BIOMETRIC AT HIGHGATE WOOD SCHOOL

Highgate Wood School makes use of a biometric system to supplement the existing card ID used with our Cashless Catering system. The biometric (fingerprint) identification system we have adopted is used by numerous schools and is fully compliant with GDPR legislation.

Biometrics is regarded as "sensitive data" under GDPR and thus needs to be handled accordingly. We request permission from both the student and a parent or carer and will not permit fingerprint ID to be taken without this.

Students who either do not wish to have their fingerprints taken or who have not provided us with the required permission, will continue to use their card ID for canteen purchases.

Please note that we will not accept any payment at the canteens other than through fingerprint or card ID.

INFORMATION ABOUT OUR BIOMETRIC SYSTEM

The biometric system for identification of students for cashless catering uses the finger (or thumb) to uniquely identify each student. Each student has their print registered, which works by translating the characteristics of their fingerprint into a unique identification code. The system measures many aspects of the finger to do this. It does not store or capture an image of the fingerprint. It is entirely voluntary for students to have their biometric information recorded for cashless catering. If they wish to do so they need to give their written permissions and also the permission of a parent or carer.

The biometric system is part of the wider ID system in the school developed by AMI Education. It uses AES256 encryption. AES256 is the same encryption technology that is used in Microsoft's BitLocker disk drive encryption and is certified by the National Security Agency of America to be used to protect Top Secret information.

Highgate Wood School has its own secret unique group of AES256 encryption keys, which means that the database and any backup of its contents can only be accessed on licensed hardware, and the encrypted data is only available to the registered licensee.

In the unlikely event that the biometric information was accessed or copied it would be unreadable to any other system and thus not present a risk to personal data security.

If you want to find out more about the school's data protection processes and procedures please visit the link on the policy section of the school's website. https://hws.haringey.sch.uk/about-us/school-policy/gdpr-and-data-protection/

Further information can found via the following links:
Department for Education's 'Protection of Biometric Information of Children in Schools – Advice for proprietors, governing bodies, head teachers, principals and school staff':
http://bit.ly/hwsbiometrics

ICO guide to data protection for educational organisations:
https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/education/