



# Sir Thomas Rich's School

## Cashless Catering System

### **Background**

As you are already aware, Innovate Services are our new catering providers as from January 2017. Alongside this, a new cashless catering system will be introduced which uses biometric (finger scanning) technology. The aim of this is to develop a more efficient system which has many advantages including the alleviation of many of the problems associated with cash in schools.

Information has already been issued to parents – the following is a summary of the procedures together with a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in case any parent has any concerns.

### **Biometrics (fingerprint scanning) Technology**

The biometric system has been chosen by the school as being the more effective and user friendly way forward.

When finger scanning is used, it measures a number of reference points and turns the information into a digital signature. The unique digital signature is stored on the catering system and the image of the fingerprint is destroyed.

The suppliers of the system, Cunninghams, have also stated that:

- The data is encrypted for further security
- The data cannot be used to recreate an image of the pupil's fingerprint

Once your child leaves school their record is deleted from the database.

You may find the next FAQ's section useful.

## **FAQ's**

### ***What is a cashless system?***

At the heart of the cashless system there is a computer controlled by I.M.P.A.C.T software. This allows the system to recognise each individual pupil, hold individual cash balances, record cash spent and cash received, record where money is spent, on what food, on any specific date and time of day.

### ***How is money entered on the system?***

Most parents are already registered online for paying for trips and we will be using the exact same system and money can be loaded on to your son/daughter's account through this route. Those of you who have not yet registered for this, a letter has been sent recently giving details of how to set this up. I would encourage you to proceed with this as soon as possible to avoid any last minutes issues.

### ***How will a pupil be able to check what the current balance is held in the system at any one time?***

We will be installing a revaluation station in school, whereby a pupil can load cash on to their account in an emergency. I would stress that with only one station in place, this must only be used as a last resort. By putting their finger on the fingerprint reader, details of their balance can be seen on the display.

Obviously, parents can monitor balances through the online system.

### ***What if the pupil does not hold a sufficient cash balance one day to pay for a meal?***

The system will not automatically allow accounts to become 'overdrawn'. However we are looking at having a facility whereby the pupil can collect a 'ticket' from Reception to allow a day's grace in special circumstances. This 'loan' would need to be repaid the following day.

## ***Free School Meals***

The system works exactly the same for all pupils whether they pay or have a free school meal. The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system by the software daily. Any underspend or missed meal will not be added to the next day's balance.

### ***Will pupils have problems using the system?***

No doubt there will be initial teething problems as the system is bedded in. The system will be new to us as well as to pupils, so a period of adjusting is inevitable. As reassurance however, in the first weeks of its introduction, Innovate will be on site to help us through the transition and we are confident that the system will be popular amongst pupils. Please do not hesitate to approach the Catering Manager should your child have any concerns.

### ***Reports from the system.***

A variety of reports can be obtained from the system giving comprehensive information on all aspects of use such as items of food served and cost, payments made on the account etc. Parents may find this aspect useful.

I hope you find the above information useful. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.