



Biometrics FAQ's



Frequently Asked Questions

What is iDStore?

iDStore is a central database located within a school, which stores the information that identifies pupils uniquely to each of the applications used at the school.

iDStore requires each pupil to register only once, usually by placing a finger on a fingerprint scanner, although other identification methods are available.

Why use iDStore instead of other existing identification methods?

The centralised system of iDStore speeds up the registration process – each student need only register once, no matter how many applications requiring identification are in place at the school.

With a biometric system, students cannot borrow or steal credentials from each other, reducing the opportunities for bullying. Queues are reduced because the rate of identification of students is quickened. Students no longer need to carry cards, remember PIN numbers, or use cash to purchase a meal.

Biometric systems save time and money for both schools and pupils because the need to replace lost cards and forgotten passwords is eliminated.

Does iDStore record images of individual fingerprints?

iDStore does not store images of fingerprints on its system, and never will. Only mathematical representations of certain points of a finger image are recorded, typically between ten and sixty depending on the characteristics of the finger. This mathematical data is encrypted and is called a template. The data is extremely secure in its encrypted form, and even if it were not encrypted, it would be impossible to recreate the original fingerprint image from the stored data.

Is it possible to recreate a fingerprint from the data stored by iDStore?

No, the iDStore system only stores a short string of encrypted numbers, too little data for the original print to be reconstructed.

How secure is the stored data? What would happen if somebody stole it?

The iDStore database is protected by a licence key. This means that the database and any backup of its contents can only be accessed on licenced hardware. The hardware is stored in the schools own secure facility, so that the encrypted data is only available to the registered licensee. Even if a school's security were to be compromised and a backup of the database stolen, the encrypted data would still be unreadable, even by another school.

Could the police or a court of law use the fingerprints stored in an iDStore database?

iDStore does not store fingerprint images. The recorded templates are comprised of a set of numbers, which represent each person. This set of numbers will be unique within populations of hundreds, or a few thousands, of people. However, in a wider population, the system is not accurate enough for the templates to be usable for forensic matching with any degree of certainty. A court of law would not be able to use this information as evidence.

What happens about twins, or someone who has hurt their finger?

Even identical twins have different fingerprints and will not be mistaken for each other by iDStore. In very rare cases there are people who are born without fingerprints. Occasionally someone's fingerprints may deteriorate because of exposure to some chemical products, and sometimes temperature change can cause reduction in fingerprint quality. However, a cut finger would not cause any problems for iDStore, unless it resulted in a major disfigurement.

Is there an alternative for pupils who are unable to provide biometric data for some reason, such as a disability?

Alternative identification methods, such as a card, are always available in iDStore systems. Pupils unable to provide biometric data can opt to use this method, as can any pupil who prefers not to use biometrics.

If I object to my child being fingerprinted, what will happen?

The school will issue any pupil who wishes to opt out of the biometric system with an alternative method of identification – a card. An initial card will be provided free of charge any replacement cards will cost £2.50.

Can I withdraw consent at any time?

By giving consent neither you nor your child are obliged to the agreement, and can object to the proposed processing of your child's biometric information at a later stage, or withdraw any consent you have previously given. Please note that any consent, withdrawal of consent or objection from a parent must be in writing.

Even if you have consented, your child can object or refuse at any time to their biometric information being taken/used. *[His/her]* objection does not need to be in writing. We would appreciate it if you could discuss this with your child and explain to them that they can object to this if they wish.

What happens when my child leaves school?

The school will securely delete your child's name from the Database. Once a person is deleted all the related biometric information is also deleted from the Database. Individual confirmation of deletion is not provided.