

Bishop Challoner Catholic College



Next Review

November 2025

Review Period

Annual

Committee

Premises

Ratified

November 2024

Website Published

November 2024

Current Status

Approved

Staff Owner

J Bloxidge

Government/DfE Requirement

Statutory

Protection of Children's Biometric Information

BIOMETRIC FINGERPRINT SYSTEM

Bishop Challoner Catholic College has a cashless catering system in place for all food and drink purchases throughout the school day.

We have a Biometric Fingerprint system as this completely alleviates the need to remember a card, or problems if they are lost or stolen. When students reach the till they simply place their fingertip on the scanner, which verifies the students' identity and debits their account with the value of their purchases. Biometric scanning does not store a picture of the fingerprint, just a jumbled computer code that is only used in the identification process. This fully complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 ("DPA") as it does not store any information that could be of use to other organisations.

Pupils will be informed about the system and given training on how to use it. One of the facilities of the system is that it can provide you, if you wish, with a report detailing each item of food served to your child, each credit made to the system, for any time period, and show a current balance.

For your convenience and to assist in our administration of the service, use of Schoolcomms is encouraged which is an online facility to put money onto your child's lunch account to avoid the need to carry cash at all.

Some of the advantages of this system include;-

- Automatic and anonymous allocation of credit for children entitled to free school meals.
- Removing the need for students to carry money alleviating many of the associated problems of cash within schools, including losing money or theft.
- The convenience of paying for school meals from your home using Schoolcomms for whatever time period suits; no more looking for change every morning.
- Reduction of queuing times through increased speed of service.
- Specific food allergy ingredients can be barred automatically.
- Students acquire important life skills by being responsible for their own account.
- Discourages the misuse of school dinner money through spending in shops outside of the school grounds.
- A daily spend allowance can be implemented.
- Increased parental control over lunch purchases.

In order for us to get the system underway, in your child's first week in September they will need to provide their fingerprint so their details are matched on the system. As advised above, this is totally compliant with the DPA as it does not store any information that could be of use to other organisations, and only stores the print as a unique number. To enable us to take your child's fingerprint we need your written consent, as required under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (sections 26 to 28).

However should any parent not wish their child's print to be taken, please advise the school in writing so that arrangements can be made for your child to be excluded from this registration and advised as to what they need to do as an alternative. Please ensure that this notification is received by 1st September of the year they begin school at the latest. You can do this by email to j.bloxidge@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk or alternatively by letter to Mr J Bloxidge at the College's address.

BIOMETRIC FINGERPRINT SYSTEM

Strategic Business Director

Bishop Challoner Catholic College wishes to continue to use information about your child as part of an automated electronically-operated recognition system. This is for the purposes of catering. The information from your child that we 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 school meals.

The information will be used as part of an automated biometric recognition system. 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 pupils for the purposes of an automated biometric recognition system.

For example:

- a. the school cannot use the information for any purpose other than those for which it was originally obtained and made known to the parent(s) (i.e. as stated above);
- 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;

Providing your consent/objection

As stated above, in order to be able to use your child's biometric information, 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.

You can also object to the proposed processing of your child's biometric information at a later stage or withdraw any consent you have previously given. This means that, if you give consent but later change your mind, you can withdraw this consent. Please note that any consent, withdrawal of consent or objection from a parent must be in writing.

Even if you have consented, your child can object or refuse at any time to their biometric information being 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. The school is also happy to answer any questions you or your child may have.

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 for the purpose of catering.

The school is also happy to answer any questions you or your child may have.

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.

Further information and guidance

This 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'*:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protection-of-biometric-information-of-children-in-schools>

ICO guide to data protection for organisations:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/>