The Middle School Honor Code and Raven Way Citizenship Guide

The Ravenscroft Middle School community is guided by two documents: The Raven Way Citizenship Guide and our Honor Code. Each of these serves a different purpose in helping you uphold the ideals and values to which we are committed. These values and documents guide you as you learn to become a solid citizen of our community and the larger world. Our Honor Code helps instill integrity in all you do.

The Middle School Honor Code

- Our Honor Code promotes trust in our community, helps develop core values, and prepares you to follow the Upper School Honor Code.

- Advisors, teachers, Honor Council, and our Student Government Association help you understand the Honor Code, your responsibilities, and consequences when it is not followed.

The Middle School Honor Code reads as follows:

“As an honorable Ravenscroft student, I will not lie, cheat, steal, plagiarize, or vandalize.”

What do we mean by lying?

Lying involves intentionally misleading a classmate, teacher, or staff member with false statements, actions, or objects.

What is cheating?

- Cheating occurs when you gain an unfair advantage over other students on an assignment.
- Such an advantage might come from looking at another student’s paper; looking at your notes while a test or quiz is still out; sharing answers in written or spoken form before, during, or after a test; or using a calculator or other form of technology, including foreign language translators, to answer questions when such use is not approved.
- Copying or requesting/granting an answer to a homework question is also a violation unless explicit permission to work together is granted by your teacher(s).

What is stealing?

Stealing involves the intention to take and keep property belonging to someone else without his or her permission or without payment.

What is plagiarism?

- Taking credit for another’s words or ideas, intentionally or unintentionally
• Using direct work from another source, whether it is a book, internet site, magazine, etc. without placing material in quotes and citing it
• Using an example on a test or quiz that is close to another on the test or quiz
• How do I avoid plagiarism?
  o Reword information in your own words; paraphrase.
  o Your teachers work with you on ways to avoid plagiarism. Pay attention to these activities and learn from them to help you avoid an Honor Code violation.

What is vandalism?

• Vandalism is deliberate damage of an individual or institution’s property.
• Some acts are very clear (drawing or writing on a desk or wall, throwing a classmate’s calculator on the floor, sticking objects such as a stick into a computer’s disk drive), and others may not be, such as those resulting from horseplay.

RavenWay Citizenship Guide

Our Character Tree was adopted in that fall of 2008. It symbolizes how our community is rooted in strong values (part of our legacy of excellence) and how we value growth. Our Student Government Association created the RavenWay Guide, which was adopted in April of 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courage</th>
<th>Honor</th>
<th>Respect</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are the choices you make guided by a sense of right and wrong?</td>
<td>Do you make wise decisions even when it is difficult to do so?</td>
<td>Do you hold yourself accountable for your actions and words?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Are you honest to yourself and everyone around you?</td>
<td>Are you where you should be when you should be there, during and after school?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do you act in a way that reflects positively on your school, family, and self?</td>
<td>Are you an engaged learner who takes pride in your work?</td>
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<td>Are you a responsible school citizen who follows the dress code and other school guidelines?</td>
<td>Do you treat others the way you want to be treated?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Are your comments appropriate?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do you respect others and their property, ideas, and opinions?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do you respect our school campus and others’ property when traveling off-campus?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you help others when they are in need?</td>
<td>Do you support your peers by attending athletic, Fine Arts, and other school events?</td>
<td>Do you continually strive to better your performance in academics, athletics, and fine arts?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you include others?</td>
<td>Do your actions and words show that are you proud to be a Raven?</td>
<td>Do you make the best effort you can to attend practices and work hard?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you judge or make comments about people based on their appearance, ethnicity, age, or other physical traits?</td>
<td>Do you act appropriately at sports events by cheering for Ravenscroft and not discouraging opponents?</td>
<td>Do you finish something once you start it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you look beyond yourself and put others’ needs before your wants?</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
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**Disciplinary System**

Students who violate expectations for Middle School conduct can expect a prompt, firm, and fair response. All disciplinary matters are handled on an individual basis. The Middle School Administration provides a system of directed guidance and logical consequences which holds students accountable for their actions while helping them grow and learn from an experience.

All major offenses are addressed by the Head of Middle School or the Middle School Dean.

Following are examples of minor and major offenses that are considered violations of school conduct. This list is not intended to be inclusive, rather it is a sampling of common offenses:

**What behaviors are considered Minor Offenses?** (Usually result in a Lunch Detention)

- Lack of courtesy and respect toward adults or peers
- Defiance or willful disobedience
- Dress code violations
- Inappropriate behavior
- Use of inappropriate or demeaning language
- Unexcused absence from class or repeated tardiness
- Careless use of school property or the property of others
- Chewing gum or eating/drinking at inappropriate times or without permission in class
- Use of prohibited items during school hours such as laser pointers, rubber band/paper clip slingshots, etc.
- Misuse of electronic devices (inappropriate gaming, emailing, etc.)

**What behaviors are considered Major Offenses?** (Usually result in suspension, probation, or more serious consequences)

Major offenses are extremely serious violations of conduct. These are further explained on pages 18 – 20.
Examples of major offenses include the following:

- Harassment of any kind, including hazing (see section on Harassment and Bullying)
- Use, distribution, or activity related to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs
- Fighting
- Dangerous objects or weapons of any kind
- Misuse of electronic devices that violate the Acceptable Use Policy

Depending upon your disciplinary history at the school and the nature of the offense, certain logical consequences will be implemented. Below are some examples of disciplinary actions that may be used, up to and including separation from Ravenscroft. It should be noted that Ravenscroft is not bound to go through all of these types of discipline prior to taking any action. In certain circumstances, suspension, probation, and/or separation from the School might be appropriate.

**What are some Logical Consequences? (Disciplinary Actions)**

- *Lunch Detention* - You are required to remain in detention until you have been excused by the Middle School Dean. Written reflections and letters of apology may be assigned, or you may be required to remain quietly seated in the detention room.

- *Writing Assignment* – You may be required to write a letter of apology or report reflecting on the impact of your actions and what you will do differently as a result of the consequence.

- *Reduced or No Credit* – You may not receive credit for work that has been comprised due to a behavioral infraction such as cheating or lying.

- *After School Detention* - You may be required to stay after school from 3:45 until 4:15 p.m. to reflect and discuss inappropriate actions. This restriction is usually given for a more serious offense or for patterns of repeated minor offenses.

- *In-School Suspension* – You will be suspended from classes and separated from the Middle School community. You are expected to complete all assignments while in suspension.

- *Out-of-School Suspension* - Each suspension is handled on an individual basis. If suspended from school, you are not allowed to attend school for a designated period of time and are responsible for all missed work.

- *Probation* - Each case is handled on an individual basis. Serious or repeated offenses may result in conduct probation. For a defined period, you may not be allowed to go on school-related trips and/or attend other school-sponsored or school-related events. Removal from co-curricular activities is an appropriate consequence for some cases.

- *Contractual Hold* – A decision to move to the following grade could be held until June. Major infractions, repeated offenses, and unsatisfactory academic performance could result being placed on Contractual Hold.
• **Separation from School** - The Head of School makes all final decisions regarding separation from school with recommendations from the Middle School Head and Administrative Team.

What happens when an Honor Code violation occurs?

- The Middle School Dean investigates the alleged violation.
- A clear violation occurs when there is an adult witness, when there is evidence, or when a student admits to behavior that violates the Honor Code.
- In such a case, faculty members of the Honor Council will follow the appropriate procedure as described on the chart that follows.
- If you are to appear before the Honor Council, Mrs. Gainey or Mr. Rothe will let you know when the meeting will take place. Mr. Rothe, as Middle School Dean, will notify your parents, and your advisor will attend the meeting to provide support for you.
- When a situation is not a clear violation, the Dean will work with teachers and students to assess if there has been a violation. The Dean will follow up with appropriate meetings, which may include the grade level representative of the Honor Council.

What is the Honor Council?

- The Middle School Honor Council is comprised of students and faculty.
- This includes three faculty members (1 from each grade level) and students from each grade level (3 from 8th, 2 from 7th, and 1 from 6th).
- Members of the Honor Council serve as a resource for the student community by raising awareness of how the Honor Code is part of our everyday life.
- The Council helps with decisions about Honor Code offenses.
- Council members are chosen by faculty based on written submissions sharing reasons they would serve the Council well.
- Once seated, members are expected to serve for the time they are in Middle School.
- A Council member may be removed from his or her position if he or she has an Honor Code violation or a significant behavioral violation.

What happens during an Honor Council meeting?

- You should bring your lunch the day you meet with the Honor Council.
- The Council will help you understand how you did not meet our community values.
- The Council will promote reflection on your part and propose logical consequences to the Middle School Dean and Middle School Head.
- Honor Council recommendations may include actions described under the Logical Consequences section of this *Handbook*, page 14.
- The recommendations of the Council will not necessarily be enacted by the Middle School Dean and the Head of Middle School but will form a significant piece of the decision-making process.
Consequences of Violating the Honor Code

*This tiered approach serves as a developmentally appropriate guide that fosters increased accountability as students progress through Middle School.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>First Violation</th>
<th>Second Violation</th>
<th>Third violation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sixth Grade Student</strong></td>
<td>Student meets with the grade level representative of the Honor Council.</td>
<td>Student appears before the Honor Council. Advisor attends to provide support.</td>
<td>Student meets with the Middle School Dean, the Honor Council Chair, and the student’s parents. A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file.</em></td>
<td><em>A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file, and the student’s re-enrollment may be jeopardized.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seventh Grade or New Eighth Grade Student</strong></td>
<td>Student meets with the Middle School Dean and the grade level representative of the Honor Council.</td>
<td>Student appears before the Honor Council. Advisor attends to provide support.</td>
<td>Student meets with the Middle School Dean, the Honor Council Chair, and the student’s parents. A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file.</em></td>
<td><em>A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file, and the student’s re-enrollment may be jeopardized.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eighth Grade Student</strong></td>
<td>Student appears before the Honor Council. Advisor attends to provide support.</td>
<td>Student meets with the Middle School Dean, the Honor Council Chair, and the student’s parents. A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file.</td>
<td>Student meets with the Head of Middle School and the Middle School Dean. The student’s parents may be asked to attend this meeting. <em>A Letter of Concern is placed in the student’s file, and student’s re-enrollment may be jeopardized.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual Classroom Plans
• Middle School teachers clearly establish their in-class expectations during the first week of school.
• Teachers will handle infractions against their in-class expectations utilizing consequences such as verbal warnings, alternate seating arrangements, Parent Advisories, “time out,” reduced daily work grades, and conversations with the Head of Middle School or the Middle School Dean.

**Middle School Lunch Detention Policy:** The lunch detention plan provides a disciplinary option that is developmentally appropriate and suited to minor infractions.

• For actions that fall short of the values expressed in the RavenWay Citizenship Guide and/or certain behaviors described under Minor Offenses on page 13.
• 6th grade students and 7th and 8th graders new to Ravenscroft receive the first three days as a grace period.
• Assigned at the discretion of faculty.
• Some teachers assign a detention for a first instance of violation, while others allow a warning or two. You can speak to a teacher after a class if you have a question about an issued lunch detention.

**What happens when a lunch detention is issued?**

• A teacher notifies you of the lunch detention.
• You serve the detention on the assigned day (the next Monday, Wednesday, or Friday).
• On the day of the detention, arrive at the assigned location by 1:00 with your lunch. Unexcused lateness to lunch detention will result in a second lunch detention. Being tardy because of purchasing food is not an excuse.
• Eat your lunch and follow directions of the Middle School Dean.
• No work or personal material is allowed.
• If you misbehave, you will be issued another lunch detention.
• You are given time to use the bathroom.

**What if I receive multiple lunch detentions?**

• After your 3rd lunch detention in a quarter, a Parent Advisory will be sent home.
• 5 lunch detentions in a semester result in an after school detention, as designated by the Middle School Dean.
• 8 detentions in a semester result in an appearance before the Honor Council.

**What behaviors result in more severe consequences?**
• Multiple violations in one incident. If your behavior related to a single incident violates several of our guidelines and rules, you will be subject to more serious consequences than would result from a single violation.
• Behaviors listed below will be brought immediately to the attention of the Middle School Dean and Head of Middle School.
• Consequences include those listed on page 14.

Harassment and Bullying

What is the definition of bullying?
(from Dan Olweus, creator of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program)

"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself."

In everyday language, that means....

You are engaging in bullying behavior if you repeatedly and on purpose say or do mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending himself or herself.

Three Key Components of Bullying Behavior

1. Aggressive behavior that involves negative, unwanted actions
2. Involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time
3. Involves an imbalance of power or strength

What are some types of bullying?

Bullying can take on many forms including, but not limited to, the following:

• Verbal bullying including derogatory comments and bad names
• Bullying through social exclusion or isolation
• Physical bullying such as hitting, kicking, shoving, and spitting
• Bullying through lies and false rumors
• Having money or other things taken or damaged
• Being threatened or being forced to do things
• Racial bullying
• Sexual bullying
• Cyber bullying (via cell phone or Internet)
• Hazing

Bullying is Not Teasing. Bullying is peer abuse that should not be tolerated under any circumstances. It might be hard to tell the difference between playful teasing and bullying. Teasing usually involves two or more friends who act together in a way that seems fun to all the people involved. Often they tease each other equally, but it never involves physical or emotional abuse.
What does harassment mean?

- The term *harassment* includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:
  - Slurs, name-calling, jokes, or other derogatory verbal comments
  - Graphic or written statements about a person, which may include use of cell phones or the internet
  - Physical conduct that is threatening or harmful
  - Any conduct or comments relating to an individual’s race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or citizenship status
  - One type of harassment is sexual harassment, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
    - Deliberate and repeated offensive and/or suggestive comments or gestures of a sexual nature.
    - Physical actions and/or threats of a sexual nature
    - Continual or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature
    - Graphic verbal commentaries about an individual’s body
    - Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual
    - The display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures
    - Unwelcome sexual advances, whether involving physical touching or not

- Harassment and bullying create a hostile environment in our community and will not be tolerated. **Students who harass or bully other students will serve a suspension, as determined by the Head of Middle School and the Middle School Dean.**

- If you feel that you are being harassed (or know someone who is), based upon your race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability, you should report the incident immediately to Mrs. Colpitts, Head of Middle School; Ms. Lindow, Guidance Counselor; Mr. Rothe, Middle School Dean; or your advisor. Mrs. Colpitts, Ms. Lindow, or Mr. Rothe will then see that the matter is investigated promptly and confidentially. You need not fear retaliation.

**Fighting, Aggressive Behavior, and Rude or Abusive Language**

- Fighting, defined as physical engagement with another student, will not be tolerated. You may be sent home at the first offense.
- Aggressive horseplay that gets out of hand may be considered fighting.
- Other actions that incur consequences include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Aggressive behavior of any nature
  - Misuse of an object to invoke harm
  - Misuse or unauthorized use of school property
  - Provoking others to act inappropriately
- Profanity is not acceptable.
- Repeated offenses of any type may be grounds for dismissal from school for longer periods
of time and possible separation from the School.

Alcohol and Other Addictive Substances

- Alcohol, addictive substances, and drug paraphernalia are strictly forbidden on campus or at any school-related function, on or off campus.
- Persons under the influence or in possession of addictive substances are not permitted on campus.
- Violation of these rules may result in expulsion.
- You are not permitted to possess or use tobacco or tobacco products on campus or at school-sponsored activities.

Possession of Dangerous Items

- Dangerous items are not permitted in School and will be confiscated, to be returned at the discretion of the Head of Middle School.
- Such items include, but are not limited to, weapons of any kind, all knives, lighters, firecrackers, and matches.
- Toy weapons or other banned items to be used in school functions should be left with your advisor, teacher, or in the Front Office until needed and returned when finished.

Technology

Safe Use

Ravenscroft embraces the use of technology for education. There are many exciting new applications of technology offered to the learning process every year. However, students should be mindful of safety considerations when using technology at school and especially when away from school. Seventh and eighth graders have Chrome Books and Ravenscroft e-mail accounts which are used for regular communication within the school. All Middle School students use Google Apps for Education in their classes. During non-school hours, many students use cell phones for various forms of communication, including the Internet. Parents and students need to be aware of basic safety considerations whenever they are using computers and cell phones:

- Use Ravenscroft accounts only for school purposes
- Protect all logins and passwords, sharing them only with parents
- Ensure that all internet access is filtered and that all social networks are appropriate to the age of the student and are set to private
- E-mail, chat, text, IM, and network only with people you know
- Never divulge personally identifying information, including your name, phone number, or address, to an unknown site or person
- Keep all content, including text, photos, and videos, appropriate
- Alert a parent or teacher if anything inappropriate takes place while using technology
Students should be aware that almost everything they do online can be found and could be revealed in the future, with possible damage to their reputations, college admissions, and even careers.

Acceptable Use

Along with opportunities provided by technology comes the obligation of using it in an appropriate, responsible manner. The actions of students should be guided by the RavenWay Citizenship Guide and our values. The use of technology should be ethical; reflect honesty; demonstrate respect for intellectual property and data and system security; and guarantee the individual’s rights to privacy and freedom from intimidation, harassment, and annoyance. Above all, the use of technology by a Ravenscroft student should be for educational purposes.

Every effort will be made to educate the student body in the appropriate use of technology. It is the responsibility of all members of the Ravenscroft community to be knowledgeable of and observe these policies and guidelines.

- Each year, you sign an Acceptable Use Policy that outlines the expectations for appropriate use of school technology. You are expected to follow the provisions stated in this policy.
- This includes on and off-campus use of computers related to Ravenscroft.
- School emails accounts are to be used for school purposes only and in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy.

Misuse and Unacceptable Use

- Misuse of the school technology (computers, printers, phones, etc.) in any form will result in consequences and/or disciplinary action.
- Such acts may also be considered a violation of the Honor Code.
- Misuse of technology off-campus that impacts school life on campus may result in disciplinary action.
- Significant violations include damaging equipment, accessing areas of the network that are not for student use, calling up or creating websites that contain pornography, unacceptable language, or disparaging comments directed toward Ravenscroft School, its students, teachers, and families. If involved in such violations, you will meet with suspension and loss of other school privileges and will be subject to separation from the School.

Personal Electronic Devices

- While the School understands that personal electronic devices are an increasing part of your life, these should be used with permission during the school day.
- Laptops, iPads, Nooks, Kindles, and other personal computing devices may be brought to school. However, use in class is to be with teacher permission.
- Use of cameras (cell phone or otherwise) for non-school related pictures should be with discretion and permission of the person(s) being photographed.
• It is understandable that you may bring a device such as an iPod for use after school. If you do, the expectation is that you will use it responsibly and only after school.
• The School assumes no liability for personal property, including electronic devices.