



# Tring School

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[www.tring.herts.sch.uk](http://www.tring.herts.sch.uk) Headteacher: Mrs Susanna Collings BSc (Hons), MA, FRSA

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## UPDATE ON THE BIOMETRIC SCHOOL MEAL SERVICE

We have now implemented the new biometric finger recognition system for our school meal service and all balances on old smart cards have been transferred to the new accounts.

We have also extended our **online payment facility** to include the ability to credit the canteen accounts but will continue to update accounts at a till point with cheques or cash. We would like to encourage online payments as they are more secure and will guarantee monies are used for School Meals as intended.

**Important note:** there is a time lag between paying on line and the account at the till being updated, and a similar time lag between spending in the canteen and updating the account balance on the website. This will be no longer than 24 hours and the date and time of the last update to the website can be seen next to the canteen account balance. Please bear this in mind and ensure that the account is topped up in plenty of time.

Although the new system is in place, finger scanning can still be done. This does not involve taking a finger print, instead a subset of unique features of the fingerprint are extracted from a scanned image and converted into a biometric template/pattern which is converted into a binary number. This is used and checked against the template generated each time a pupil places their finger on the scanner. **Full fingerprint images are not stored** and a usable fingerprint image cannot be generated (reverse engineered) from the template/pattern.

If your child wishes to have their biometric information scanned or would like to add money to their account by cash or cheque they should go to the dining room between 8.30am and 9.00am any day providing the dining room is not being used for assemblies etc. Scanning and updating during break and lunch is slow and holds up the rest of the diners.

If you have any queries please refer to the 'Frequently asked Questions' document or feel free to e-mail Mrs Kath Davis on [kdavis@tring.herts.sch.uk](mailto:kdavis@tring.herts.sch.uk) who will be happy to help with any questions you may have including providing passwords for the internet payment facility.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** Do you store fingerprint images.

**A.** No, fingerprint images are not stored in our system.

**Q.** Can anyone see a fingerprint image?

**A.** No, fingerprint images are not seen. When a finger is read it is converted into a unique number/pattern.

**Q.** How do we purchase goods?

**A.** Simply place your finger on the scanner. Your fingertip is read and then converted to your account number, which is then debited.

**Q.** How do we know the correct account number is being debited?

**A.** The name and photo of the student appear on the Terminal screen confirming the identity to the operator. The account numbers are unique.

**Q.** How can I check my account balance?

**A.** After each transaction the remaining balance appears on the operator's screen. Balances will also be available on the Internet Payment site once this has been set up.

**Q.** What if I am entitled to Free School Meals?

**A.** The system works exactly the same for all students whether they pay or have a free school meal. The account will be credited with a daily amount. Extra cash can also be added to enable a greater daily spend.

**Q.** Can I still pay with cash?

**A.** Yes, but our intention is that eventually most payments will be paid via the internet payment facility, thereby reducing the handling time of cheques and cash to give greater security and accountability and provide a more streamlined service.