you may withdraw any consent you have previously given. Please note, however, that any consent, withdrawal of consent or objection from a parent must be in writing.

Should your child object or refuse at any time to their biometric information being taken/used, their objection does not need to be in writing. We would appreciate it if you could discuss this with your child and explain to them that they can object to this if they wish.

If you do not wish your child's biometric information to be processed by the school, or your child objects to such processing, the law says that we must provide reasonable alternative arrangements for children who are not going to use the automated system to use the cashless catering system. This will be provided in the form of a 4 digit PIN code which will be allocated to your child. However, these do not have the same level of security and it will be your child's responsibility to remember their own code and to keep it secure at all times.

If you give consent to the processing of your child's biometric information, please sign, date and return the enclosed consent form to the school. In signing this form, you are authorising the school to use your child's biometric information for this purpose until he/she either leaves the school or ceases to use the system. If you wish to withdraw your consent at any time, this must be done so in writing and sent to the school.

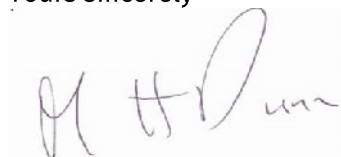
Please note that when your child leaves the school, or if for some other reason he/she ceases to use the biometric system, his/her biometric data will be securely deleted.

The school is happy to answer any questions you or your child may have, but if you wish to research this matter yourself, or have any concerns, further information and guidance can be found via the following links:

Department for Education's 'Protection of Biometric Information of Children in Schools – Advice for proprietors, governing bodies, Head teachers, principals and school staff':
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin>

Please also find attached a list of frequently asked questions which may better inform your decision in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M H Dunn', written over a light grey rectangular background.

M H Dunn
Headteacher

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a cashless system?

A cashless catering system is a solution which is purpose designed to meet the ever evolving needs and demands of the Catering Provision that is required by today's Schools and Academies.

The Trust-e Cashless Solution allows schools to be better able to provide their students with a faster, more efficient and more appealing meal service.

What is Biometric?

Biometric is simply a method of identifying an individual person. We will be using an algorithm based scan, which reads between 50-130 points on the finger/thumb. It is not a fingerprint in any way shape or form and is of use only in the cashless system.

How does a Biometric System work?

The information of a student or staff member who has been biometrically registered is stored on a secure Biometric Controller within the school, which only our provider, Nationwide Retail Systems Ltd, can access. Once an account is credited the student or staff member places their finger/thumb on the EPOS Terminal, which looks up their account details and allows them to purchase items using only this method of identification.

How does my child register on the Biometric System?

Your child will be asked to place their finger/thumb on a Biometric sensor twice to obtain a matching template, which only takes a few seconds. If you have chosen to 'opt out' of this procedure, your child will be given a 4 digit PIN code at a later date.

What methods of payment can be used to credit an account?

Any amount can be credited to an account. Once an account has been credited the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break services.

Cash at the Revaluation Units

Revaluation units will be sited within the school. These can be used to top up accounts by the student/member of staff placing their finger/thumb on the sensor or by entering their 4 digit PIN code, followed by inserting the accepted tender below:

£20, £10, £5 notes

£2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p, 5p coins

(Please note copper coins are not accepted)

On-line Payments

We have introduced On-line payments in partnership with the Cashless Catering System. To make a payment, please go to Parent Pay to make an electronic payment.

How can I check the credit on an account?

This can be done by the account holder placing their finger/thumb on the revaluation machine or by entering a 4 digit PIN code. The current balance will then be displayed. Alternatively, this can be accessed via the On-Line payment engine.

Can I change the daily 'Spend Limit'?

Yes - the daily 'Spend Limit' has a default of £5.

How do 'free meal' entitlements work?

The Cashless Catering System will, on a daily basis, automatically allocate the appropriate accounts with the free meal amounts, which can be redeemed at break or lunchtime. Students with Free meal entitlements remain anonymous at all times as all account types are accessed in the exact same manner regardless of whether paid for or not. NB: Any monies not spent from the daily free meal allocation will not be carried over to the next day.

Can anyone else use my child's account?

No – due to the extensive security on Biometric templates no-one will be able to access your child's account.