



CHANGES TO THE LAW ON BIOMETRICS FROM SEPTEMBER 2013

The school currently uses biometric information in order for pupils to purchase their lunch using our school catering facilities. Biometric information is taken in the form of a fingerprint; the school takes and uses information taken from a fingerprint and converts it into a unique code which is then stored on the computer system. An image of the fingerprint is **not** stored.

Under the new **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012** (Section 26 to 28) which comes into effect in September 2013, Crofton Academy is required to obtain the written consent of at least one parent before using a child's biometric information for this automated system.

Under the new legislation in order to use a child's fingerprint we require written consent of a least one parent. However, consent given by one parent can be overridden if the other parent objects in writing to its use. Parents can also object to the proposed processing of information at a later stage or withdraw consent previously have given. This means if a parent/guardian gives consent and later changes their mind, it can be withdrawn. Any consent, withdrawal of consent or objection from a parent/guardian **must** be in writing.

It should be noted that even if a parent/guardian has consented, a child can object or refuse at any time to their biometric information being taken and used. Their consent does not need to be in writing and overrides any parental/guardian consent. We would therefore ask that all parents/guardians discuss this with their child and explain to them their rights to object.

If pupils do not use the biometric system the school offers a reasonable alternative in the form of a card reader where children can put their lunch money and purchase lunch in the same way they would using their finger. Data will be collected to identify each child, but this will not be biometric data and is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998.

If a child leaves the school or if for some reason they decide to opt out of the biometric system their data will be securely deleted.

Over the next few weeks all our parents/guardians will receive notification of this change in the law together with a consent form which should be returned to school as soon as possible thereafter.

If you have any queries or questions about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Andrea Hewson at Crofton Academy on 01924 862985 or andrea.hewson@croftonacademy.org.uk.