

Elysian

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



Reviewed: September 2024

Consultation completed: 18th September 2024

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all Elysian sites, encompassing Elysian Animal Assisted Interventions Ltd, including Elysian School and Elysian Animal Assisted Therapy and Learning.

Commitment

Elysian is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

What is Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)?

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in secondary schools refers to the curriculum and instruction focused on helping young people's understand and navigate various aspects of human relationships and sexual health. This education aims to equip young peoples with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about their relationships, sexual health, and well-being.

Goals of RSE

Knowledge: Providing accurate, age-appropriate information to help young people's understand their bodies, relationships, and sexual health.

Skills: Developing skills for effective communication, decision-making, and self-care in the context of relationships and sexual health.

Values and Attitudes: Encouraging respect, empathy, and responsible behaviour towards oneself and others.

Safety: Ensuring young people's understand how to protect themselves and seek help if needed, including awareness of abuse and exploitation.

Overall, RSE at Elysian aims to support the holistic development of our young people, preparing them for the complexities of adult life and fostering healthy, respectful, and fulfilling relationships.

Rationale for RSE at Elysian

Elysian aims to equip young people with the information, skills, and values they need to lead safe, fulfilling, and enjoyable relationships. RSE is crucial for safeguarding children, reducing harmful behaviour, and fostering a safe, nurturing environment for young people to explore their identities, values, and future decisions.

Our guiding principles are led by the DFE guidance, ensuring content is age and developmentally appropriate. The farm animals at Elysian serve as a context for discussing themes such as consent, families, and reproduction.

Delivery of the RSE Programme

Teaching Methods: RSE is taught through class-based, teacher-led learning, 1:1 sessions, and paired sessions, within a safe, non-judgmental environment.

Curriculum Integration: Elements of RSE are incorporated into the PSHE and science curriculum, with at least one PSHE lesson each week.

Group Settings: Sessions are usually in mixed-gender groups but may include single-sex sessions when appropriate.

Resources: Staff have access to a wide range of subject-specific and SEND-appropriate resources, ensuring a varied range of activities to make the curriculum accessible to all young peoples.

Individual Tailoring: Lessons are tailored to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.

Tracking Progress: The Seesaw app is used to track the content each learner has accessed, ensuring comprehensive coverage.

Implementation

Age-Appropriate Curriculum: Content is tailored to the age and developmental stage of the young peoples, building on their knowledge and understanding as they progress.

Inclusive Approach: RSE is inclusive, considering the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences of all young peoples.

Parental Involvement: Parents and carers are engaged in the education process, providing them with information and support to discuss these topics with their children.

Professional Training: Staff are trained to deliver RSE effectively, creating a safe and supportive learning environment.

Working with Parents/Carers

Throughout the academic year, staff will liaise with parents/carers to inform them of upcoming RSE topics. This ensures parents are aware of the content and can collaborate with staff to tailor sessions to individual needs.

Content of the RSE Programme

Lessons are carefully designed to build knowledge and life skills, equipping young people to:

- Develop moral understanding
- Foster self-esteem, confidence, and respect for self and others
- Make positive choices and develop healthy relationships

- Understand and manage relationships
- Prepare for physical and emotional changes
- Recognise appropriate/inappropriate behaviour
- Develop communication skills for discussing relationships and sex
- Specific Areas of Focus
- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships

These areas are taught with respect for diversity, reflecting the various family structures and personal circumstances of our young peoples. For more information, please see Appendix 1 at the end of this policy.

Answering Difficult Questions

Staff will answer questions honestly and appropriately, considering the young people's age, developmental ability, and maturity. Staff may defer questions to ensure appropriate responses, with a focus on providing information and guidance rather than instruction. Any concerns are referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Confidentiality and Child Protection Issues

Confidentiality is maintained where possible during RSE sessions. If a young person discloses information indicating risk or danger, staff will refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as per the Child Protection Policy. The child will be fully supported throughout the process.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

RSE is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the school community and meeting the needs of all young peoples, regardless of their background. The curriculum promotes inclusion, gender equality, and respect for all sexual orientations.

Parents' Right to Withdraw

While Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory subjects, parents / carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of RSE, except for parts included in the National Curriculum for Science. Parents wishing to withdraw their child should discuss this with the Head of Education and Learning.

As stated in the DfE guidance Relationships education, relationships and sex education document:

(RSE) and health education: FAQs - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)' From up to three terms before the child turns 16 'if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.' At this stage, the parent can no longer withdraw their child from Sex Education.

Policy Review and Amendment

The Heads of Education are responsible for ensuring this policy is updated annually or as needed to comply with changing guidance. All amendments will be fully consulted with parents/carers.

For the purposes of this policy, "Elysian" refers to Elysian Animal Assisted Interventions Ltd, including Elysian School and Elysian Animal Assisted Therapy and Learning.

Appendix 1:

By the end of secondary school

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary.

Families

Pupils should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as:
- trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict
- reconciliation and ending relationships, this includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship

- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

Online and media

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content
- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Pupils should know:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion

- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)