

Main Benefits of the Cashless Catering System:

- ✓ *Convenient way of paying for school meals. No more looking for change every morning.*
- ✓ *Discourages the misuse of school dinner money through spending in shops outside of the school grounds.*
- ✓ *Alleviates many of the associated problems with the use of cash in schools. i.e.: Loss, theft and bullying.*
- ✓ *Specific food allergy ingredients can be barred automatically.*
- ✓ *Healthy eating is encouraged.*
- ✓ *Queuing times are reduced through increased speed of service.*
- ✓ *Automatic free meal allocation with the pupil remaining anonymous.*
- ✓ *Detailed reports to analyse all aspects of the use of the system.*
- ✓ *Having control of student accounts by students using the I.M.P.A.C.T. (Information, Management, Point of sale, Access and Cashless, Tracking) system teaches important life skills.*
- ✓ *A more efficient delivery of service helps the caterer to provide wholesome, healthy and enjoyable school meals at a low cost.*

Some key questions about the new biometric cashless catering system:

What is a biometric cashless system?

At the heart of the biometric cashless system is a software program which recognises each individual customer, holds individual cash balances and records expenditure and cash received. It also records where and when money is spent and on what food.

How are students and staff recognised by the system?

All students and staff will be registered by biometric measurement and photograph. The biometric measurement takes a part image of some of the coordinates of the fingerprint. This information is then converted, encrypted and stored as a unique number. This data cannot be converted back into any image of a fingerprint, nor can it be used by any other source for identification purposes.

What data will be held on the system?

Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include the student's name, tutor group, photo, account balance, meal entitlement and the biometric number. Other than the biometric number, this data is already held on the Academy's administrative systems. All the data will be handled under the guidelines of the Data Protection Act. The data will only be utilised for the purposes of the cashless catering system and will be destroyed when the data is no longer relevant (such as when a student leaves the Academy).

How is biometric system utilised to obtain food?

A finger will be placed on a biometric scanner at a till. This will activate an individual's account which will be displayed on screen for the catering operator, including name and current balance. The operator will then enter the selected food and drink into the system from an itemised keyboard, while the amount spent and the new balance will show on the display.

How is money entered into the system?

Initially, there will be two methods:

a) By putting cash, notes (£20, £10, £5) and coins (£2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p), into an automatic cash 'revaluation' terminals located in the dining room. After activation via a biometric scanner, the terminal will show the current account balance. Cash is then entered and, finally, a red button pressed to mark the end of the transaction.

We are planning to introduce an additional payment method – a secure internet site, accessible by password, enabling payment by debit or credit cards. We will inform you about this in due course.

What about students entitled to a 'free school meal'?

The system works 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 by the software daily and will only be accessible at dinner break.

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 on to his or her balance in the system by using the revaluation station, 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.

There will be no more queuing to be issued a 'free meal' tickets or having the students name entered into the 'free meal' register at the till point.

How will the pupil be able to check what the current cash balance is held in the system at any one time?

- (a) By using the revaluation station. Place their finger on the scanner display the current cash balance. There is no need to deposit any money, just press the red button to finish.*
- (b) Also a Remote Display at the point of sale will show the new cash balance when the food service is finished.*

How can we be sure that a regular amount of money is used daily?

There is a daily spending limit of £5.00 for each student. No food above this limit can be bought. On request, an individual student limit of your choice can be set, to include a school dinner and break time snacks.

What happens if a student or member of staff does not hold a sufficient cash balance to pay for food?

There is no overdraft facility on the new system. Students and staff must have enough money in their accounts to purchase food or drink.

How will the biometric cashless system encourage healthy eating?

After the new system has been operating for a while, we will explore the ways we can use the recorded information about food consumption and nutrient intake, in particular, for the purposes of healthy eating awareness and understanding. When the food is selected, the system can register 'reward points' in recognition of students choosing a balanced, healthy and nutritious diet. This information can then be used for healthy eating awards. Eventually, it should be possible for each student to be access the record of their eating habits, so they can begin to make choices about nutrient intake in the context of nutrient understanding. This may become part of food technology lessons.

Will we be able to have any information on how the system is being used?

Reports can be obtained from the system giving comprehensive information on all aspects of use for each individual pupil as well as each day's service. These reports can be for a specific day or between any dates you wish, they will be dated and timed to the minute, and can be obtained from the Catering Department.

- (a)** *To show every item of food served and the total cost of each serving.*
- (b)** *Individual payments made direct to the school by cash and manually entered into the system.*
- (c)** *Each payment made by cash at the revaluation station by the pupil and if required, even the number of individual coins and the denomination.*
- (d)** *A total overview to show the date, time and location with cost of each purchase value of all manual cash payments, value of all cash deposited in the revaluation station and current cash balance*