to the highest level

Purple Ruler Behaviour Policy 2024 - 2025

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Introduction

Behavioural management in virtual classrooms is essential to foster a conducive and productive learning environment. This policy outlines Purple Ruler's behavioural expectations and procedures to ensure a positive and respectful online learning community for all.

Purpose

This policy aims to achieve the following:

- Foster a respectful and collaborative school ethos.

- Promote high-quality teaching and learning.

- Ensure fair and transparent treatment of all learners.

- Maintain the safety and wellbeing of all learners and staff.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners, stakeholders, and staff involved in Purple Ruler Online School.

Ethos and Values

Our ethos is deeply rooted in the belief that education should be a transformative experience, equipping learners with essential skills for academic success and future endeavours. We are committed to providing specialised education provision that caters to diverse learning styles and abilities, fostering an inclusive and dynamic environment where every learner can thrive. By nurturing a culture of continuous growth and development, we aim to inspire our learners to achieve their fullest potential and become lifelong learners.

Role of Facilitators and Staff

Learners

- Adhere to the behavioural expectations and rules.

- Report any incidents of misbehaviour or bullying.

- Participate positively in the Purple Ruler community.

Stakeholders and Partner Schools

- Support Purple Ruler's behaviour policy.

- Reinforce the importance of good behaviour at home.

- Communicate with Purple Ruler team regarding any behavioural concerns.

Staff

- Implement the behaviour policy consistently.

- Provide a positive role model for learners.

- Address behavioural issues promptly and fairly.

- Support learners in developing positive behaviour.

Respect for Others

In a virtual setting, respect is essential for creating a collaborative atmosphere where diverse opinions and perspectives are honoured. It encourages open communication, empathy, and mutual understanding, which are crucial for effective learning and personal growth. By practising respect, we build a community of trust and cooperation, enabling all learners to thrive and succeed.

Behavioural Expectations

Learner Code of Conduct

For detailed information on learner expectations, please refer to the learner handbook and code of conduct available at this link ☰ Purple Ruler Learner Handbook and Code of Conduct.

General Conduct

Learners are expected to contribute positively to Purple Ruler's culture.

- Treat all members of Purple Ruler community with respect.

- Engage positively in all online lessons and activities.

- Follow the instructions of facilitators and staff promptly and respectfully.

- Use appropriate language in all forms of communication.

- Respect the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of peers.

Online Etiquette

Learners must use online tools and access them responsibly and respectfully.

- Attend live lessons punctually and prepared.

- Participate actively and responsibly in-class activities.

- Use the chat and other communication tools constructively.

- Avoid disruptive behaviour that interrupts the learning of others.

- Submit assignments and homework on time and to the best of their ability.

- Refrain from sharing inappropriate content online.

Anti-Bullying

Bullying in any form, including cyberbullying, is strictly prohibited. Please view our full ☰ Purple Ruler Anti-Bullying Policy. Learners should follow the protocol below to address issues related to this.

- Report any incidents of bullying to a facilitator or staff member.

- Support peers who are being bullied by reporting incidents and offering support.

- Avoid engaging in or encouraging bullying behaviour.

For more on prevention and resolution, view the UK Government Prevention Policy here.

Prohibited Conduct and Organisational Rules

Misbehaviour in virtual classrooms often has underlying causes such as academic insecurity, unfamiliarity with the platform, societal pressures, or distractions at home. It is crucial to approach misbehaviour with empathy and understanding, addressing the root causes rather than solely focusing on punitive measures.

Prejudice-based Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying involves targeting individuals based on their identity or characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or cultural background. This type of bullying can manifest in various forms, including verbal abuse, exclusion, physical harm, and online harassment.

For example, a learner might face racial slurs or derogatory comments about their religious beliefs, be deliberately excluded from group activities because of their gender identity, or experience online harassment due to their sexual orientation.

Our school maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of prejudice-based bullying. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment where every learner is respected and valued.

Any incidents of bullying will be promptly addressed with appropriate measures to ensure the wellbeing and dignity of all members of our school community.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes behaviours that compromise the integrity of your learning process and the fairness of assessments.

1. **Plagiarism**: Presenting someone else's work, ideas, or words as your own without proper acknowledgment. This includes copying text from a source without citation, using someone else's research findings without credit, and paraphrasing another's ideas without attribution.

2. **Cheating**: Engaging in dishonest practices to gain an unfair advantage in assessments. This includes copying from another learner during an exam, using unauthorised materials or devices during a test, and receiving help from others in completing assignments or exams.

3. **Collusion**: Collaborating with others inappropriately on assignments meant to be completed individually. This can involve working together on an essay or project and submitting it as your own independent work.

4. **Fabrication**: Falsifying data, research results, or citations. This includes inventing data for a research project, altering experimental results to fit desired outcomes, and creating fake citations for sources that do not exist.
5. **Impersonation**: Taking an exam or completing coursework on behalf of another learner, or having someone else do so on your behalf.

Undesirable Behaviour in the Classroom

Verbal Disruption

Verbal disruption in online lessons refers to any spoken or written communication that interrupts the flow of the lesson, distracts other learners, or hinders the learning process.

This can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Speaking out of turn or without permission.
- Making inappropriate or off-topic comments.
- Using offensive or disrespectful language.
- Engaging in side conversations during the lesson.
- Repeatedly interrupting the facilitator or other learners.
- Shouting or making excessive noise that disrupts the learning environment.

Chat Box Misuse

Chatbox misuse in online lessons refers to any inappropriate or disruptive use of the chat feature that distracts from the learning environment or hinders the educational process.

This can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Posting inappropriate or offensive comments.
- Sharing irrelevant or distracting images.
- Engaging in off-topic conversations.
- Spamming or flooding the chat with repeated messages.
- Using disrespectful or hurtful language.
- Sharing personal or sensitive information without consent.
- Posting links to inappropriate or unrelated content.

Whiteboard Misuse

Whiteboard misuse in online lessons refers to any inappropriate or disruptive use of the whiteboard feature that interferes with the teaching process or distracts other learners.

This can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Drawing or writing inappropriate or offensive content.

- Scribbling or marking over instructional material.

- Erasing content added by the facilitator or other learners without permission.

- Using the whiteboard for off-topic or irrelevant purposes.

- Creating distractions by changing the content or layout.

- Posting images or messages that are not related to the lesson.

Bullying

Bullying in online lessons refers to any intentional, repeated behaviour that causes harm, intimidation, or distress to another learner. This can include verbal, physical, or emotional abuse conducted through digital platforms. Any bullying incidents should be managed by our Anti-Bullying Policy and reported through the Bullying Incident Report Form. Examples of bullying in an online learning environment can include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sending threatening or abusive messages through the chat box or private messages.

- Making derogatory or offensive comments aimed at an individual.

- Spreading rumours or false information about a learner.

- Excluding someone from online group activities or discussions.

- Mocking or making fun of a learner's contributions or questions.

- Sharing private information or images without consent.

- Creating and sharing harmful or inappropriate content about a learner.

Promoting Desirable Behaviour

Establish Clear Expectations

- Clear guidelines are set for behaviour from the first session using the classroom agreement.

- Staff must role-model and exemplify desired behaviours.

- Facilitators must aim to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

- Facilitators must work to develop rapport and mutual respect between learners and facilitators.

Acknowledging Desirable Behaviour

"Acknowledging good behaviour encourages repetition and communicates the school community's expectations and values to all pupils.

> 📄 Using positive recognition and rewards provides an opportunity for all staff to reinforce the school's culture and ethos. Positive reinforcements and rewards should be applied clearly and fairly to reinforce the routines, expectations, and norms of the school's behaviour culture." - Behaviour in Schools Advice for headteachers and school staff (2024)

Examples of rewards may include:

- Verbal praise and encouragement
- Communicating praise in the lesson reports as feedback, highlighting strengths and accomplishments
- Digital stickers/badges, certificates, or prizes
- Rewards for consistent hard work and effort, such as 2 minutes whiteboard drawing time or other fun activity break
- Provide learners with positions of responsibility, such as group leader or note-taker
- Acknowledging academic skill in stronger learners and encouraging them to share their knowledge and support their peers
- Healthy competition can work in certain dynamics, but it can cause friction in others
  - In this case, whole-class or year group rewards should also be considered for accomplishing tasks together
  - It is useful to remind learners that they are all working towards the same goals, and that their peer success is also theirs.

Classroom Agreement

- Facilitators will work collaboratively with learners to establish a set of guidelines and expectations for each course.
- The facilitator may revisit the agreement periodically to reinforce expectations if necessary.

Engage Learners

- Facilitators must use interactive and engaging teaching methods.
- Facilitators must incorporate frequent activity changes to maintain interest.
- Facilitators must utilise technology and online platforms to make learning interactive.
- Facilitators must encourage collaborative activities and peer-to-peer interaction.

Responses to Misbehaviour

Protocols for Managing Undesirable Behaviour

For a comprehensive guide for facilitators, view the following ▤ Classroom Behavioural Management Guidelines for Facilitators

Immediate Response

- Facilitators must address inappropriate behaviour promptly and calmly.

- Facilitators must remain calm and composed, modelling a relaxed demeanour.

- Facilitators must acknowledge the learner's feelings and use active listening.

- Facilitators will work with the learner to find positive strategies moving forward.

Formal Steps to Resolve Issues

- Facilitators must avoid embarrassing or reprimanding learners publicly.

- Facilitators must document incidents of misbehaviour in the lesson reports and seek support from the Purple Ruler team on individual communication groups.

- In the case of severe or ongoing disruption, a member of the Purple Ruler team may choose to temporarily remove a learner from a session and contact the partner school or parents/guardians.

Sanctions for Misbehaviour

Inappropriate behaviour will be addressed through a graduated response:

Minor Misbehaviour

Examples include:

- Disruption in class

- Inappropriate language

- Failure to complete assignments

Sanctions may include:

- Verbal warning

- Temporary muting in online class

- Reporting to the partner school or stakeholders

Repeated or Serious Misbehaviour

Examples include:

- Persistent disruption
- Disrespect towards staff or peers
- Cyberbullying

Sanctions may include:

- Temporary removal from online classes
- Formal written warning
- Stakeholder, parent/guardian, facilitator or school meeting
- Temporary suspension from certain online activities
- Behaviour improvement plan

Severe Misbehaviour

Examples include:

- Threatening or violent behaviour
- Significant disruption to the learning environment
- Persistent bullying

Sanctions may include:

- Longer-term suspension from online classes
- Exclusion from specific school activities or groups
- Referral to external authorities if necessary

Sanction Processes

Issuing of Sanctions

All sanctions issued to learners must be recorded by the facilitator in as much detail as possible. Behavioural incidents are to be documented in the lesson report at the end of the session using the **Behaviour Incident section**. These records are automatically synced to the Purple Ruler database, ensuring that a comprehensive history of learner behaviour is maintained.

For more minor but persistent behavioural concerns, stakeholders (schools/guardians/carers) will be informed through standard lesson report feedback. However, in cases where the learner's conduct is deemed serious, stakeholders will be contacted immediately.

Facilitators are required to adhere to a structured process when issuing sanctions. The facilitator is expected to employ various methods, included in facilitator training, to manage classroom behaviour and redirect attention to the lesson after disruption. However, facilitators can request further support if necessary.

Before a sanction is imposed, the facilitator must:

- Exhaust all potential methods and strategies in session to resolve the behaviour in session.

- Reach out to the Teacher Coordinator for support on session strategies.

- Remind the learner of the collaborative class agreement expectations when undesirable behaviour occurs, and clarify the positive contribution methods the learner can use.

- Provide the learner with an opportunity to reflect, correct their behaviour and improve.

- Provide the learner with three verbal warnings before issuing a sanction.

- On the third warning, the learner must be informed that continued misconduct will result in their behaviour being reported to the Head of Academics.

Correctly Identifying Behavioural Issues

Here's a detailed list of behaviours that ARE and ARE NOT considered serious enough to report on the **Behaviour Incident Report** form, along with explanations and examples for facilitators at Purple Ruler.

Behaviours That ARE NOT Considered Serious and Should Be Recorded in the Lesson Report

> 📌 These behaviours, while disruptive, are generally manageable within the session. Facilitators should handle them using classroom management strategies and record the incidents in the lesson report after class. These behaviours will not be reported to the commissioning school or LA upon the first count. However, it will be monitored and reported on the third count.

Talkativeness

Example: A learner consistently talks out of turn, interrupting the flow of the lesson. This might include chatting with peers or speaking over the facilitator.

Mild Disruption

Example: A learner repeatedly asks off-topic questions or makes comments that distract the group from the lesson objectives, or a learner frequently uses the chat box to make jokes or irrelevant remarks, slightly derailing the focus of others.

Inattention

Example: A learner is visibly distracted by other activities during the session, such as playing with objects, browsing other websites, or using a mobile phone.

Reluctance or Refusal to Participate

Example: A learner shows reluctance or outright refusal to engage in the lesson's activities, such as declining to answer questions, avoiding work, or not following instructions, without causing significant disruption.

Mild Non-compliance

Example: A learner refuses to participate in certain activities, such as activities, or responding to questions, without causing significant disruption to others.

Minor Technical Disruptions

Example: A learner repeatedly has issues with their microphone or camera, causing minor interruptions but not severely affecting the overall lesson.

Facilitators should manage these behaviours by reinforcing expectations, redirecting learners to the lesson activities, and using positive reinforcement. If the facilitator struggles with classroom management or maintaining learner engagement, they should reach out to the Teacher Coordinator for strategies and support before the next session.

If intervention strategies prove ineffective, or if the misbehaviour is continuous, the Teacher Coordinator may choose to submit an incident report due to failure to improve. Three reports submitted by the Teacher Coordinator will result in the same intervention procedure as reports submitted for serious offences.

Behaviours That ARE Considered Serious and Must Be Reported on the Behaviour Incident Report Form

> 📌 These behaviours are considered serious as they significantly disrupt the learning environment or are inappropriate. Facilitators should immediately report these incidents using the Behaviour Incident Report form. These behaviours will be reported to the commissioning school or LA immediately, within 24 hours of the behaviour being recorded.

Highly Inappropriate Language

Example: A learner uses offensive, discriminatory, aggressive, or vulgar language directed at others or in general, creating a hostile environment. Any language or expressions that violate the Purple Ruler Learner Code of Conduct or Purple Ruler's Values must be reported.

Severe Disruption

Example: A learner shouts into the microphone, making it impossible for others to hear or engage with the lesson or a learner spams the chat box with repeated messages, preventing others from utilising the chat box.

Harassment or Bullying

Purple Ruler has a zero tolerance policy on bullying, and any incidents of bullying, regardless of the perceived severity, must be reported.

Example: A learner targets another learner with threatening, mocking, or demeaning language or actions, either verbally or through the chat box.

Intentional Abuse of Technology and Lesson Tools

Example: A learner shares content on their screen (using the LessonSpace tools) or in the chat box that violates the Purple Ruler Learner Code of Conduct .

This must be reported directly after the session. Whether the content is of a distracting, distressing or inappropriate nature, facilitators must delete it from the chat box or lesson screen as quickly as possible and enable ''Read-Only'' mode.

The facilitator must warn the learner not to repeat this behaviour, without drawing unnecessary attention to the content that was shared so as to avoid exposing learners who may not have seen the content before deletion.

Violating School Policies

Example: A learner shares personal information about others without consent, which is against the school's privacy policies.

Any violation of the school's policies must be reported, immediately without exception.

In these instances, facilitators should immediately follow the reporting procedures outlined in the school's behaviour management policies. This includes completing the Behaviour Incident Report form below, documenting the incident with as much detail as possible, and contacting the appropriate members of staff on Lark for further action.

Aggression, Threats of Violence, or Violent Behaviour:

Example: A learner exhibits aggressive behaviour towards others, makes threats of violence, or engages in any form of violent behaviour during the session, either verbally or through written communication in the chat box.

Important: This is considered a serious safeguarding issue and will be reported immediately to the relevant authorities, including the school's safeguarding DSL and external law enforcement

or child protection services, if necessary. Facilitators must ensure the safety of all learners and follow the school's safeguarding protocols without delay.

Muting

If a learner is disruptive on the microphone, the facilitator may instruct them to wait for their turn to contribute. Should the disruption continue, the learner will be informed that they will be muted.

The facilitator must inform the learners that they can unmute themselves when it is their turn to contribute with relevant academic input. Facilitators cannot permanently disable a learner's microphone, so continuous misuse of the microphone will be considered a conduct issue and addressed accordingly.

In cases where the learner is working in a loud physical environment that is causing distraction to the class, the facilitator may ask the learner to mute and only unmute when speaking, or in cases of severe background noise ask the learner to use the chat box to contribute instead.

Recording

Facilitators are encouraged to record any incident of behavioural issue, whether minor or serious, in the lesson feedback report under the behavioural issue section. These behavioural incidents will be reviewed by the DSL on a daily basis.

The DSL will determine the severity of each report. The more serious and severe cases will be reported to the schools within 24 hours of the report received, some may be referred to the Anti-Bullying or Safeguarding protocols. Other minor reports will be sent to the school, LA or Parents or Guardians on a weekly basis via an encrypted document.

The DSL will also determine whether the facilitator required further training or assistance with behaviour management, she will inform the academics team if this is necessary.

Interventions

When the threshold of three serious behavioural incident reports is reached and stakeholders are contacted, the learner must be informed. We will work with the stakeholders to develop an intervention plan. This may be an incentive programme to increase the engagement level of the learner, or they may need to be moved to a different group, or they may need to have their access to online sessions revoked.

If exclusion is the decision, this remains in effect until contact is made with stakeholders to discuss the behaviour and a strategy for improvement has been established. Upon conclusion of this process, learner access to courses will be reinstated.

A facilitator meeting will be held with all facilitators attending to the learner to discuss the improvement plan. This improvement plan will include a close evaluation of lesson reports and ongoing discussions with facilitators to monitor improvements.

Should learner misbehaviour continue, the learner will receive a written warning. Stakeholders must be met with (where possible) and informed of the warning, as well as potential consequences to follow.

Further infractions may result in additional written warnings administered by the Head of Academics. Learners may enter disciplinary processes or be permanently excluded after 3 written warnings, if appropriate intervention cannot be established.

Rewards and Recognition Policy

Positive behaviour and achievements will be recognised and rewarded through:

- Praise and positive feedback from facilitators.

- Certificates for outstanding achievements.

- Participation in special activities and events.

Support Systems

Purple Ruler Online School is committed to supporting learners in meeting behavioural expectations. Support systems include:

- Regular check-ins with facilitators.

- Lessons focus on digital citizenship and online safety

- Parental/guardian and partner school involvement in behaviour management plans

Maintaining Professionalism

- Staff must always remain calm and professional.

- Staff must use de-escalation techniques and positive reinforcement.

- Staff must seek support when necessary and report incidents according to the established protocols.

Seeking Support and Reporting

- Facilitators can seek support through Lark NTP groups for managing challenging behaviour.

- Facilitators must report behavioural issues to the school and maintain open communication regarding courses.
- Incidents documented in lesson reports will be used to provide feedback to stakeholders and partner school administration.

Monitoring and Review

The behavioural policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from learners, stakeholders, and staff will be considered in the review process.

Relevant Policies

The behaviour policy is interlinked with various other policies listed below:

📄 Purple Ruler Anti-Bullying Policy

📄 Purple Ruler Online Safety Policy

📄 Purple Ruler Learner Handbook and Code of Conduct

📄 Purple Ruler Safeguarding Policy 2024/2025

📄 Purple Ruler Equality and Inclusion Policy

Conclusion

Effective behavioural management in virtual classrooms involves a combination of clear expectations, positive reinforcement, empathy, and structured responses to misbehaviour. By following these guidelines, facilitators can create a positive and conducive learning environment for all learners.