Clackmannanshire Council Cashless Catering System – Permission Slip

Please return this form to school by Friday 19th September 2008

Cashless Catering	YES	NO
I give consent for my child's photo to be taken and used in the provision of the cashless catering services provided by Clackmannanshire Council.		
I give consent for my child to have a biometric finger scan in a controlled, confidential and secure environment for use in the cashless catering system		

Pupil's Name	
Class	
Parent/Carer's Name	
Parent/Carer's Signature	
Date	

Clackmannanshire Council
INFORMATION FOR PARENTS: BIOMETRICS AND INFORMATION HANDLING

Digital Fingerscans in Schools

Clackmannanshire Council is proposing to use fingerprint scan biometric technology to identify pupils in the cashless catering system in the new secondary schools.

Biometric technology is becoming very commonplace. Many modern computer systems come with a finger scanner which you use instead of a password. Another example is at Walt Disney World where finger scans are taken from guests to ensure that the person's ticket is used by the same person from day to day.

People sometimes have misgivings when new technologies emerge to help in identifying individuals. Some people have expressed concerns in the news about rights of privacy and how biometric information could be misused.

The controlled, confidential and secure environment in schools is, however, ideal for hosting Biometric technologies without such privacy concerns, as the data is used only for a single purpose, is stored securely, and is never shared with anyone else or used for any other purposes.

The following section provides answers to the most frequently asked questions in this area.

What is a Biometric?
A biometric is a measurement taken from a person which can uniquely identify that person. Examples include retina scans and fingerprint scans.

Would my child's fingerprint be stored in a database?
No. the picture of an individual's fingerscan is never stored in a database or computer file. When a finger is scanned the image is converted into a mathematical code known as a template. The template records certain features of the finger surface, a few dozen at most, and cannot be converted back into the original image. Only the template is stored in the database.

How do I know the school will keep my child's fingerscan data safe and confidential?
Schools already have systems and procedures in place to protect the personal information they hold on their pupils. All the fingerscan data captured is the property of the school and is only stored on a computer within the school. Biometric data is classified as personal information under the Data Protection Act and must be treated in exactly the same way as other personal data. In this controlled environment the security and privacy of an individual can be assured.

Could the police use this stored information to identify and prosecute someone?
The amount of detail recorded in the template is totally inadequate for forensic purposes and is not admissible as evidence in a court of law for the purposes of identification of an individual.

If the government decided to create a national database of fingerprints is it technically possible for them to take this data from all the schools?
The system works exceptionally well when dealing with small groups of people from a few hundred to a few thousand. During enrolment a new template is created and compared against those already in the database. This is a controlled environment and only enough detail is stored to distinguish this group of people from each other. There is not enough information stored about the characteristics of the fingerscan to scale this up to a national database.

When my child leaves the school how can I be certain their fingerscan data is removed?
Only one copy of the template is stored in the database and when the individual is deleted from the system the template is completely obliterated.

How to Use the Cashless Catering System

Putting money on your account.
Before you can buy anything, you must put money onto your account.

Use the Reval (Revaluation Unit)
o Swipe your finger through the reader - your name and balance appear on the screen.
o Insert coins or notes
o Your new balance is displayed.
o Press the red button - that's it. Your name and details disappear from the screen.
o The value on your card has now been increased by the money you've just put in.

Hand in a **cheque** from home to the school office. They will add the value onto your card using the computer.

Checking your balance.
You can check how much you've got to spend anytime by swiping your finger through the **Reval** - your name and balance appear on the screen. You don't have to put money in - just check it and press the red button to finish.

Buying your meals.
Take your food to the till point. Swipe your finger through the reader. Your picture will appear on the machine and the your

purchases rung up. Your balance has now been reduced by the price of your meal.

What are the benefits?

The system is very fast - operators can register slightly more than eight meals per minute. By speeding up service in the canteen, pupils get their meals faster and have more time to eat them.

Fingerscans are easy to use. Unlike other methods of identification, fingers are not easy to lose, forget, or steal.

If pupils carry cash less often or not at all, theft and bullying are reduced or eliminated

Parents can send a cheque to the school office to pay for their child's meals. Over time the system will be extended to allow payment on-line over the internet. This cuts out the need for pupils to carry cash, and ensures that dinner money is used for that purpose.

Alerts can be set which notify catering staff if a pupil accidently tries to buy unsuitable food - very important in cases of allergies or other dietary conditions.

Pupils will be provided with Healthy Eating Points which can be exchanged for a range of benefits

Parents can receive reports on their child's eating habits. These can show how much money was paid in and when, how much was spent on food and when, and even detail each individual item purchased.

Pupils entitled to free meals use the same system as everyone else, and there is nothing which identifies to other people which pupils are receiving free meals. The stigma which youngsters may feel about free tickets is completely removed.

The monetary value and information associated with each account relates to that

individual pupil only. It cannot be spent or
accessed by other pupils