



Written by [James Heiser](#) on January 4, 2011

## Biometric ID Use Spreads in UK Schools

Only a few weeks after the European Commission expressed “significant concerns” over the compulsory fingerprinting of British students, the Daily Express is reporting that a quarter of all schoolchildren in Scotland are being tracked throughout their daily activities by means of biometric identification.



[According to the Express:](#)

New figures show 68 schools are now using technology to manage meals, control library books and even allow access to toilets.

Almost two-thirds are primaries, where fingerprinting and palm recognition can be used to identify young children.

And another 10 schools in Midlothian have the capability for biometric ID but are not yet using it.

The decision to permit the mechanisms of the national security state to intrude into the most routine aspects of the lives of children as young as four is not only degrading and absurd — it is educating impressionable youths to take for granted that the State will track their every movement, action and thought for the rest of their lives. Such needlessly pervasive interference in the lives of children is so scandalous that even continental European bureaucrats understand that it is wicked.

According to a [December 14 article by Bruno Waterfield for The Telegraph](#), the use of such tracking technologies is swiftly overtaking the British educational system, and is doing so in violation of the laws of the EU:

In many schools, when using the canteen or library, children, as young as four, place their thumbs on a scanner and lunch money is deducted from their account or they are registered as borrowing a book.

Research carried out by Dr Emmeline Taylor, at Salford University, found earlier this year that 3,500 schools in the UK — one in seven — are using fingerprint technology.

EU data protection rules, Brussels legislation that overrides British law, requires that the gathering of information such as biometric fingerprints, must be “proportionate” and must allow judicial challenges.

“We should be obliged if you could provide us with additional information both regarding the processing of the biometric data of minors in schools, with particular reference to the proportionality and necessity in the light of the legitimate aims sought to be achieved, and the issue concerning the availability of judicial redress,” said the letter, seen by *The Daily Telegraph*.

The latest news regarding the schools in Scotland demonstrates that there is little doubt that such dehumanizing technologies are quickly becoming widespread in the educational institutions of the United Kingdom.



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No justifiable purpose is served by the invasive introduction of such technologies. If the goal is simply to track attendance, or the presence of a child within a classroom, then the traditional roll call would continue to suffice. What justifiable purpose is served by collecting information every time a child uses the toilet? Can library cards no longer track books without a thumbprint or an iris scan? Furthermore, the technologies necessary for such pervasive tracking of students are quite expensive — is the state of education in the United Kingdom so advanced that school administrators cannot find any more beneficial use for the funds at their disposal? The *Express* cites Michael Parker of the group NO2ID:

It is quite unreasonable to construct a system whereby children of a very young age are being regularly indoctrinated into the idea that they must constantly prove who they are.

What studies have demonstrated that these extravagant and, no doubt, very expensive schemes are any better than paper and card records?

Clearly, no good purpose is served by such a system — and its introduction risks a great deal of harm.

The ideology of the national security state is spreading aggressively throughout the West; cultures which once would have instinctively refused such intrusions are now expected to “roll over” to each new demand for a surrender of liberty in the name of “security,” “efficiency,” and other idols of post-modernity.

A similar scandal surrounded the decision of school administrators in Houston, Texas to use radio frequency identification (RFID) chips to track students. [As that story was reported for \*The New American\* in October of last year,](#)

RFID might be fine for monitoring inventory in a warehouse or cattle on the range, but it is inexcusable to treat students like a side of beef. Teachers need to put down the RFID skimmer, and spend their time teaching their students, not monitoring them. The dangerous experiment in Big Brother monitoring systems in some California and Texas schools is a very poor civics lesson for the children submitted to such an ill-considered misuse of technology.



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