

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

### **BIOMETRIC CASHLESS SCHOOL MEAL SERVICE**

During the weeks ahead we will be implementing a complete cashless system in our new dining room for school meal service and would appreciate your support. The system will provide a more efficient, faster and better quality of service. The service is more secure and will guarantee monies are being used for school meals, rather than being misused. Full audit reports are available on accounts, including purchase history.

Our selected partner for this project is Sharp Electronics' one of the world's largest electronic companies. The system will use the latest biometric technology and will eliminate the need to carry a bank card or cash within school. The system scans a thumb/finger at the till and debits the relevant account.

Monies will need to be credited to your child's account before purchases can be made. This will need to be done using your child's Scopay account.

New legislation recently introduced requires an 'opt in' arrangement and therefore you must complete the form attached in this link:

[Biometric Consent](#)

We are confident the system will offer greater security and speed of service; which has been the experience for other schools for many years.

If you choose not to have your child registered on the biometric system, then a fob will be issued to be used at the till (similar to a debit card). We do however hope that parents will agree that the thumb/finger access to payment is the best way forward, in order to eliminate the issues created by lost or stolen cards.

Please complete the form in the link above even if your child never/or occasionally uses the catering facility. Alternatively, please contact school for a paper copy.

There will be an opportunity to add students to the biometric system at any point during a school year, but Sharps will be in school specifically on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February, in order to get as many students set up on the system, as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, at this point, we are unable to give you an exact date as to when the system will be fully functional, as there is still a set up process taking place. Until we can confirm this date, we will continue to accept cash payments at the tills.

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This is only a brief overview but if you have any queries please feel free to email [main.bbs@taw.org.uk](mailto:main.bbs@taw.org.uk) and someone will come back to you.

Yours sincerely

*R Barton*

Mrs R Barton  
Business Manager

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** Do you store fingerprint images?

**A.** No, fingerprint images are not stored on the system, specific points of the scanned finger image are converted to an unique numeric algorithm and then stored in the pupils account record. Data is also only stored on the school premises and not on a cloud server. Pupils, parents and staff can therefore be assured that images cannot be used by any other source for identification purposes.

**Q.** Can anyone see a fingerprint image?

**A.** Finger images are not stored on the system and from the unique number it is impossible to reverse engineer to an image.

**Q.** What happens when a pupil leaves the school?

**A.** All data will be deleted.

**Q.** What alternative is there if we do not consent to “opt in ” to the biometric system ?

**A.** Pupils will be issued with a mi-fare card or fob that can also be utilised by the school.

**Q.** What happens if I hurt my finger or forget my pin number.

**A.** The account details can be retrieved by searching on pupil's forename or surname, a photo image will be displayed as confirmation that the correct account has been accessed.

**Q.** How do we purchase goods?

**A.** Simply place your finger on the scanner. your biometric pattern is scanned and then converted to your unique account number, which is then debited.

**Q.** How do we know the correct account number is being debited?

**A.** The name and/or photo of the student appears on the terminal screen confirming the identity to the operator. The account numbers are unique.

**Q.** How can I check my account balance?

**A.** The balance available is displayed on a customer screen at each transaction. Account balances are also available on the Internet Payment Site

**Q.** What if I am entitled to Free School Meals?

**A.** There is no discrimination as the works system works exactly the same for all students whether they pay or have a free school meal entitlement. The set allowance will be electronically placed onto the pupil's account each day ( The allowance is not rolled over so must be used in full each day ) additional cash can also be added to enable a greater daily spend this is retained in a separate electronic purse and is only used when free meal entitlement has been used in full .

**Q.** Is there a limit to how much can be spent in one day?

**A.** Yes there is a school global maximum spend per day of £5.00 however parents can also request individual daily spend limits as per the attached form.

