

Biometrics for Cashless Catering

SWCHS operates a biometric cashless catering system which links to your child's Wisepay account and avoids the need for students to pay cash for their meals. The system uses the latest biometric technology that is able to recognise the thumb or finger of the student at the tills.

This system improves our ability to serve food quickly and efficiently, reduces the amount of cash circulating within the school and makes the process of getting a school lunch easier for Free School Meal students. It also makes it more convenient for you as lunches can be paid for in advance, online.

Step 1

The student's cashless account is set up and their finger scanned to associate the student with their account. This will link with their Wisepay account.

Step 2

Cash is loaded onto the student's Wisepay account either by the parent or by the student putting money into the 'cash loader' inside the school.

Step 3

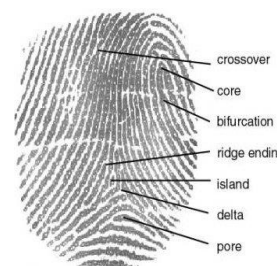
The student chooses their school lunch items and scans a finger at the till; this displays their name, photo and account balance to the till operator who then enters the cost of their food items, deducts the total from the account and the transaction is complete.

A very small number of parents decide to opt out of the biometric aspect of the service, in which case a plastic payment card can be issued. Please note that there is a £5 replacement fee for lost cards.

Information regarding the Biometrics installed at SWCHS

Bio – what??

Biometrics authentication is the automatic recognition of a living being using suitable body characteristics. By measuring an individual's physical features in an authentication inquiry and comparing this data with stored biometric reference data, the identity of a specific user is determined. There are many different biometric features that can be used for authentication purposes these include fingerprint, signature, iris, retina, DNA or any other unique characteristic. Once a characteristic has been chosen the next stage in the Biometric process is authentication. A biometric feature is saved on to a database. Once the data has been stored, a new scanning of the biometric feature is taken. If the comparison is positive, access to the appropriate application is granted.



A history of biometrics

Once the domain of the local constabulary, fingerprint technology is now being used at many locations around the country. Banks, supermarkets and now schools and colleges are adopting this increasingly popular technology. Biometrics are not new, their roots have been traced back to ancient Egyptian times. The use of fingerprints as a security device started with Chinese officials using them to seal documents in the second century BC. Over the last few years the technology has begun to find favor commercially.

Whilst the use of Biometrics has been steadily growing over the last ten years, the past couple of years have seen an explosion in development, interest and vendor involvement.

Biometrics and Security

Students, parents and staff can rest assured that the fingerprint images cannot be used by any other source for identification purposes. The system uses an image of the fingerprint to create a mathematical algorithm and then discards the fingerprint; only the numbers remain and these cannot be reinterpreted back into a fingerprint image. Fingerprinting is voluntary and those not wishing to sign up will still be able to pay online, but may have to wait longer at the till points whilst their records are accessed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you need to take my child's fingerprint?

By taking an image of your child's fingerprint we can turn this information into a digital signature. This unique image will then be used.

Can fingerprints be used by any other agency?

No, the software we use turns your child's fingerprint in to a mathematical algorithm. The image of the finger print is then discarded. The information that is stored cannot be used to recreate an image of the child's fingerprint

What happens when my child leaves the School?

When a student leaves school all data will be deleted very easily.

How does it work?

When the child places his/her finger on the scanner, the software matches their fingerprint with the unique digital signature held in the database.

