



King Henry VIII 3-19 School
Ysgol 3-19 Brenin Harri'r VIII
Headteacher: Mr J R Watson
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Dydd Llun 10 Mawrth 2025

Dear Parents and Carers / Annwyl Rhieni a Gofalwyr,

Catering and Cashless Till System

We are very excited to be working with our new partner Aramark, who will be providing the catering across our school when we move into our new building in April. This will provide high-quality food in our new state-of-the-art facilities for all pupils in our school. They will be providing meals for pupils in Reception right through to those in our Sixth Form.

As part of this development we will be introducing new systems to enable our break and lunch times to work smoothly and effectively. We want our pupils to spend less time queueing and more time enjoying their food.

We will still be using Parent Pay. For pupils in Years 7 to 13 you will still use it to top up their account and pay for meals. For pupils in Reception to Year 6 who receive a universal free school meal, you will still use it to book the meals.

Parents of pupils in Year 7 and above will already be familiar with the cashless till system operated in school. The pupils choose their meal and at the till use a fingerprint to identify them, which deducts the value from the Parent Pay account. We are moving this technology forward and are excited to announce that we will be moving to a facial recognition system.

It's important to us that everyone in our school community, including parents and carers, and pupils, is well-informed about this new development and has all the information needed before opting to use this new service.

This letter contains detailed information about Facial Recognition, how it works, how we will use the software, and most importantly, the benefits for pupils.

Why use Facial Recognition

- For pupils in Year 7 and above, it will help cut the queue times by about a third. Pupils simply select their meal, look at the camera and go! Our goal is to help pupils reclaim time to enjoy their meal breaks.
- For pupils in Reception to Year 6, it enables us to know who has taken a Universal Free School Meal.
- Facial Recognition will prevent the issues we currently experience with the fingerprint system – greasy, dirty or wet fingers prevent the fingerprint from registering.



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- Facial Recognition is hygienic as it does not require any contact.
- When the pupil passes through, if they have any allergy or dietary requirements, it prompts an alert making it quicker to identify that all important information. This is yet another way to make our children safer during service.

How the technology works

- With Facial Recognition technology, pupils simply choose their meal, look at the checkout camera, and proceed with a quick and secure point-of-sale experience.
- Facial Recognition is a biometric recognition method that works in the same way as other recognition technology. Like a PIN, a unique identifier is attributed to each pupil and matched at the till for quick and secure access to their cashless account. This is the same technology as used when opening a mobile phone, iPad or going through passport control at a border.
- An image of the face is captured, and the software turns unique features of the face geometry, such as the distance between the eyes and the distance from the top of the forehead to the chin, to create a unique identifier for each pupil. The system is sophisticated enough to distinguish between identical twins and updates as the pupils features mature.
- When pupils pay for their meal items at the point of sale or receive their universal free school meal, the camera matches their unique identifier to their cashless account to take payment.

How the transaction process works:

1. Consent:
Parents must opt-in to use Facial Recognition before an image is taken. If we do not have consent to use the software, the till operator cannot activate the Facial Recognition process.
2. Capture:
The biometric system captures an image of the pupils' face. This image is not retained, stored, or distributed to third parties, and Facial Recognition cameras are only located at the point of sale for school meal transactions. Times will be allocated for these images to be captured prior to the move to the new building.
3. Collection:
The system reads distinctive features from the image and processes it through an algorithm. This process turns the image into a unique string of characters, which serves as the pupil's unique identifier. This unique identifier is stored on a secure, encrypted database within the school and is used to verify pupils' accounts at the checkout.
4. Identification:
During checkout, the cashier initiates the system to verify their account and process the transaction. The cashier must activate this process; the system is not live for pupils. A picture of the pupil is captured and processed through the algorithm to



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confirm their unique identifier and access their account. The image is not kept on record; only their unique identifier is stored.

Security of Facial Recognition

- Biometrics, in this case, provides a unique identifier for the person present at the checkout. The unique identifier is created by processing the biometric capture through a mathematical algorithm, generating a unique number. **Only this number is stored; the captured image is not retained.** This data is encrypted using AES 256 (similar to encryption used by your online banking) and cannot be reversed to produce an image of the biometric, ensuring the highest level of security and compliance.
- No other agencies or third parties can use the images. The information is never shared, and the face template representing the pupils' 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.
- When the pupil leaves the school, all biometric data will be deleted; the school is the data controller and will delete the data from its databases. You can opt-out anytime, meaning the school will delete the biometric data.
- The system is not live and has to be activated in the Dining Room before use at the beginning of service.

How do I get started?

- Like all biometric recognition methods, Facial Recognition requires consent. If you are happy to use this software, please complete the form in this link: [Consent Form](#) before Friday 14th March 2025.
- If you decide that you do not wish to use this software, or if you opt out later on, middle and upper phase pupils will use a pin number system and lower phase pupils will give their names.
- If you decide not to opt in now, you can always opt in at some point in the future.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch: kinghenryviii319finance@monmouthshireschools.wales

Thank you for your positivity and support.

Yours sincerely / Yn gywir,

Mrs Haidee Clarke
Rheolwr Busnes Ysgol / School Business Manager