

BEHAVIOUR POLICY



MINERVA'S
virtual academy

KEY CONTACTS

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INTRODUCTION

Minerva's Virtual Academy (the School) is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils; to do so we strive to create an environment which encourages everyone to accept responsibility for their behaviour and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct. We champion allowing our pupils to develop the key skill of self-discipline with support from our staff as opposed to blind obedience.

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy aims to help young people grow in a safe and secure online environment, and to become successful, confident, responsible and effective members of the School and beyond. Minerva's Virtual Academy recognises and promotes good behaviour, as it believes that this will develop an ethos of kindness, trust and cooperation.

This policy aims to:

- Create a culture of self-enabled behavioural excellence within the School and beyond
- Ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and shown respect
- Promote positive academic and interpersonal relationships between pupils, their peers and staff
- Help pupils take control over their behaviour and be responsible for the consequences of it
- Build an environment which values kindness, care, good humour, good temper and empathy for others
- Promote cohesion between all members of the school, and between the school and the wider community
- Ensure that exemplary behaviour is a minimum expectation for all, staff and pupils alike.

RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Principal and vice principals will stand alongside Heads of Department, mentors and colleagues to support, guide, model and provide a consistent point of reference to all pupils. The role of the leadership team includes:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently throughout the school
- Supporting teachers and staff by setting standards of behaviour
- Celebrating staff, leaders and pupils whose effort and/or achievements go above and beyond expectations
- Keeping records of reported incidents of misbehaviour and poor conduct
- Regularly reviewing provisions for individual pupils who fall beyond the range of written policies
- Working with staff to implement early interventions for pupils, where required
- Supporting staff in managing pupils with more complex or entrenched negative behaviours
- Taking time to share good practice during professional development opportunities.

STAFF

Minerva's Virtual Academy staff are expected to handle all interactions on behaviour consistently and with positive change as the overriding goal. In turn, our pupils feel treated as valued individuals who respect their education as well as the education of their peers. With this in mind, the role of staff at the School includes:

- Ensuring that the rules of the online classroom are enforced in their classes, and that pupils behave in a responsible manner during lesson time
- Striving to ensure that all pupils work to the best of their ability
- Being a role model for pupils by treating each pupil fairly, with respect and understanding, building positive working relationships
- Planning lessons that engage, challenge and meet the needs of pupils
- Using visible positive recognition mechanisms, for example awarding commendations through iSAMS
- Reporting instances of poor or worryingly negative behaviour by logging a Concern through iSAMS
- Following up on instances of poor behaviour, retaining ownership and engaging in reflective dialogue with pupils, parents, carers and the leadership team
- Reporting repeated negative behaviours to the principal and vice principals with parents
- Implementing consistently appropriate sanctions and the School's behaviour policy

PARENTS AND CARERS

The role of parents and carers in the education of our pupils should not be underestimated. The support of family members is pivotal to pupils achieving success in their learning. In order to best support our pupils it is the responsibility of parents and carers to:

- Ensure that their child is properly supervised during lessons
- Ensure that their child arrives to each lesson on time and equipped to work
- Ensure their child is well prepared with a device that is suitable, charged and in good working order
- Work with the school to advocate safe and positive behaviours when online. Any concerns can be raised directly with the vice principal pastoral via telephone or email.

PUPILS

Pupils are held responsible for their own behaviour and neither disruptive nor unkind behaviour will be tolerated. Pupils can help to ensure their own success by:

- Attending all live lessons in full unless prior notification of absence has been provided
- Attending lessons on time using their school-registered email address, with their full name on display
- Behaving in a respectful, considerate and kind manner when they are in classrooms
- Listening to and taking direction from their teacher when in class
- Participating actively in lessons and completing individual and group tasks to the best of their ability, with the encouragement of their teachers
- Completing independent learning tasks to the best of their ability by the agreed due date
- Ensuring that work completed on Canvas is their own work, avoiding plagiarism, using appropriately academic language
- Letting their teacher and mentor know as soon as possible if there is a problem or anticipated delay in completing work

MANAGING BEHAVIOURS

For the majority of pupils at Minerva's Virtual Academy, a gentle reminder or nudge in the right direction is all that is needed when negative behaviour begins to occur. We encourage our teachers to reinforce all behaviour management strategies with care and consideration, taking individual needs into account where necessary. Our teachers would rather praise and celebrate the behaviour they want to see from pupils.

Teachers will use different practical steps for dealing with poor conduct - these steps are outlined below. All pupils are given 'take up time' in between steps to allow acknowledgment of reflection on actions. Pupils will not miss or accelerate steps for repeated low-level disruption.

Steps	Action(s)
1. Redirection	Gentle encouragement, a nudge in the right direction or a small act of kindness.
2. Reminder	A reminder of the classroom expectations, delivered privately wherever possible, reminding the pupil of their behaviour. Repeat reminders if necessary. De-escalate and decelerate, where reasonable and possible, and take the initiative to keep things at this stage.

3. Caution	A clear verbal caution delivered privately wherever possible, making the pupil aware of their good previous behaviour and clearly outlining the consequences if they continue to display poor conduct. Pupils should be encouraged to make good choices.
4. Time Out	The pupil should temporarily leave the lesson. Give the pupil a chance to reflect away from others. If possible, speak to the pupil privately, reminding them of previous conduct/attitude/learning, reset the boundaries and give them a final opportunity to engage. Offer a positive choice to do so.
5. Internal referral	At this point the pupil will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the lesson. An internal referral should be directed to the Headmaster which will be recorded electronically. Parents and carers will be notified of this referral and will be asked to have a conversation with their child regarding their conduct.
6. Restorative Meeting	A restorative meeting should take place before the next lesson with the teacher, Headmaster and/or Mentor. Parents and carers will be notified of this meeting with the option to attend. The consequences of not meeting any agreed targets should be made clear to all parties. At this point, it may be necessary to give pupils a second chance at any targets, but professional judgement should be used. If the pupil does not attend or the reconciliation is unsuccessful, staff should call on the support of the Headmaster and a meeting with the parent(s) and carer(s) will be arranged.
7. Restorative Conference	A meeting with the pupil, teacher, parent(s) and carer(s), Mentor and Headmaster or Deputy Head will take place. There will be an official record of this meeting with action plan targets that will be monitored over the course of two weeks. Please see additional details below.

RESTORATIVE CONFERENCE

A restorative conference takes a holistic view of the pupil, their learning and conduct. This meeting will include the pupil, necessary teacher(s), parent(s) and carer(s), mentor and a member of the leadership team. The meeting will address the pupil's: progress and achievement, learning needs, course choice, attitude, behavioural routines and personal organisation. The meeting aims to identify areas of the pupil's experience that are presenting challenges, with a view to bringing positive changes to any aspect of the above. Any action plan agreed with the pupil at the meeting will come under the terms of a final warning. If the actions agreed in the plan are not completed or positive changes are not observed in the following two weeks, the Headmaster may ask for the pupil to leave the school. The consequences of not meeting the agreed targets should be made clear to all parties and recorded. Every effort will be made to encourage and support a change in the pupil's behaviour.

CAMERAS IN LIVE LESSONS

The leadership team understands that some pupils choose virtual schooling, from the comfort and safety of their home, because they live with anxiety and other mental health difficulties. However, we also believe that live interaction with teachers and other pupils is crucial to a pupil's learning journey and in time helps to develop their confidence, make them active learners and equip them for further study and life beyond education. We also believe that teachers can do their job to its fullest only by seeing and speaking with pupils. For these reasons, our expectation is that - unless there are agreed reasonable adjustments - pupils will attend all live lessons with their camera turned on and their full head and shoulders visible, suitably attired and facing forwards.

There are instances when this may be temporarily unmanageable for a particular pupil - whether at the start of their journey with us as they transition to online learning, or during periods of severe symptoms. At such times, parents should contact the Headmaster to discuss a dispensation allowing the pupil to engage in lessons only via the chat function, or only via the microphone.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

This procedure is designed to set good practice standards. However, the School recognises that best practice develops over time and, as such, will update it regularly in the light of experience and as a result of changes in legislation or its own internal organisation and policies. The procedure will be subject to a comprehensive review on an annual basis.

Date Policy created:	March 2021
Last Review Date: Reviewed by:	March 2024 Suzanne Lindley Principal
Next Review Date:	March 2025