



## Virtual Classrooms Policy

January 2022

## **'Virtual Classrooms' - Student Code of Conduct**

While the pandemic continues students at Sacred Heart Catholic High School will be able to access some lessons via our 'virtual classrooms' offer using their school Microsoft Teams account. 'Virtual classroom' lessons will be provided, where appropriate, to students who are at home isolating with covid-19 but are well enough to continue with their schoolwork.

### **Attending 'virtual classrooms' from home:**

- Students will be provided with a short 'getting started' session in form time in January 2022. Details of the session will be communicated to students and they will also receive a copy of the instructions for accessing 'virtual classroom' sessions
- A register will be taken by the teacher at the start of each 'virtual classroom' session to monitor attendance

### **Behaviour during remote learning and use of virtual classrooms:**

- Students must always follow school behaviour expectations
- Students must always treat others with respect
- Students must not attempt to communicate with each other through the 'Teams Chat' function or through any other Teams application unless directed by the teacher
- All 'Teams Chat' conversations are recorded for safeguarding purposes
- Students must always use appropriate language when communicating with staff via Teams
- Students must address staff with their school title in any communication and must always adhere to formal staff/student boundaries
- Students must ensure that all information they upload to Teams and any messages they send during any Teams session is polite, sensible and relevant
- Students must not use racist, threatening, sexist or homophobic language on any application
- Students must not upload any inappropriate images, audio or video to Teams including but not limiting to that which is racist, threatening, sexist or homophobic

### **Behaviour in 'virtual classrooms':**

- Students must always follow our school expectations, whether they are in the classroom or joining the 'virtual classroom' from home
- Students will aim to be positive, adequately prepared and participate fully in any online session
- Students must treat the teacher and the other students in the lesson, with respect during any 'virtual classroom' sessions
- Students must not take secret photos, videos or screenshots of teachers or other students
- If a student is participating in a 'virtual classroom' session from home, any other device not in use, such as a mobile phone, must be switched off and out of sight before the session
- If the code of conduct is not followed appropriately, students may be removed from the 'virtual classroom'

### **Expectations for the completion of work:**

- Students must complete all work in the format set by the teacher
- Students must complete all work by the specified deadline

- Failure to complete work will be followed up by the teacher, Head of Department or Head of Progress

#### **Equipment and organisation for 'virtual classrooms':**

- Student webcams are centrally disabled in Teams for Key Stage 3 and 4 students. Sixth Form students should leave their webcams off unless directed otherwise by the teacher.
- Teachers will inform students if they are required to enable their microphone
- Students will choose a sensible place to work from - ideally a living room or shared space in their house, not a bedroom, and they must dress appropriately
- Students must also ensure they avoid backgrounds with personal information such as photographs
- Students will ensure that they have all necessary equipment (pen, pencil, exercise book, calculator etc) in advance, so that they do not leave and interrupt the flow of the lesson

#### **Teacher Absence:**

We will attempt to notify you of a teacher's absence when practicable and alternative teaching arrangements will be put in place

#### **Safeguarding and online safety:**

- Microsoft Teams is a closed school system and students must therefore not invite any guests to join the system through the misuse of login details
- Students must not communicate with staff outside school channels eg. they must not attempt to contact staff using their personal social media accounts, personal email addresses or phone numbers
- Students must be aware that 'virtual classrooms' and the contents of the chat are recorded for safeguarding purposes and stored securely, following a strict GDPR code of practice
- Students, parents and carers should be mindful that they and other family members and anything in the background, might be seen or heard within the session by staff

**If you have any safeguarding concerns, please ring the school directly on 0191 274 7373 and ask to speak to a member of the safeguarding team**

### **Staff Protocols - 'Virtual Classrooms'**

Online sessions will be scheduled by individual classroom teachers as deemed appropriate.

A detailed 'Student guide' explaining how to access the 'virtual classrooms' via Teams has been distributed to all students and parents as well as the Student Code of Conduct. Normal professional conduct should be maintained during 'virtual classroom' sessions, and the following protocols followed:

- Only communicate with students via Teams or school email
- Keep direct one to one online communication with students restricted to normal working hours
- If you have safeguarding concerns, continue to refer these using normal school protocols ie. Designated safeguarding leads

- Keep communication solely about work and tasks; avoid long conversational email chains with students
- Be careful not to have any windows open on your desktop that you do not wish to share
- **DO NOT** record the lesson. No lessons will be recorded from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2021
- Use Teams as the only platform to provide face to face support
- When teaching from home, any devices used within 'virtual classroom' lessons should be set up in appropriate areas i.e. not in a bedroom.
- When teaching from home, find a quiet space to hold the session and try to ensure you will not be interrupted by other family members. Dress appropriately
- Use the PARS system to record any 'Merits' or behaviour 'Concerns' in the usual way.
- If at any point you feel uncomfortable continuing the lesson due to student behaviour, you may end the lesson. Please explain this to the students before ending the lesson then follow this up with an email to your HOD and the relevant Head of Progress

## **Guidance to Support the Planning and Delivery of Virtual Classrooms**

### **Pre-lesson Preparation:**

- You will need to build in a little buffer time at the start of lessons. Aim to start teaching 5 mins into the lesson this allows you time to set up the remote lesson
- Log into Teams in advance of your lesson to avoid any potential issues such as accessing a PowerPoint or other resources
- Remember to log off from any other computer you have recently used before attempting to stream a live lesson. If you don't log off from all other computers, you may be unable to share your screen and the microphone won't work in the web version of Teams
- When necessary, inform students in advance of the lesson via email that a 'virtual classroom' session will take place. It may be easier to do this via a whole class email at the start of the week. However, staff can develop their own practice on this.

### **At the start of the virtual lesson:**

- Open your Teams calendar and click on your previously arranged virtual lesson meeting maker. You may use the 'meet now' button instead if you are confident that your class will join the lesson at the appropriate time
- Student cameras will not be activated in Key Stages 3 and 4 (they are enabled in 6<sup>th</sup> Form, but it is up to the teacher to decide if you want to use them). Ask all students to mute their microphones at the start of the lesson.
- Complete the register on PARS at the start of the session. Do this by calling out student names in the traditional way so that no students are missed. This will incentivise students to attend lessons promptly and allows pastoral staff to track and intervene in attendance issues
- Explain that isolating students should not use the 'raise hand' or 'chat' functions, if they have a question, they should email the teacher directly after the lesson
- Outline your expectations at the start of the lesson. Students and parents will have been made aware of the expectations and will have been sent the 'Virtual Classrooms' Student Code of Conduct
- **Do not record** the 'virtual classroom' lesson.

### **Throughout the Virtual Classroom Lesson:**

- Adhere to all staff protocols for virtual lessons
- Sit at a desk or table when teaching. Your voice will only be picked up whilst sitting in front of the computer webcam
- Do not share screens with any personal or confidential information to those students at home via SIMS, email or other forms of communication
- The only screen that should be shared with students at home should be the screen that students would see in the classroom via the projector
- Speak slowly and clearly, building pauses to cheque for understanding.
- You may want to use a visualiser for annotation
- Build in plenty of time for independent tasks
- Be flexible with lesson content. Remember that when delivering 'virtual classroom' sessions you are not required to speak for the full hour. Your expertise will determine the best way to use the time allocated to teach the class and deliver the curriculum
- Leave enough time to explain any homework tasks that you wish the students to complete.
- Set a clear deadline and expectations. Teams 'Assignments' provides a good framework and location to set homework

### **At the end of the online lesson:**

- Finish promptly
- Remind students of any homework tasks or assignments that they need to complete
- Thank the students at home for their participation before ending the 'virtual classroom' session