Dear Parent/Carer **March 2017**

We have a Cashless System in our school canteen where the students have the option to be registered for an unique Biometric Signature or to be issued with a Smart Card.

At the heart of the cashless system, computer software allows the system to recognise each individual student, hold individual cash balances, record cash spent and received, record where money is spent, on what food, on any specific date and time of day. Alternatively, if you do not wish your son or daughter to have their Biometric Signature taken, they will be issued with a Smart Card.

The student simply places their finger on a scanner or swipes their Smart Card at the point of sale, a display will show the server the student's name, class and current cash balance held within the system. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance will show on the display.

The system has proven highly popular and has been very effective in speeding up queues at break and lunchtime; it has the advantage that a student cannot lose their finger. What is stored is a numeric identifier which is derived from the fingerprint pattern of the student – the fingerprint itself is not stored, nor can the fingerprint be generated from the data on the system. The derived data is stored securely on the school system and is not shared with anyone else.

Parents/carers can make payments via the online payment service by using **School Gateway using the following link :-** https://login.schoolgateway.com/0/Auth/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=/0/Gateway/SchoolSummary.aspx This is a safe and secure way for parents to pay money to the school using credit or debit cards. Please note that to successfully login, the email address and mobile number for contact person Priority 1 must match the one you provide on the Pupil Registration Form. You can also pay by giving your son or daughter cash or, alternatively, by cheque, which must be received by Student Services by 9am, for their accounts to be credited in time for break at 10:35am. The student's name and form must be clearly written on the back of the cheque so we are able to top up the correct account and cheques will need to be payable to Blatchington Mill School.

Cash is entered into the system via Revaluation Machines. Students will be given training on how to top up their accounts with cash. Automatic Revaluation terminals are located by the school canteen as well as in the centre Music Foyer and are set to accept 10p – 20p – 50p - £1 - £2 coins together with £5 - £10 - £20 notes. **(Please note we are unable to provide change)**. Students can use either their finger or their Smart Card to top up their accounts.

Students will be able to check the current balance held in the system at any time by using the Revaluation Machines. Students place their finger on the scanner or swipe their Smart Card and this will display their current balance. If there is no need to deposit any money, just press the red button to finish. Also, a Remote Display at the point of sale will show the new balance when the food service is finished.

Opting In.

The law has changed recently and in order for students to use the biometric identity system for school lunches, the school has to have the **explicit consent of at least one parent/carer**. The law does provide that if **either** parent/carer specifically objects, the school **may not** use the data, even if the other parent/carer has agreed. (You would have **provided confirmation of agreement OR specific objection** to the use of biometric data from your son or daughter by the school when you completed **Page 5** of the **Pupil Registration Form)**.

Many thanks for your support in this matter; the biometric identification system has been embraced by an overwhelming majority of our students (and their parents) and we look forward to receiving your reply to allow us to provide an efficient and cost-effective service.

Yours faithfully

A Harrold
Headteacher

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you need to take my son/daughter's Biometric reading?
By taking an image of your son/daughter's Biometric reading we can turn this information into a digital signature.

Can Biometric readings be used by any other agency?
No, the software we use turns your son/daughter's Biometric reading into a mathematical algorithm. The image of the Biometric reading is then discarded. The information that is stored cannot be used to recreate an image of the student's Biometric reading.

Data Handling
Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include your son/daughter's name, class, photo, account balance and meal entitlement. This data will be handled under the guidelines of the data protection act and only used by parties directly involved with the implementation of the system. If you have any concerns, please contact the school business manager.

What happens when my son/daughter leaves the school?
When a student leaves school all data will be deleted.

How does it work?
When the student places their finger on the scanner, the software matches their Biometric reading with the unique digital signature held in the database.

Is there a daily limit?
No, but if you send in a written request, an individual student limit of your choice could be set to include a school dinner and break time snacks.

What about students entitled to a 'free school meal'?
The system is exactly the same for all students whether they pay or have a free school meal. All students have their own account to use in exactly the same way. The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system daily by the software. The system will then allow, on a daily basis, the required cash amount for each individual student to be allotted to their current cash balance. However, any under spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance. The student can also add extra cash onto their balance in the system by using the Revaluation Machines to enable a greater daily spend on the school dinner than allocated by their free meal allowance. As this allowance can only be spent on a school dinner, extra cash added into the system can also be used for break time snacks.

How will 'healthy eating' be encouraged?
When the food is selected on the canteen server's keypad, it will also register points for a balanced, healthy and nutritious school dinner. At the end of the term the top scoring students will be identified and the winner receives an award.

What is meant by 'dietary control'?
Should the student have a specific food allergy, or be a diagnosed diabetic, this medical information can be coded into the system, preventing foods with allergy ingredients from being served to a particular student, by automatically locking out relevant buttons on the keyboard.

Will students have problems in using this system?
Some students may find it difficult to control their accounts for the first couple of weeks, but most learn this important life skill very quickly and will enjoy being in control of their account.