Cardinal Newman Catholic High School
Specialist Maths and Computing College
A Member of The Federation of
Catholic High Schools in Warrington
Executive Headteacher: Mr S Clarke B.Sc. M .A
Head of School: Mrs J Warburton

8th February 2013

Dear Parent /Carer,

On March 7th, as a further part of our modernisation of the dining facilities to improve and streamline our Catering service we will be moving to a biometric "cashless" catering system within our school, which will improve service times. Please find enclosed information that gives details about the new system and how it will work. Please read this information carefully.

It is planned to biometrically register all students on the new system in the days running up to the live date, following which we will be showing students how to use the revaluation or "top up" units to add money onto their accounts. This is the method how pupils can load their "accounts", though we are currently looking at the feasibility of being able to add monies online as a future enhancement. Please note we will not be able to accept cash at the new tills once the system is live to purchase food or drinks. It is therefore important that students have some money (coins or notes) with them in advance of the new system starting on March 7th, in order to avoid queuing to top up on the first day of the new system. Once they have been registered on the system, they will be able to "Top up". Alternatively payments can be made by 'Cheque' made to 'Metro Fresh' via the catering office to cover any period. i.e. Term, ½ Term, month or week – or a fixed monetary amount of your own choice. A post box to receive payments will be located in the school. **To enable the catering office to identify the pupils account in which to place any payment by 'cheque', write the full name and form group of the pupil on the back of the cheque or on the envelope. If payment is to be shared between two pupils, identify both with full name and form group.**

If you do not wish for your child to be biometrically registered, you must complete the reply slip below and return it to the school office before Monday 25th February. Students not registered on the biometric system will be issued with a swipe card though this does slow service times which we are aiming to improve with this system, and replacement cards will cost £5.
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school on 01925 635556. Alternatively you can email with the subject line "Cashless Catering Query"

Yours faithfully

Acting Headteacher

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Cashless Catering - Parent / Guardian Reply Slip
(Please only complete if you do not want pupil to be registered using biometrics)

I confirm that I DO NOT wish for my child to be included in the biometric registration process, and that I would like them to be issued with a swipe card instead.

Name of Student: _____

Year: _____   Form: _____

Name of Parent or Guardian: _____

Signed: _____

Cardinal Newman Catholic High School

AN INSIGHT TO THE NEW CASHLESS SCHOOL MEALS SYSTEM FOR PARENT'S AND PUPILS

How will the cashless system work?

Our Point of Sale tills at school will be replaced with new terminals which have built-in readers. When a student wishes to purchase items from the canteen or sandwich bar, they collect it in the usual way and then proceed to a till. At this point, rather than paying with cash or coins, they will simply place their finger on the reader. The software will recognise the student, and automatically deduct the value of the items from their account.

Accounts are topped up using one of two "Revaluation" machines conveniently sited, and will allow students to top-up their accounts using coins (10 pence upwards) or notes. In the near future, we hope to allow parents to top-up accounts from home using a credit card, although this feature isn't available straight away.

Spend Limits

To ensure students cannot spend all of the money in their account on a single day, there is a spend limit of £5.00 per day. This can be increased or decreased on request by contacting the school.

What if a student does not hold sufficient balance to pay for a school dinner?

There is no overdraft facility on our system, so students MUST have sufficient money on their account to be able to pay for their school dinner. If a student finds themselves without sufficient funds, they may borrow £2.10 from the school office but it must be paid back the following day.

Students entitled to free school meals

Any students entitled to free school meals have their accounts automatically credited each day with the free school meal allowance of £2.10 per day. However, any under-spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance. Students should opt to add additional funds to their account using the revaluation units, which will allow them to purchase additional items at break time or during lunch and cover purchases in excess of the £2.10 allowance.

Does my child have to top up every day?

Ideally no, just like a pay as you go phone, you can choose to top up as much or as little as you want. As the balance decreases, they can then add monies to their account. Each time they top up funds or purchase an item their remaining balance will be shown.

Opting Out

You can choose to opt-out of the biometric identification system. If you do this, your child will be issued with a swipe card, which they will use to top up with credit. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their swipe card safe. Replacements are chargeable at £5.00.

Frequently Asked Questions concerning finger recognition

BioStore is the software used to record and recognise certain points on the student's finger. This FAQ addresses some common questions and concerns related to finger recognition technology.

What is BioStore – how does it work?

BioStore is a database which stores the information which identifies pupils uniquely to each of the applications used within the school. It requires each pupil to register only once, usually by placing a finger on a small scanner.

Why use BioStore's biometric system instead of other existing identification methods?

BioStore's centralised system speeds up the registration process – each student need only register once, no matter how many applications requiring identification are in place in the school. With a biometric system, students cannot borrow or steal credentials from each other, reducing the opportunities for bullying.

Service speeds are increased, queues are reduced, because the identification of students is speeded up. Students need no longer carry cards, remember PIN numbers, or use cash to buy a meal. Biometric systems save time and money for both school and pupils because the need to replace lost cards and forgotten passwords is eliminated.

"Together we can make a difference"

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 image 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 from the data stored by BioStore?

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

A simple way to think about how the system works is to consider an ordnance survey map of a given area. Imagine marking all the points where roads cross over rivers and where railway tracks cross roads, and then record the coordinates of these crossing points. Use this information to examine a set of say 100 maps, and compare each map with the recorded information. The original ordnance map will be identifiable with some degree of certainty. However, using only the recorded coordinates it would be impossible to recreate the original map with any accuracy - more than 99.99% of the information on the original map will have been discarded, leaving only the few recorded points. Even these points cannot be recreated because only a simple description of each has been kept.

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. Even if a school's security were to be compromised and a backup of the database stolen, the encrypted data would still be unreadable, even by another school.

Could my child's images be use by the police or a court of law as a fingerprint?

No! BioStore does not store a fingerprint image. The recorded templates are comprised of a set of numbers which represent each person. This set of numbers will be unique within populations of hundreds, or 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.

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, and will not be mistaken for each other by BioStore. Occasionally somebody's finger characteristics 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.

Is this system tried and tested elsewhere?

The company supplying the system, Cunninghams have installed the system we will be using in over 2,000 schools. The biometric system is the latest development which speeds up service and means the old method of using magnetic cards is not required eliminating the possibility of being lost, or even used by the wrong person.

This system is already installed into 15 High Schools operated by our caterers MetroFresh, as well as in other Schools in Warrington Borough.

"Everyone is valued in our school"