Purple Ruler Learner Admissions Policy

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Introduction

At Purple Ruler, we inspire and empower learners through a holistic and inclusive approach to online education. Our mission is to ignite passions, foster curiosity, and promote critical thinking with bespoke learning journeys and live interactive lessons. We are committed to a positive, engaging educational experience tailored to individual needs, guided by our core values of versatility, curiosity, respect, ingenuity, integrity, compassion, and empowerment.

We maintain high standards of educational excellence and continuous improvement, offering robust support to learners who are unable to access mainstream education due to behavioural reasons, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) or Special Educational Needs and

Disabilities (SEND). Our admissions process identifies learners who will benefit from and contribute positively to our community, helping them achieve their full potential.

This Admissions Policy outlines the principles and procedures for admitting learners to our online programme, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and promoting fairness, transparency, and accessibility for all applicants.

Objectives

Purple Ruler aims to provide an inclusive and empowering education that aligns with the UK Department for Education (DfE) accreditation and quality assurance standards for online education providers.

We are committed to:

1. Providing clear and transparent admissions procedures, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.
2. Ensuring equal access to education for all learners, regardless of background or circumstances.
3. Supporting learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through tailored educational experiences.
4. Fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging online learning environment that encourages active participation.
5. Collaborating with parents and guardians to support learner success and personal growth.
6. Maintaining high standards of academic excellence and continuous improvement.

Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and regulations:

- Education Act 1996
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Admissions Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code 2022

Scope

This policy applies to all prospective learners and referrers seeking admission to our online education programme. It outlines the procedures and criteria for enrolment, ensuring a transparent and equitable process for all applicants. By adhering to this policy, we aim to welcome learners who are committed to our values and educational philosophy, fostering a diverse and inclusive learning environment.

This policy also ensures that we meet the specific needs of each learner, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and maintain compliance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

Admission Principles

1. Admissions are open to all learners, regardless of race, gender, disability, religion, or belief. We are dedicated to creating a diverse and inclusive learning environment that values and respects every individual.

2. We are committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality. Our policies and practices are designed to ensure that no learner is disadvantaged or excluded based on their background or personal circumstances.

3. Admissions arrangements are designed to ensure fair access to education. We believe that every child has the right to quality education and strive to remove any barriers that may prevent access to our programmes.

4. Criteria for admission are clear, objective, and made available to all applicants. Our process is designed to be straightforward and understandable, ensuring that all prospective learners and their families know what is required for a successful application.

5. We accept admissions throughout the year, providing flexibility to accommodate learners' varying needs and circumstances. We aim for a swift and effective enrolment process to ensure that learners can start their educational journey with us as soon as possible.

6. The admissions process is transparent, with clear information provided to parents and learners about how to apply, key dates, and the criteria used for selection. We believe in open communication to ensure that all parties are well-informed and confident in the process.

7. We regularly update our admissions information on our website, including detailed guidelines and support for completing applications. We provide clear timelines and notify applicants promptly about the status of their applications.

8. We regularly review and improve our admissions process to adapt to changing needs and maintain high standards of fairness and transparency.

Admission Criteria

1. **Who can apply:**

   - Learners must be of compulsory school age, typically between 14 and 16 years old (Key Stage 4), or meet specific programme requirements if older.

- **Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):**

   - We welcome applications from learners with SEND, affirming our commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

   - Reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the needs of learners with SEND, including modifying learning materials and ensuring platform accessibility.

   - We give detailed consideration to each applicant's individual needs, working closely with parents, guardians, and local authorities to develop personalised learning plans.

- **Learners with Unique Circumstances:**

   - Applications from learners experiencing temporary or permanent exclusion from mainstream education are given special consideration.

   - Robust support is provided for learners with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

2. **Exceptions:**

   - Exceptions may be made for older learners who meet specific programme requirements and demonstrate a commitment to our educational philosophy.

   - Learners must have access to necessary technology and a stable internet connection to participate. Guidance or support may be provided to help meet these requirements.

Priority Admissions

In the event that Purple Ruler is oversubscribed, priority for admission will be given to learners who have been referred by the local authority. This ensures that those learners who require immediate educational placement due to specific circumstances or needs are given the opportunity to access our tailored online education programme.

Local authority referrals are prioritised to support our commitment to inclusivity and educational support for vulnerable learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). By giving precedence to these referrals, we aim to address the urgent educational requirements of these learners, ensuring they receive the necessary resources and support to thrive in our online learning environment.

Application Process

1. **Application Form**:

   - Parents or guardian should submit an enquiry via our website's contact form initially to show their interest in enrolling their child onto our online education programme. We aim to respond to these enquiries within 5 working days via a phone call.

   - During the call, our consultation team will determine what type of programme is most suited for the learner. The consultant will send a follow up email to the parent or guardian to proceed with the application.

2. **Supporting Documentation**:

   - Applicants may be required to provide additional documentation to support their application. This includes previous school reports to provide insight into the learner's academic performance (if available), and any relevant medical or psychological reports for learners with SEND. These documents help us ensure that we have a comprehensive understanding of each learner's needs and can make any necessary accommodations to support their learning.

3. **Application Deadlines**:

   - We will be accepting applications at the beginning of the new academic year as well as at the beginning of each new term throughout the academic year. We require 10 working days to successfully onboard a new learner. Therefore, all necessary information must be submitted 10 working days before the desired start date. This includes completing all required forms and providing any additional documentation requested.

   - Late applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, priority is given to those received by the deadline to ensure effective enrolment management and that all learners receive the attention and resources they need. If a late application is received 5 days before the beginning of the term, it will be considered for enrolment for that term.

4. **Support for learners with SEND:**

- We are committed to supporting learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) throughout the application process. Detailed consideration is given to each applicant's needs, and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure they can access and benefit from our programme.

- For learners with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), we work closely with parents, guardians, and local authorities to develop personalised learning plans that address their specific challenges and strengths. This collaborative approach ensures that all learners receive the support they need to succeed.

Decision-Making

1. **Review Process**:

   - Upon receiving an application, our admissions team meticulously reviews it to ensure all required fields are completed and the necessary supporting documentation is provided. This initial review helps us verify the basic eligibility of the applicant.

   - The admissions team evaluates each application against our established admission criteria. This includes assessing the learner's age, residence, and access to necessary technology. Special consideration is given to any disclosed special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to ensure we can provide appropriate support.

   - We carefully consider the learner's educational background, previous school reports, and any relevant medical or psychological reports. This comprehensive review allows us to understand each learner's unique circumstances and how they align with the learning environment and support we offer at Purple Ruler.

2. **Online Meeting:**

   - For certain applicants, particularly those with specific needs or unusual educational backgrounds, the admissions team may arrange an online meeting. This will be conducted virtually to better understand the learner's readiness and suitability for our online learning environment. Parents or guardians will be notified via email if an online meeting is required.

3. **Decision Notification**:

   - Parents or guardians are informed of the admission decision via email within 48 hours of the application submission. This timely communication helps applicants plan and prepare for the upcoming academic term.

- If the learner is offered a place, the notification will include comprehensive details about the enrolment process, required documentation, and important dates, including the start date of the programme. Clear instructions are provided to guide families through the next steps to confirm enrolment. We require new applicants to submit all outstanding information 10 working days in advance of the scheduled start date. We then send over a schedule/timetable within 24 hours.

- In the rare instance, an application is not successful, the admissions team provides constructive feedback and, where possible, suggests alternative options or steps that can be taken for future consideration. This ensures transparency and supports families in making informed decisions about their child's education.

Onboarding Process

Upon submission of the enrolment form by the referrer, the onboarding process for new learners at Purple Ruler begins with careful review and entry of the learner's details into our system. The learner is then assigned to their chosen courses, and a personalised timetable is created based on their chosen subjects. This ensures that each learner's educational journey is tailored to their unique needs and goals.

Following the timetable allocation, the learner is integrated into Lark, our communication and collaboration platform. Through Lark, the learner gains access to relevant groups, resources, and support channels, enabling seamless communication and interaction with peers and educators. This step is crucial for building a sense of community and providing essential tools for the learner's success.

To further support the learner, a welcome email is sent to both the learner and their referrer via email. This email includes welcome video's from the learner's facilitators, their personalised timetable, an introduction to Purple Ruler, and detailed instructions for accessing Lark.

On the start date, the learner begins their new timetable, joining their first live interactive online lessons as scheduled. To ensure a smooth transition, a member of the learner support team conducts an initial check-in during the first week. This check-in addresses any initial questions or concerns and provides an opportunity for the learner to receive personalised support.

Baseline Assessments are conducted in the first or second lesson to assess prior knowledge and understanding of the subject. These initial assessments provide facilitators with valuable insights into learners' existing knowledge and skill levels. Facilitators analyse the results to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each learner, which is crucial for designing effective and tailored lesson plans.

Baseline tests help facilitators pinpoint areas where learners may need additional support or targeted instruction, allowing them to adapt their teaching strategies to better meet individual

needs. This targeted approach ensures that lessons are designed to address specific areas for improvement while reinforcing existing strengths.

Baseline tests are adjusted to accommodate SEND needs by removing time constraints for anxious learners, increasing text size, and incorporating questions into engaging formats like fun quizzes rather than formal tests. This approach ensures that all learners can demonstrate their prior knowledge comfortably.

For learners who are non-native English speakers and cannot provide previous English proficiency test scores, Purple Ruler will administer an English Proficiency test within the first session to assess their language skills. The results of this test will be used to plan lessons and tailor instruction to the learner's language abilities. If adequate previous data is unavailable, the cost of the test will be charged to the Local Authority (LA) for referred learners, or to the parents/guardians for those enrolled individually.

The learner continues to receive ongoing support from their facilitators and the support team, ensuring a smooth and successful integration. This ongoing support is essential for fostering a positive and productive learning experience, helping each learner achieve their full potential.

Appeals Process

1. **Right to Appeal**:
   - Parents or guardians have the right to appeal if they disagree with an admission decision made by our school. This ensures that all parents/guardians have a fair opportunity to present their case if they believe an error has been made or that exceptional circumstances were not considered. The appeals process only applies to those who have received an unsuccessful application email.
   - Appeals must be submitted via email within 14 days of receiving the unsuccessful application email. The written appeal should clearly state the grounds for the appeal and provide any relevant supporting documentation to substantiate their case. This timeframe allows for a timely review while giving applicants sufficient time to prepare their appeal.

2. **Appeals Procedure**:
   - The appeal is reviewed by an independent panel comprising the Head of Academics and the Head of School. This ensures an unbiased review of the case. The panel carefully considers the grounds for the appeal, including any new evidence or special circumstances presented by the appellant.
   - The panel may request additional information or clarification from the parents or guardians to fully understand the context and specifics of the appeal. This request will be made via email, and parents or guardians will have up to 7 days to respond.

- In some cases, the panel may arrange an online meeting or hearing with the parents or guardians to discuss the appeal virtually. This meeting will be scheduled within 10 days of receiving the appeal. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for the family to further explain their situation and for the panel to ask questions directly.

3. **Final Decision**:

- The panel's decision is communicated in writing to the parents or guardians within 30 days of the appeal submission. This written communication will outline the reasons for the decision, ensuring transparency and understanding of the outcome.

- If the panel decides to uphold the original admission decision, the notification will detail the reasons and any relevant considerations. The letter will also include suggestions for alternative options or steps that can be taken for future applications.

- If the panel decides to overturn the original decision and offer the learner a place, the notification will include details about the enrolment process, required documentation, and important dates, including the start date of the programme.

- The decision made by the independent panel is final and binding. This means that the school will adhere to the panel's ruling, whether it involves upholding the original admission decision or overturning it to offer the learner a place.

Data Protection and Privacy

Please review our full Data Protection and Privacy Policy here: Purple Ruler Data Protection and Privacy Policy

Monitoring and Review

1. **Annual Review**:

- The admissions policy undergoes a comprehensive review annually to ensure that it remains in compliance with current legislation and best practices in the field of education. This includes adherence to the Data Protection Act 2018, GDPR, and other relevant legal requirements.

- The review process includes a thorough examination of any changes in legislation or regulatory guidance that may impact admissions procedures. This ensures that the policy remains up-to-date and legally compliant.

2. **Continuous Improvement**:

- The admissions team regularly monitors the effectiveness of the admissions policy throughout the year. This involves tracking key metrics such as application processing times, acceptance rates, and the satisfaction levels of applicants and referrer.

- The team conducts detailed analyses of admissions data to identify trends, potential issues, and areas where the process can be streamlined or improved. This data-driven approach ensures that adjustments are evidence-based and targeted for maximum impact.

- Continuous efforts are made to ensure that the admissions process is inclusive and accessible to all learners, regardless of their background or circumstances. This includes reviewing and enhancing procedures to support learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

- Based on the insights gained from monitoring and feedback, the admissions team makes necessary adjustments to the policy and procedures. These changes are aimed at improving the overall admissions experience, reducing barriers to entry, and ensuring fair access for all learners.

Conclusion

This Admissions Policy underscores our dedication to providing equal access to quality online education, ensuring a fair, transparent, and inclusive admissions process for our diverse learner population. At Purple Ruler, we celebrate diversity and prioritise inclusivity, supporting learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through tailored approaches and personalised learning plans. We continuously improve our admissions process based on regular reviews and stakeholder feedback to maintain high standards of fairness and effectiveness. Our dedication to collaboration, academic excellence, and holistic education inspires and empowers every learner, fostering curiosity and critical thinking to help them achieve their full potential in a supportive online environment.