# Drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

Online Learning Etiquette Guide: Do's and Don'ts for Pupils

The following principles are intended to help with appropriate conduct for online lessons. Trust policies and regulations apply to all classes and other work or study interactions, and these principles work with both and do not replace any element of either.

While many of these guidelines may seem obvious, a new medium of communication can tend to throw off some of our instincts for proper etiquette, so we thought we should support you by providing a baseline of expectations that you can refer back to as we work to develop an ideal online atmosphere for learning, social and professional interactions.

Online Learning DO's

1. **DO** – **Read the school behaviour policy,** then ensure your child behaves in accordance with the policy as it still applies for and during all online lessons.

2. **DO** - **Read the school's Acceptable Use Agreement.** Please ensure that any/all school equipment provided specifically for your child's home/online learning is used in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy.

3. **DO - Use the bathroom BEFORE the lesson starts**

4. **DO - Be kind, respectful and on time.** Make a point to be kind and respectful in your comments; never forget it is a human being at the other end of the conversation. Online communication comes with a level of anonymity that doesn't exist when you're talking to someone face-to-face. Sometimes this leads people to behave rudely when they disagree with one another.

5. **DO - Be on time.** Being on time is especially important for online events, so pupils should be organised to ensure the event can start on time and without disruption.

6. **DO** – **Mute your mic.** Ensure that you mute your mic at the start of each lesson.
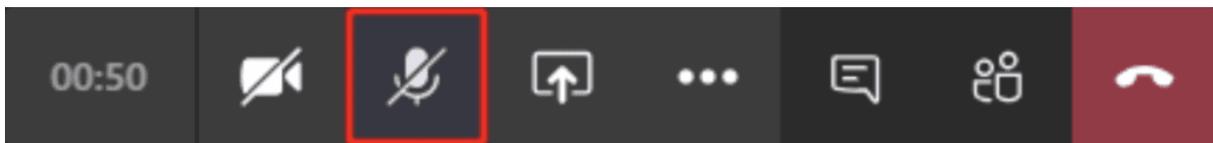
7. **Have parents/carers present.** For live lessons, ensure there is a parent/carer is present with your child at all times during their lesson.

8. **DO – Be prepared.** Have what you need for the class (your books, pens, paper etc) in place BEFORE the lesson begins.

9. **DO – Turn cameras off.** For live lessons, ensure your child's cameras is turned off for the duration of the lesson. Only teaching staff cameras on switched on.

10. **DO - Prepare everyone at home.** Remind everyone in your home that your child is entering their online lesson and they now need quiet during their lesson. If family members are likely to be heard, try to find a quiet location and/or make use of a headset to reduce background noise that may distract them from the lesson.

11. **DO - Think before you type.** Think carefully about how what you write in comment boxes can be read and be careful about how the tone can come across. A passing comment spoken in class can be forgotten a few minutes later, but what is typed or shared can have lasting impact. Also, remember what is written or shared in an online classroom cannot be deleted once posted. Don't share personal information and be as respectful to others as you would be if you were sitting in the same room together.

12. **DO - Apologise for any accidental breach of online etiquette.** No one is perfect, so if your child does break one of these etiquette guidelines — whether it's not being on time, loud background noise with the mic turned on, dominating the discussion, or not being prepared — please apologise sooner rather than later. This shows as the parent/carer you are aware of the problem and respectful of the school code of conduct.

13. **DO – Ensure your child stays focussed.** Focused attention is important for an effective learning environment so please keep toys, food, devices (phones, etc) and other distractions away from your workspace during class. Avoid side conversations or running other applications and respect the group in the session.

14. **DO – Join In.** During live lessons, encourage your child to join in and be an active participant in learning, in class and outside. Participation may look different depending on the class or particular activity. This may mean both paying attention and contributing using the chat function. An online format may increase the tendency to sit back and observe. Make the most of each online session by being as active a participant as you can.

15. **DO – Ensure your child keeps on top of their work.** Your child's preparation may impact the learning experience of others. Respect the learning of the whole class by planning your work times well and keeping up with the preparation. One of the challenges posed by online learning is the increased level of responsibility that parents/carers will have for their child's learning. Keep to routines for your child and help them adopt a mind-set that separates learning time and free time.

16. **DO - Look out for instructions, guidance and messages about changes that may need to be implemented.** Lesson tasks, instructions and links to online classes or messages will all be sent out in the standard communication formats. Watch out for the messages and remember that while we will try to keep to the schedules, we have to expect change and disruption. Check your text and email, it's where updates will be sent to you.

Online Learning DON'Ts

1. **DON'T** - **switch your microphone ON**. Keep your mic switched off unless your teacher specifically asks you to switch it on, or in the event of an emergency.

2. **DON'T** – **record the lesson.** If you have any questions, or you are unsure of anything during your lesson, please ask your teacher.

3. **DON'T** – **take screenshots of the lesson.** Remind your child not to take screenshots of the lesson.

4. **DON'T** – **upload lesson recordings or screenshots.** This includes onto personal devices, into personal email accounts, into separate file storage or social platforms.

5. **DON'T** – **allow your child to behave inappropriately.** If your child behaves in a manner deemed to be inappropriate, they will be asked to leave the lesson. If your child is removed from a lesson, they will not be able to join any future lessons until you (the parent/carer) have discussed the situation with a member of the senior leadership team.

6. **DON'T** - **Share personal information online**.

Frequently asked questions to support online etiquette principles

1. The etiquette principles note the strong encouragement for teachers to use a camera, but I don't want to/cannot	Using the camera is encouraged because teacher/pupil engagement is easier when teachers are visible. However, sometimes cameras slow down the connection and need to be switched off to allow full engagement. Generally, the camera should be on for teaching, where possible. Guidelines are provided where they should be based, if at home, to maintain an appropriate learning environment and to use a blurred background, if this is not possible. Classes are not recorded.
2. How do I ask questions during an online session?	MS Teams has a raised hands function and a chat box for questions. The teacher should clearly define their preference for use in the class.
3. How do I use the mute function?	Please join the session on mute and mute yourself when you're not speaking. Pupils **should not mute other pupils.**
4. What are the protocols around oral and written/chat discussions?	The chat box should be confined to academic discussion as outlined in the online etiquette principles. The use in each session should be agreed with the participants keeping in mind any pupils who are unable to access the chat due to existing disabilities.
5. What happens if someone leaves the session?	The online class is still a class and engagement with the whole class is expected. Pupils should inform their session leader beforehand if they need to leave. If a teacher wanted to keep a check on whether pupils were still there and engaged, they could request that pupils parent/carers use the 'thumbs up' reaction or comment in the chat box. There may be technical reasons why a participant 'leaves' which will be treated sympathetically while we get used to the new technology.
6. What are the conduct and behaviour expectations?	These are set out in the online etiquette principles.

7. What are the issues relating to behaviour outside of the learning environment, for example in meetings, other online work activities, and in student organised platforms (social media or other forms of communication)?	Online harassment is no different to in-person harassment and will be dealt with in the same way. Parents/careers are reminded that there is an Acceptable Use Policy and a Pupil Behaviour Policy that all pupils must adhere to. Support can be provided from the Pastoral and Safeguarding Leads for your child's school.
8. How do I contact staff?	Staff and pupils should use their school email addresses unless specifically asked to do otherwise (i.e., logging in through MS Teams, etc). Please don't expect immediate answers to all questions; staff will have office hours that are set aside for pupil queries and questions about learning will be responded to within 48 hours. Emails coming from personal email addresses are likely go into a staff junk email folder and will delay or prevent a response. Use of private phone numbers by pupils and staff is discouraged unless absolutely necessary. Where they have been used, numbers should be deleted afterwards. If staff do contact students via their private numbers, then they should use the 141 function to withhold their number.
9. How can I access more support for my online learning?	If you need any additional support please contact the school office and someone will contact you to discuss this as soon as possible.
12. What if issues arise around bullying online?	It's important to underline the academic focus on all online forum for education – keeping discussions on track and within agreed boundaries. Please contact school if you have any concerns.