



## St. Thomas More High School

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Kenilworth Gardens  
Westcliff-on-Sea  
Essex SS0 0BW  
Telephone: Southend (01702) 344933

Headteacher:  
Mrs G Ackred

E.Mail: [office@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk) [www.st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk](http://www.st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk)

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### **School Gateway and Biometric Cashless Catering**

Dear Parent / Carer,

As part of the schools initiative to reduce printing and paper costs a vast majority of correspondence that the school sends home will be sent via email, this includes reports and our weekly newsletter 'Contact', it is therefore imperative that you have given us your email address on the pupil information sheet received in this pack. Another reason your email address is important to us is that by using your email address and mobile number you have access to the 'School Gateway'.

#### **What is the School Gateway?**

The school gateway is accessible via iPhone / Android phone by downloading the free application called School Gateway. You can also access the gateway via [schoolgateway.com](http://schoolgateway.com) on any internet enabled computer.

#### **You will be able to view the following for your child/children:**

- Achievements
- Attendance
- Your contact details
- Student details
- Behaviour
- Students Lesson timetable
- School details
- Medical conditions

#### **You will also be able to pay for the following items:**

- School trips
- Music Tuition
- School CTS Bible
- Dinner Money
- Textbooks etc.
- **Locker Rental (more details to follow)**

#### **What is Biometric Cashless Catering?**

The school now operates a cashless catering system; cash will no longer be accepted in the school canteen. The system assigns balances by scanning your child's biometric data at the till – this involves taking an image of a finger which is then turned into a unique identification number. No register of the scanned image is kept and it is impossible to turn the unique number back into a fingerprint. This data is kept on an encrypted system and is deleted when the pupil leaves the school automatically.

Yours faithfully,

**St Thomas More High School**

## **Cashless Catering FAQs**

### **What is a Cashless System?**

At the heart of the cashless system is computer controlled software. This allows the system to recognise each individual student, 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.

### **Biometrics – Bio – what??**

Biometrics authentication is the automatic recognition of a living being using suitable body characteristics. By measuring an individual's physical features in an authentication enquiry and comparing this data with stored biometric reference data, the identity of a specific user is determined.

Once the biometric data has been stored, a comparison is made at the point of purchase and access to the appropriate cashless catering application is granted.

### **How are pupils recognised by the system?**

Each pupil will have their fingerprint registered which will then be translated to an Alpha Numeric number, the image is then discarded, when used this will then enter them into the system program and identify them by a number. Separate details are enclosed containing further details of the Biometrics system. The information stored cannot be used to recreate an image of the student's fingerprint.

### **How is this then used to obtain a school meal?**

The student simply places their finger on a scanner at the point of sale; a display will show the server the pupil's name, class and current cash balance held within the system. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance will show on the display.

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

- a) By School Gateway – Online Payment Provider.
- b) Cash loader at main office

### **If we pay for a set number of school meals, can it be spent in one day?**

No, a daily spend limit of £5.00 will be set for all pupils in Years 7 – 11 and £10 for students in 6th Form, and no food above that limit can be bought.

### **When can I log into my School gateway account to add money for school meals?**

By the end of June 2015

### **Which cards can I use?**

School Gateway accepts MasterCard and Visa credit cards, Maestro, Switch, Delta, Electron, Sola and Visa debit cards.

### **Is it safe to make payments on the Internet?**

Yes. School Gateway uses leading technology to process your card transactions securely. All communication with the bank is encrypted and neither School Gateway nor the School have access to your card details.

### **How can I check that it is secure?**

Standard website addresses begin with http; the address for a secure site will always begin with https. You will also see a padlock at the bottom/top right of the screen on the School Gateway login page, and after you have logged into your account. Never enter your card details or personal data on any web page whose address does not begin with https.

### **What about personal information?**

School Gateway holds a very limited amount of information solely for the purpose of administering the account. However School Gateway does not use your personal information nor share or give this information to any other organisation. The system will function and operate under the strict guidelines set out by the Data Protection Act 1998.

School Gateway will never contact you by phone, email or ask you to divulge confidential information such as passwords or card numbers.

### **What about pupils entitled to a 'free school meal'?**

The system works exactly the same for all pupils whether they pay or have a free school meal. All pupils have their own account to use in exactly the same way.

The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system by the software daily and will only be accessible at dinner break.

The system will then allow on a daily basis the required cash amount for each individual pupil to be allotted to their current cash balance. However, any under spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance.

Additional cash can also be added to the system by Parents using School Gateway, to enable a greater daily spend on the school dinner than allocated by their free meal allowance. As this allowance can only be spent on a school dinner, extra cash added into the system can also be used for break time snacks.

There will be no more queuing to be issued a 'free meal' tickets.

### **Will pupils have problems in using this system?**

Some pupils may find it difficult to control their accounts for the first couple of weeks, but because of a daily spend limit, most learn this important life skill very quickly and will enjoy being in control of their account.