

Dear Stantonbury families

School meals at Stantonbury

We are experiencing high demand from school meals served in the Diner and Deli at break and lunch time at the moment. This can cause long queues leaving little time for students to eat their snack or meal. As most parents will know, our catering is provided by Cucina who are an external company but we work closely with them to help provide our 1500 students with healthy school meals and snacks.

We use a cashless payment system that requires students to use their fingerprint to access funds that parents can top up through ParentPay. When a student arrives at the Diner or Deli they should be able to select their food choice and 'pay' very quickly at the till by scanning their fingerprint. If a student is eligible for free school meals they also scan their fingerprint so that Cucina can account for that transaction. In this way students who are eligible for free school meals look no different from any other student who is making a transaction. The process of making a fingerprint transaction literally takes 3 seconds.

Unfortunately many transactions are being made by students without using their fingerprint. When this happens students have to give their name or ID number to the till operator who then has to look the students up on the system. This type of transaction takes up to 30 seconds which obviously slows the queue down considerably.

To speed up the system we need all students to use their fingerprints to access their accounts. Our records show that less than half of students have their fingerprint registered so it is important that we get the remaining students on the system. We require parental consent to collect biometric data such as fingerprints and wish to reassure parents that biometric data is kept in a highly secure environment and only used for the purpose of enabling school meal transactions. This data would not be released to any other agency.

If you wish your child to be able to use the school meal service then please complete the attached form that gives your permission to scan your child's fingerprint. Upon receipt of the form we will then arrange to take the fingerprint scan. As soon as the fingerprint is loaded onto the system it can be used in the Diner and Deli providing your child with a much quicker method of 'paying' at the till.

From previous experience the start of term is often slower than normal and that the queues will reduce in the coming weeks.

Some parents have complained on Facebook that students are not getting food despite queuing. Our policy is that if they are in the queue before the end of break/lunch warning bell rings then they will be served. Staff on duty do their very best to ensure that all students get food at lunchtime and we would be grateful if you could remind your child that if they are worried about any canteen issues then they should speak to the member of staff on duty so we can help them. If you have concerns about particular issues please contact the school by emailing enquiries@stantonbury-tove.org.uk