



14 May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: New improved catering provider and biometric payment system**

I am excited to inform you that we now have a new catering provider for the school. Olive Dining has a proven track record of excellence and already provides great food and great service at both Forest Gate and Cumberland School.

Olive Dining will provide a more varied and flexible offer for our students and we are confident that parents, students and staff will be very pleased with the changes. You may not be able to sample them yet, but the new catering team is now working at Hackney New School to ensure that they are ready to welcome our students with an enticing food offer when students do return.

Along with the introduction of a new catering company we will also be implementing a new biometric payment system for our students from September. As you are aware, the current system does not provide a good service for students or parents as it charges parents if a child is present in school, not for what they actually eat from the canteen.

This new system is much more sophisticated and will ensure parents are only charged for what is eaten by their child. For example the school Meal Deal will be £2.60, the main meal will be £2.00 and break time snacks/food will cost between 80p and £1.80. Previously the system charged parents the same amount whatever was eaten, so this will be much better value for money for our families. The system is used successfully by thousands of schools and we are convinced that this is the right way forward for HNS.

We expect this system to improve the services we are able to offer students and staff significantly, with benefits including:

- Reduction in queuing time
- Reduction in administration time and costs
- The ability to purchase individual items rather than only a set meal
- Effective linkage to the School Money accounts parents already have set up
- Specific food allergy ingredients can be barred automatically
- Healthy eating is encouraged
- Automatic free meal allocation with the students remaining anonymous

- Parents charged ONLY for the food that students eat each day

We would like to make it clear that our school will comply at all times with the Data Protection Act and with the guidance given by Becta and by the Information Commissioner's Office regarding the use of biometric data.

Fingerprint images WILL NOT be stored by the system. Instead, a set of coordinates is translated into a string of numbers and encrypted. The encryption method used by the system is a high level, industry standard method. The data held could not be used to recreate a fingerprint image, nor could it be used in a forensic investigation.

A useful Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document regarding the new system is enclosed with this letter. Clearly we will not be collecting the biometric information until our students return. We will be contacting you as soon as we have a clearer idea of when students will return to give you more information about how the HNS biometric system will work.

If you would like more information or the chance to discuss this further, please feel free to contact Ms Dineen at: [gilliandineen@hackneynewschool.org](mailto:gilliandineen@hackneynewschool.org). We will, if needed, offer an opportunity to opt out for those parents who feel that they would rather not have their child's biometric data taken.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Whelan  
Head Teacher