



Virtualis Arizona

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Academic policies, attendance, conduct, communication, and the rhythm of a Christian classical school day — with the family signoff at the end.

A Christian classical school built around the whole person.

arizona.virtualis.school

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I. Welcome and Mission

Welcome to Virtualis Arizona. This handbook is the practical document that describes how the school works — what we expect, what we provide, and how the day-to-day is handled. Read it carefully. The acknowledgment at the end is required for every enrolling family.

Mission

Virtualis is a Christian classical school built around the whole person. The academic spine is Great Hearts Online — the proven classical liberal-arts curriculum delivered live by trained classical educators. The formation spine is Vitae Christian Formation, integrating the body, the soul, and Christian moral teaching from the earliest grades onward. The medical-care spine is Christian telemedicine through Vitae Health.

Together, these pieces form a school that takes the mind, the body, and the soul seriously — in that order: a child is given an education, a discipline of the body, and a Christian moral framework, all under the supervision of parents who remain the first teachers.

Who this school is for

- Families who want a serious classical liberal-arts education for their children, delivered online, anchored in the Western tradition.
- Christian families — Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, evangelical, or still-searching — who agree the school may teach in the Christian tradition without sectarian gatekeeping.
- Parents who understand that a school is the parent's partner, never the parent's replacement.

Who this school is not for

- Families seeking a secular alternative to public school. We are unmistakably Christian.
- Families seeking a low-touch, self-paced credit shop. The classical liberal arts demand live instruction, primary sources, Socratic discussion, and time.

II. Statement of Faith

Virtualis is a Christian classical school. We teach within the broad Christian tradition without making the school an extension of any one denomination. The following affirmations are the working framework of the school's formation program. Families do not have to subscribe to them to enroll; the school will teach within them.

We affirm

- The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as faithful summaries of Christian belief.
- The inspiration and authority of Scripture (RSV-CE used as our default text in classical-formation contexts).
- The classical Christian moral tradition, including the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of human life, and the natural-law account of marriage and the family.
- That a Christian classical school exists to form the whole person — mind, body, and soul — in the inheritance of Western civilization at its best.

Posture toward families

We do not require families to share the school's confessional positions to enroll. We do require that families respect the school's right to teach in the Christian tradition, and that students engage the curriculum in good faith. The school will not be used as an instrument against the religious convictions of any enrolled family, and families will not require the school to soften its Christian content to suit private preferences.

"All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

— John 1:3 (RSV-CE)

III. Academic Policies

Curriculum

Virtualis delivers the Great Hearts Online classical curriculum across K–12, supplemented by Vitae Christian Formation (body and soul) and the Quintivium series in active authoring. The curriculum is Socratic rather than lecture-based, rooted in primary sources rather than textbook summaries, and ordered toward the classical ideal of a student who reads well, writes well, reasons well, and loves what is true.

Grading

Letter grades A–F are issued at the end of each quarter and at the end of the academic year. Quarter grades are formative; the year-end grade is the official transcript record.

A is reserved for excellent work, not above-average effort. B is competent work that meets expectations. C is acceptable but signals room for growth. D is below standard and requires intervention. F means the standard was not met. We do not grade on a curve.

Late Work

Assignments are due when posted by the teacher. Late work is accepted with a one-letter-grade reduction per school day, capped at three days late. After three school days, the assignment is recorded as a zero. Exceptions for documented illness, family emergency, or pre-arranged absence are granted on parent request.

Make-up Work

Make-up work is the student's responsibility. Teachers post assignments in Canvas. After an excused absence, students have one school day per missed day to submit make-up work, up to a maximum of five school days.

Retake Policy

Major assessments may be retaken once for partial credit (cap of 80 percent) at the teacher's discretion when the student demonstrates genuine remediation. Quizzes and minor assignments are not retakeable.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism, copying, unauthorized AI use, and any form of cheating are violations of academic honesty. First offense: zero on the assignment, parent notification, and a recorded warning. Second offense: zero on the assignment, principal conference, and a record placed in the student file. Third offense: subject to disciplinary review up to and including removal from the program.

Records and Transcripts

Virtualis issues an annual academic record showing each course the student completed, the grades earned, and any teacher notes. For K–7, records are kept in narrative-plus-grade form. When the upper grades launch, transcripts in standard high-school-credit format will be

issued for grades 9–12.

Current Grade Scope and Growth Plan

For the 2026–2027 academic year, Virtualis Arizona enrolls Kindergarten through 7th grade. High school grades are added one per year beginning Fall 2028 (Grade 9), with the full K–12 program in place by the 2031–32 academic year. Graduation requirements for grades 9–12 will be published in advance of each grade band launching.

Until the upper grades are operational, this handbook describes K–7 expectations. Lower-school subjects include English Language Arts, Mathematics, History and Humanities, Science, Latin, and Fine Arts, with the Vitae Christian Formation program ready for 2026–27.

Appeal Process

A parent who believes a grade or academic decision was made in error may submit a written appeal to the principal within ten school days of the decision. The principal will review with the teacher and respond in writing within ten school days. The principal's decision is final.

IV. Attendance Policy

Attendance is the foundation of academic and formational progress. A classical school is a community of teachers and students engaged in real-time discussion of real texts. A student who is not present cannot be formed by the conversation. The Virtualis attendance policy is straightforward and humane, but it is also serious.

Compulsory attendance — Arizona law

Arizona law (A.R.S. § 15-803) requires students aged six through sixteen to attend school. Virtualis, as a private school operating in Arizona, satisfies the compulsory-attendance requirement for enrolled students. Families enrolled at Virtualis are not separately registered as homeschoolers under A.R.S. § 15-802.01.

MUST: *Track attendance and report to parents. Required because we serve as the compulsory-attendance institution for enrolled families.*

MAY: *Use the public-school definition of “instructional minutes” as a planning reference; we are not bound to it.*

EXEMPT: *Public-school truancy referral procedures. Private-school attendance issues are handled internally and through parent partnership, not through the AZ Department of Education or law enforcement.*

Live class attendance

Live Great Hearts classes are scheduled across the school day. Students are expected to attend every live session in which they are enrolled, on time, with camera on, dressed appropriately, in a quiet workspace, and ready to participate.

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each live session. Three categories are recorded:

- Present: student is on time, on camera, and engaged.
- Tardy: student joined late but participated. Three tardies count as one absence.
- Absent: student did not attend, or attended off-camera without prior arrangement, or was so disengaged the teacher could not record participation.

Excused absences

The following count as excused absences when reported to the school in advance or within twenty-four hours after the fact:

- Documented illness or medical appointment.
- Death in the family or significant family emergency.
- Approved family travel (notify school at least one week in advance).
- Court appearance, religious observance, or required civic obligation.

Excused absences require notification by the parent to the school office. The school office will confirm the excused-absence record by email.

Unexcused absences

All absences not excused as described above are unexcused. Five unexcused absences in a quarter trigger a parent conference with the principal. Ten unexcused absences in a semester trigger a formal academic-and-attendance review and may result in removal from the program.

Tardiness

Tardiness disrupts the live classroom. Three tardies in a quarter count as one absence. A pattern of tardiness will be addressed in the parent conference.

Asynchronous and independent work

Independent work between live sessions is part of the academic day. Failure to complete assigned independent work counts as non-participation, not as absence, but persistent failure to complete independent work is treated as an academic-progress issue and may trigger an academic review.

Attendance records and reporting

Attendance is recorded in Canvas and made available to parents through the parent observer account. Quarterly reports are emailed to parents. The school maintains attendance records for the duration of enrollment plus seven years, in keeping with general school-record retention standards.

MUST: *Maintain attendance records and provide them to parents on request. Retain records for the period required by ESA receipt rules and standard school-record retention.*

MAY: *Submit attendance summaries to ESA-administering agencies if specifically requested as part of an audit of an ESA-funded service. Otherwise, attendance is internal to the school.*

EXEMPT: *AZ public-school average daily membership reporting. As a private school, Virtualis is not required to report enrollment counts to ADE.*

Withdrawal for non-attendance

A student who has missed twenty consecutive school days without contact, or thirty cumulative unexcused absences in a semester, may be withdrawn from the program. The school will document one written attempt to reach the parents before withdrawal. ESA receipt obligations for services already rendered remain regardless of withdrawal.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

— Matthew 5:16 (RSV-CE)

V. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct describes the basic posture every Virtualis student is expected to bring to the live classroom and to the school community. The bar is high but not unreasonable. We are forming young men and women who carry themselves with the seriousness their education deserves.

Live classroom

- Camera on. Microphone muted unless called on.
- Dressed appropriately. No pajamas, no sleepwear, no inappropriate graphics.
- In a quiet workspace, not in bed, not on a couch, not in a car.
- Books, paper, pen, document camera, and any required materials present.
- Participating in good faith. The Socratic seminar requires speech.

Discussion

- Speak respectfully to teachers and classmates, even in disagreement.
- Address the argument, not the person making it.
- When wrong, acknowledge it and move on.
- Christian charity is the floor, not the ceiling, of how the discussion is conducted.

Beyond the classroom

Students represent the school in classroom chat windows, in school-organized social media, and in any forum identifiable as connected to Virtualis. Conduct that brings the school into disrepute is treated as a school-discipline matter regardless of where it occurs.

Disciplinary review

Discipline at Virtualis follows a graduated three-step framework:

Step 1: Teacher-level correction. Most issues are resolved at this level by the teacher with a private word and, if needed, a note home.

Step 2: Principal conference. Issues that recur or that involve dishonesty, disrespect, or repeated disruption are escalated to the principal, who meets with the student and parent.

Step 3: Disciplinary review board. Severe or unresolved cases go to a review board (principal, one teacher, one outside member) which may recommend probation, suspension from live classes, or removal from the program.

Removal from the program

A student may be removed from Virtualis for sustained academic dishonesty, repeated serious code-of-conduct violations, threats or harassment, or conduct that clearly violates the school's Christian moral framework after the parent has been given reasonable opportunity to address the situation. Removal is a last resort, taken only after the disciplinary review board has met.

VI. Communication Norms

How parents communicate with the school

First-line communication for academic questions is the classroom teacher, by email. Teachers commit to a one-business-day response window during the school year.

For attendance, scheduling, ESA, billing, or enrollment questions, contact the school office at admissions@virtualis.school.

For policy or program-level questions, contact the principal directly. The principal commits to a two-business-day response window.

How the school communicates with parents

Quarterly grade reports, weekly classroom updates from teachers, and end-of-year transcripts are the standard communications. Major program-wide announcements are sent by email. Time-sensitive matters use the parent's phone number on file.

Parent observer account

Every enrolled family receives a Canvas Observer account giving the parent read-only access to assignments, announcements, due dates, and grades. Observer accounts are required, not optional. The school will help any family set up the Observer account at enrollment.

Confidentiality and student records (FERPA)

Virtualis treats student records consistent with the standards of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Parents have the right to inspect their student's education records, the right to request a correction of records they believe are inaccurate, and the right to consent to most disclosures of personally identifiable information.

MUST: *Comply with FERPA-equivalent protections because we accept ESA funds and because student-record protection is a baseline expectation of any serious school. Records are released to parents on request and are not shared with third parties except as required for ESA reporting or as part of an enrollment transfer at parent request.*

MAY: *Exceed FERPA when serving the student and family well — for example, by providing parents stronger access than FERPA strictly requires.*

EXEMPT: *Some specific public-school FERPA reporting obligations (directory information disclosures to military recruiters, etc.) do not bind a private religious school.*

Photo, video, and recording consent

Live classes are not recorded for student access by default. Recordings made for teacher-training or accreditation purposes are kept private to the school. Photos, videos, or recordings of students are not used in marketing or on the website without specific written parent consent.

VII. Technology and Privacy

Required hardware

Each enrolled student requires a working laptop or Chromebook (less than five years old), webcam, microphone, headphones with mic, document camera, and reliable home internet at minimum 25 Mbps download / 5 Mbps upload. The full specification is published on the Tech Requirements page of the website and in the welcome packet. Tablets are not acceptable as a primary device.

Required software

Canvas (browser-based, no install) for the learning portal. Zoom for live classes. Google Workspace for documents. The browser of choice is Google Chrome — other browsers occasionally fail with Canvas.

Acceptable use of school technology

- School-issued accounts, login credentials, and Canvas access are for academic use only.
- Sharing accounts, passwords, or recordings outside the family is prohibited.
- Bypassing school filters or impersonating other students is treated as a serious code-of-conduct violation.

Zoom etiquette

- Camera on, microphone muted unless called on.
- Background appropriate (no inappropriate images, no other people visible without their consent).
- No screenshots, no screen-recordings of classmates without explicit teacher permission.
- No use of the chat for non-academic conversation during class.

Student privacy

Virtualis collects only the personal information necessary to operate the school: enrollment-form data, attendance records, grades, and contact information for parents and student. We do not sell student data. We do not share student data with third parties except as required for ESA reporting, transfer of records at parent request, or as required by lawful subpoena.

Online safety for minors

Virtualis takes seriously the responsibility to protect minors in an online learning environment. Teachers do not communicate with students individually outside of school-monitored channels. Live classes are conducted with parents able to observe at any time. Any concern about online safety should be reported to the principal immediately.

MUST: *Maintain reasonable safeguards on student data, including secure password practices, encrypted submission of forms, and access controls on records.*

MAY: *Adopt additional safeguards as best practice when warranted, such as periodic audits of the parent observer system or two-factor authentication for staff accounts.*

EXEMPT: *CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) applies to schools receiving E-Rate federal subsidies. Virtualis does not receive E-Rate funding and is not bound by CIPA. We adopt CIPA-equivalent practices voluntarily as a matter of stewardship.*

VIII. Christian Formation Framework

Virtualis is unmistakably Christian. The formation framework runs through every part of the school day in age-appropriate ways and through dedicated formation hours.

Vitae Christian Formation

Vitae Christian Formation is the health-and-formation curriculum that addresses the body, the soul, and Christian moral teaching. Topics include human anatomy and physiology, virtue ethics, the theology of the body, nutrition, sleep, movement, and the Christian moral tradition on marriage and the family. The Quintivium textbook series is the spine. Vitae Christian Formation is ready for the 2026–27 academic year.

Daily devotional rhythm

Each school day opens with a brief reading or prayer drawn from the Christian classical inheritance. Students may decline to participate vocally; presence is expected, sectarian conformity is not.

Scripture in the classroom

We use the RSV-CE (Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition) as the default biblical text. Scripture appears in literature, history, theology, and the formation curriculum as a historic primary text of the Western tradition. Students of every Christian tradition are welcome.

Sacramental and parish life

Virtualis does not replace the work of a parish or local church. Families are encouraged to remain active in their own communities of faith. The school will not require students to participate in sacraments or denomination-specific practices.

What we do not do

- We do not require any single denominational creed for enrollment.
- We do not preach against any Christian tradition that affirms the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.
- We do not soften the school's Christian content to suit secular preferences.
- We do not enroll for the purpose of converting students against parental wishes.

"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

— *Colossians 3:17 (RSV-CE)*

IX. Health, Safety, and Wellness

Wellness curriculum

The Vitae Christian Formation program covers Christian-classical wellness — movement, nutrition, sleep, and habits of the body — as a non-credit but ongoing element of the school year.

Telemedicine through Vitae Health

Enrolled families may access pediatric telemedicine through Vitae Health, an Arizona-licensed Catholic telemedicine practice operated separately from Virtualis. Vitae Health is a for-profit provider; charges for clinical services are not Virtualis tuition and are not part of the school's charitable mission. Vitae Health is a service available to families, not a school benefit. Use is voluntary.

Mandatory reporting

Virtualis staff who teach or observe minors are mandatory reporters under Arizona law (A.R.S. § 13-3620). Suspected child abuse, neglect, or imminent harm is reported to the Arizona Department of Child Safety and to law enforcement as required by law.

MUST: *Comply with mandatory-reporting law. There is no religious exemption from child-protection statutes.*

Emergency contact

At enrollment each family provides at least two emergency contacts. The school office maintains current contact records and updates them on parent request.

X. ESA, Tuition, and Withdrawal

Tuition

Tuition is published on the Virtualis Arizona website and in the welcome packet. Tuition covers academic instruction, the Vitae Christian Formation program, the welcome packet, the Canvas seat, and standard testing. Materials, books, the laptop or Chromebook (if school-issued), and supplemental services are billed separately and listed on the Tuition page.

ESA

Virtualis is approved for the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program. Families using ESA funds for Virtualis tuition pay through ClassWallet. The school issues receipts for all ESA-eligible charges. Families remain responsible for ESA receipt-keeping under Arizona Department of Education rules; the school provides documentation, the family submits it to ESA.

MUST: *Issue ESA-compliant receipts for ESA-funded tuition and services. Maintain records of services rendered for the period required by ESA receipt rules.*

EXEMPT: *The state cannot regulate the religious content of a private school's curriculum on the basis of ESA participation. Arizona law and First Amendment protection both bar this.*

Refunds

Tuition is refundable on a pro-rata basis through the second week of the school year. After the second week, tuition is non-refundable. ESA refunds, when applicable, follow the same schedule and are processed through ClassWallet.

Withdrawal

A family may withdraw at any time by written notice to the school office. The school will issue a final transcript of work completed within fifteen business days. ESA receipt obligations for services already rendered remain regardless of withdrawal.

XI. Compliance Posture

Virtualis Arizona is a private Christian classical school operating in Arizona. As a private religious school, Virtualis is subject to a specific subset of state and federal requirements and exempt from many requirements that apply to public schools. This section names the framework so families and staff understand the operating posture.

What we MUST follow

- Compulsory attendance law (A.R.S. § 15-803): Virtualis serves as the qualifying school for enrolled students aged 6–16.
- Mandatory reporting (A.R.S. § 13-3620): staff are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect.
- ESA receipt-keeping rules: when accepting ESA funds, the school maintains receipts and records as required by the Arizona Department of Education.
- Federal civil-rights law as it applies to private religious schools (e.g., Title VI on race in admissions where applicable).
- Standard contractual obligations: the enrollment agreement, the tuition agreement, and any executed services agreements.

What we MAY follow as best practice

- FERPA-equivalent student-record protections (we adopt these voluntarily; we are not strictly bound by FERPA except as a contractual matter).
- CIPA-equivalent online-safety practices (we adopt these voluntarily; we do not receive E-Rate).
- A–F school evaluation frameworks as internal benchmarks where useful.

What we are EXEMPT from as a private religious school

- Arizona Department of Education curriculum standards: the state cannot dictate what a private religious school teaches.
- Arizona public-school teacher-certification requirements: Virtualis hires for fit with the classical mission, not for state credentials.
- Public-school average-daily-membership and accountability reporting: we are not a public school and do not report enrollment to ADE.
- Public-school disciplinary procedures and appeal rights: discipline at Virtualis is governed by the parent enrollment agreement and this handbook, not by public-school due-process law.
- Public-school content restrictions on religious instruction: as a private religious school, Virtualis explicitly teaches in the Christian tradition.
- Public-school speech and expression rules: the First Amendment does not constrain a private school's content selection in the same way it constrains a public school.

This section is not legal advice. Specific compliance questions should be directed to the principal or to school counsel.

NOTE: *When new state or federal rules are proposed that affect private religious schools, Virtualis evaluates them through this same MUST / MAY / EXEMPT framework before adopting or contesting.*

XII. Family Acknowledgment and Signoff

Every enrolling family is required to read this handbook in full and submit the Family Acknowledgment before the first day of school. The signed acknowledgment is part of the enrollment file.

Families may complete the acknowledgment online at:

arizona.virtualis.school/handbook-acknowledgment.html

Online submission captures family information, scholar names and grades, the three required acknowledgments, and a digital signature. The form takes about two minutes per family.

What you are acknowledging

- You have read and understand the Virtualis Arizona Family Handbook in full.
- You agree to support the school's mission and to abide by the policies, expectations, and standards described in the handbook.
- You understand Virtualis is a Christian classical school that teaches in the Christian tradition.
- You understand the school is the parent's partner, never the parent's replacement.
- You are the parent or legal guardian of the Scholar(s) named on the form.