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DriffieldSchool

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16 May 2025

Dear Parent or Carer,

RE: Cashless Catering System

As you be aware, Driffield School and Sixth Form has operated a cashless catering system whereby students currently use a card to purchasing school meals.

We regularly review our systems and processes to see how we can improve the experience for students and over recent years we have seen an increase in the numbers of students that are purchasing school meals from our canteens, particularly at lunch time.

We're are excited to launch a new facial recognition system to our cashless system which will offer a fast and straightforward payment experience for school meals. This facial recognition system is supplied by the same provider as our current card system (CRB Cunnighams) and they are working closely with us to provide a smooth transition during this project.

The facial recognition system offers a quick and secure way for students to purchase school meals without the need for a card. With this system, students simply collect their food, head to the till look at their camera and go. This system will have many benefits which will include a faster service for students, meaning that they can enjoy more of their break time. There will also be no issues with students losing cards, and no students having to purchase new cards when they have lost them.

How the technology works

This system uses facial recognition to make paying for school meals quick and secure. When your child chooses their meal, they simply look at a camera, which recognizes them using unique facial features. This links to their school meal account and processes the payment—no need for cash or cards. It's designed to be safe, fast, and easy to use.

Security of facial recognition

The system is designed with strong security in mind. It doesn't store images of your child's face. Instead, it converts their facial features into a secure code using advanced encryption - similar to what's used in online banking. This code cannot be turned back into an image, ensuring your child's data stays safe and private.



The Education Alliance is a charitable limited company registered in England and Wales No. 7542211 whose registered office is at East Dale Road, Melton, North Ferriby, HU14 3HS.

To be included on this system we require your consent. Please complete the link below by Monday 2 June: <https://forms.office.com/e/AvUArtwBqJ>.

This new system only affects that way that students pay for school meals in school. Parents and carers will continue to add money to student accounts in the same way using Parent Pay.

We are aiming to launch this system from September 2025 as it will offer a quick, secure and hygienic way for students to pay for meals, whilst ensuring personal data remains private and protected. We believe that this will streamline and enhance the overall dining experience for all students.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact the school. I have attached an FAQs page to this letter for your reference.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Evans', is positioned above the printed name.

Mr M Evans
Assistant Headteacher

FAQs

What are biometrics?

Biometrics authenticates people based on their unique characteristics and identifies possible matches to ensure accurate and secure identification. Facial Recognition is a type of biometrics that we use in various aspects of life, including:

- **Security:** unlocking phones, accessing secure buildings, and logging into accounts
- **Identification:** faster check-ins at airports and hospitals
- **Convenience:** logging into computers and making payments for school meals

What student data is stored and where?

Biometric recognition operates on a closed-loop system, which means student data is stored on our internal secure database.

Can any other agency or 3rd party use the facial images?

No, the information is never shared, and the face template representing the students' faces is meaningless to anyone else. The software turns your child's image into a mathematical algorithm, and the stored information cannot be used to recreate the face image.

What happens when my child leaves the school?

All biometric data can be deleted; the school is the data controller and can delete the data from its databases. You can opt-out anytime, meaning the school will delete the biometric data.

What if I object to my child using Facial Recognition? Can my child still purchase school meals?

Parents and students reserve the right to object to using Facial Recognition. Any parent or carer not wishing for their child to use the system will for now be able to continue using their dinner card. After a period of time we will phase out the dinner cards and students can be manually searched on the till system, however this will significantly slow down your child purchasing their school meals.

Is this technology 'live'?

No; catering staff must activate the process at the point of sale for students that have consented to use Facial Recognition. The system is not live; the cameras only capture students' images for the transaction process when the staff activates the software.