

## **BIOMETRIC consent information form for parents and carers – October 2022**

We are pleased to tell you that Harris Science Academy East London operates a cashless catering system. The system is provided by Cashless Solutions – Civica Systems and provides us with a more efficient, faster and better quality of service in the school canteen. This system incorporates the latest biometric technology that will recognise the thumb of your child at the revaluation pay points and at the tills.

In preparation for the introduction of this system, we are asking for your consent to use your child's biometric data. We will require the consent of at least one parent in order that the biometric information of your child can be processed. Please be assured that this information remains within the school and that the biometric information taken is an algorithm and not the actual fingerprint. In line with data protection legislation, we do need positive consent from you to use biometrics and therefore, require you to complete the form. If you choose not to have your child registered on the Biometric System, then they will be issued with a 4 digit PIN code. Please note that PIN codes do not have the same level of security and it will be your child's responsibility to remember the code and **keep it secure at all times.**

The attached information should answer any questions you may have, however, if you do have any queries, please contact the school office and we will do our best to answer them. The latest legislative advice is here: <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00218617/biometric-recognition-systems->

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - BIOMETRICS**

**Q. What is a cashless system?**

A. A cashless catering system is a solution which is purpose designed to meet the ever evolving needs and demands of the catering provision, required by today's schools and academies. The cashless solution allows schools to be better able to provide their students with a faster, more efficient and more appealing meal service.

**Q. What is 'biometric?'**

A. Biometric is simply a method of identifying an individual person. The Trust-e Cashless System uses an algorithm based scan, which reads between 50 and 130 points on the finger/thumb. It is not a fingerprint in any way, shape or form and is of use only in the Cashless System. Q. How does a biometric system work?

A. The information of a student, who has been biometrically registered, is stored on a secure biometric controller within the school, which only our provider, Nationwide Retail Systems, can access with permission from the school. Once an account is credited, the student places their finger/thumb on the EPOS Terminal Biometric Reader, which looks up their account and allows them to purchase items using only this method of identification. Q. How does my child register on the biometric system?

A. Registration for your child will take place during the morning of their first day in school. Your child will be required to place their thumb on the Biometric Reader twice to obtain a matching template, which only takes a few seconds. If you have chosen to opt-out of this procedure, your child will be presented with a 4 digit PIN code.

**Q. What methods of payment can parents and carers use to credit an account?**

A. Any amount can be credited to an account by way of any of the following methods. Once an account has been credited, the monies cannot be withdrawn and must be spent on the school meal/break services.

#### **Cash at the Revaluation Units**

Revaluation units will be sited at different locations within the school. These can be used to top up accounts by the student placing their registered thumb on the Biometric Reader or by entering their 4 digit PIN Code followed by inserting the accepted tender: £20, £10, £5 notes or £2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p or 5p coins. Please note that copper coins are not accepted.

#### **Online Payments**

We have introduced online payments in partnership with the Cashless Catering Solution. You will receive further information and an invitation to register for ParentPay once your child starts with us.

#### **What is a biometric algorithm?**

The individual templates are encrypted using a 256 bit AES key that is built into the scanner's hardware. Also the persisted file is encrypted using a different 256 bit AES key built into the matching algorithm supplied by Secugen and generated by a unique license purchased for each site. This is more secure than the ANSI and ISO standards that government department's use as the Secugen Template is encrypted and the ANSI and ISO standards are not. The template data is useless and cannot be interpreted back into a usable fingerprint image. If this was not the case then there would be no world standards and performance measures for such technologies. The data is stored in an array in the RAM of the Biometric Controller and is also permanently stored on the hard drive of the Bio Controller to be restored in the event of a reboot.

Below is an example of a template code for an individual finger.

#### **Q. How secure is the system?**

The solution is secure because the matching can only be done by the individual's consent as the finger has to be presented to the device for matching. We do not hold images of fingerprints in our system. The technology provided for this method of identification meets with BECTA guidelines and also allows students the option to opt out of the scheme and use a PIN number instead. Also under the data protection act the school or caterer (the originator of the data) cannot allow access to this data by anyone for any other means than for the purpose the data was collected and that is to identify an individual within the solution we supply. Any biometric data that belongs to an individual that leaves the school is purged which also is in line with the BECTA guidelines.