

BIOMETRIC SYSTEM

We have a student recognition system using biometrics at Blackfen School. This allows us to make the best use of efficient systems such as cashless catering. This system has improved the services we are able to offer students and staff significantly, with benefits including:

- Improved security for handling cash transactions in the school
- Reduction in administration time and cost dealing with lost or forgotten cards/passwords/PINs
- Only the student can purchase items from her account
- Children will not have to remember to bring a card
- Reduction in queuing time

We would like to make it clear that Blackfen School complies at all times with Data Protection Act and with the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (which came into force in September 2013) regarding the use of biometric data. In order for your child to use the biometric system (fingerprint), one parent or guardian will need to read, sign and return the enclosed form. We will also offer an opportunity to opt out for those students who, upon consideration, would prefer to use alternative forms of identification. This is done by using a unique PIN number. Parent/Carers can upload money safely onto students' cards via their Wisepay account where they can also check on the amount and type of expenditure and to view the type of food purchases being selected. Details of your Wisepay account will be sent out to you during the Summer. Money can also be uploaded via the use of the cash loader in the Canteen, although we would point out that the queues for this machine can be long during peak times (break and lunch), therefore we would urge you to use Wisepay to avoid cash in the school.

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR PARENTS

Consent for biometric data use is sought when a pupil joins the school. The consent is logged in SIMS and can be withdrawn at any time as stated on the consent form. Finger-image data is held onsite on a secure server and is retained for the duration of the child's time at the school. Finger-image data is used exclusively for the use of the school canteen (Fastrak Cashless Catering Software). The student photo stored in the SIMS system is also used in the catering system to ensure the account is associated with the student purchasing items using their finger recognition or PIN number.

Background to the use of biometrics in school

For the sake of clarity, biometric information is information about someone's physical or behavioural characteristics that can be used to identify them. There are many possible biometrics, including for example, a digital photograph, fingerprint, or hand shapes. As part of our identity management systems, we will record a biometric measurement taken from a finger, but not a fingerprint image. The information is stored in a highly secure database along with the student photograph and will only be used by the school to confirm who is using a range of services. In future we may use other biometric services where appropriate. Our chosen solution allows us to use a secure database holding biometric data for use with a range of services. This means we will store the least amount of data possible. This reduces the risk of loss of data.

The data that is held cannot be used by any other agency for any other purpose.

The school will not use the biometric information for any purpose other than that stated above. The school will store the biometric information collected securely in compliance with the Data Protection

Act 1998. The school will not share this information with anyone else and will not unlawfully disclose it to any other person.

Current Legislation – The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

This legislation requires schools to:

- Inform parents about the use of the biometric systems in the school and explain what applications use biometrics.
- Receive written permission from one parent if the school is to process biometric information for their child.
- Allow children to choose an alternative way of being identified if they wish.

If you do not wish your child to use the biometric system or your child chooses to use an alternative form of identification we will provide reasonable alternative arrangements that allow them to access current and future services.

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

If you would like more information or the chance to discuss this further, please feel free to contact Mr Morgan, Business Manager