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Dear Parent or Guardian

Re: Automated Biometric Recognition System

As you may be aware, we use a voluntary biometric recognition system at the school. This is currently used with teaching and administration systems, such as cashless catering and library management, and may be used with door access and e-registration for Sixth Form students in the future.

We find this provides the school with a number of very significant benefits including:

- Reduction in administration time and cost dealing with lost or forgotten cards/passwords/PINs
- Reduction in opportunities for bullying as there is nothing that can be stolen for use by another student
- Reduction in the need for cash handling
- Students do not have to remember to bring a card
- Reduction in queuing time

In order to comply with the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 we need written permission from a parent in order for students to continue to use the biometric system.

We will continue to offer an opportunity to opt out for those pupils who would prefer to use alternative forms of identification.

If you would like more information or the chance to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Yours faithfully

S C Elphick
Headteacher

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR PARENTS

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 currently record **a biometric measurement taken from a finger, but not a fingerprint image**. The information is stored in a highly secure database and is only used by the school to confirm who is using a range of services.

Our chosen solution allows us to use a secure database holding biometric data for use with a range of services. This means we 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 continue processing biometrics 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 to discuss this in more detail, please contact the school.