June 2009

Dear Parent / Staff,

New Catering Arrangements at Beaumont

At Beaumont we will be operating a cashless system for our catering service with Cucina. Parents will pay in advance for pupils' school meals, crediting the pupils' account with the amount paid in. Individual pupils are identified at the till by an automated biometric system, with the cost of their meal being deducted from the credit, paid for by the parent.

There are several advantages to cashless catering. Pupils in receipt of free school meals are not identifiable; pupils do not need cash to pay for their meals, reducing the opportunity for loss or theft and the service is speeded up. The biometric system has additional advantages as the pupils do not have to remember to bring anything with them to the dining hall; nothing can be lost such as the smart cards used in the past; there is no cost of replacement cards and no chance of other pupils trying to use your child's card.

The biometric system we are using is based on fingerprint recognition technology which stores numerical values derived from fingerprints and not the actual image of a fingerprint. Once the fingerprint is taken and converted into a numerical value it is this number which identifies the child. The school does not keep an image of the fingerprint and the numerical value cannot recreate an image of the fingerprint. This data will be handled in the same way as all other data in the school and will be subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. It will not be passed on to any third party and will be deleted once your child leaves the school.

The system will come into operation on Thursday 3rd September 2009 and **no cash will be accepted at the 'Till Point.** If you do not wish your child to be included in the biometric recognition system, then please write in to the school and we will arrange for your child to apply for a smartcard. (Please note that smartcards will cost £5 to replace if lost or damaged.)

Money can be paid into the system by two methods, at present:

1. **Payment by cheque:** The cheque is made out to **Cucina** and placed in the Post Box provided at the top of the ramp in the Dining Hall. **Please write the full Name of the Pupil and his/her Form on the back of the cheque and place in an envelope.**
2. **Payment by cash:** The Revaluation Station, at the entrance to the Dining Hall accepts cash, both notes and coins. This works as follows:
   - Firstly the pupil places his/her finger on the scanner mounted on the Revaluation Station to enter the system which will display the pupil's name and current balance held within the system.
   - Secondly, cash is inserted into the slot. Each incremental cash balance will show on the display. The red button is then pressed to tell the system that the transaction is completed.

Any amount of money can be paid into the pupil's account. Money spent on food will be taken out of the system and the pupil can always check his/her balance by using the revaluation station or at the till, to see how much he/she has left.

If a pupil is entitled to a 'free school meal', the amount allocated will be automatically entered into his/her account on a daily basis for use at lunch time; it will not be carried over to the next day. Extra money can be added to the account in the same way as described above.

The school is also able to provide parents with a report detailing each item of food served, each credit made to the system, for any time period and show a current balance upon request. If you wish, we can programme a daily 'spend limit' into the system. This can be increased or decreased for an individual pupil by making a written request to the school.

I hope you will find this system helpful.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact me at the school.

Yours sincerely

E. Jones

E Jones
Assistant Headteacher (Premises)