

# **Elysian**

## **Behaviour, Suspensions and Exclusion Policy**



**Last Review: June 2025**

**Next Review Due: June 2026**

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

## **Policy Principles**

At Elysian, our commitment to therapeutic care, individual empowerment, and community harmony shapes every aspect of our practice—including the way we approach behaviour. This Behaviour Policy sets out our shared principles and expectations for conduct across all settings, guiding staff, children, and young people in cultivating an environment that is safe, respectful, and rooted in empathy.

We believe that behaviour is a form of communication, and by understanding what underpins each individual's actions, we can respond with compassion, consistency, and informed support. Our approach is person-centred, grounded in the belief that every child and young person deserves to feel heard, valued, and supported to thrive.

In alignment with Elysian's core values—Respect, Integrity, Care, and Inclusion—this policy promotes proactive, restorative strategies that encourage growth and resilience. It seeks to foster positive relationships, reduce conflict, and uphold the dignity of everyone in our community.

The principles outlined here are designed to support therapeutic progress while creating the conditions for safety, learning, and wellbeing. These principles are achieved through combined holistic approaches which:

- Promote positive behaviour, self-esteem and mutual respect
- Ensure consistency and fairness of treatment for all
- Promote early intervention via proactive and targeted behaviour work with learners
- Seek to help learners understand their behaviours and enable positive changes

This policy should be read in conjunction with our anti-bullying, safeguarding, SEND, and equality policies, which collectively inform a holistic and inclusive framework for care and education.

This policy therefore sets out the guiding principles and strategies of how Elysian effectively supports and assists learners to manage their behaviour to be able to meaningfully engage in education and with the wider community. In doing so, this policy also works to tackle anti-bullying (for more detail see Anti-Bullying Policy), promote anti-discriminatory practice and ensure fair treatment for all by providing a clear framework on our approach to managing unwanted behaviours from learners.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Promoting positive behaviour at Elysian is a collective responsibility, guided by our core values of Respect, Integrity, Care, and Inclusion. This Behaviour Policy applies across all settings and demands clarity of roles, transparency in practice, and shared ownership from everyone involved.

## **Strategic Senior Leadership Team (SSLT)**

The Strategic Senior Leadership Team, positioned above Site Heads and below Directors, holds responsibility for ensuring that this Behaviour Policy is:

- Aligned with Elysian's values, therapeutic model, and applicable legislation

- Embedded consistently into practice across all sites
- Subject to rigorous quality assurance processes, including scheduled audits, live and reflective observations, and strategic oversight

SSLT will regularly analyse implementation data, identify emerging themes, and support continuous improvement through system-led feedback, reflective supervision, and targeted staff development.

### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

Site-based SLTs are responsible for:

- Communicating this policy effectively to learners, parents and carers, and staff
- Ensuring the policy is applied consistently and non-discriminatorily across their site
- Coordinating and delivering training to enable confident and informed implementation

SLTs liaise directly with SSLT to monitor progress, share site-specific challenges, and uphold Elysian's person-centred approach.

### **Staff and Volunteers**

All Elysian staff and volunteers have a shared responsibility to uphold the Behaviour Policy and demonstrate its principles through their professional conduct. This includes:

- Modelling positive behaviours and setting clear expectations
- Addressing incidents of disruption, violence, bullying, or harassment appropriately and ensuring they are accurately reported and recorded
- Reflecting on personal responses and potential barriers to behaviour management, supported by supervision and peer dialogue

Staff are expected to engage in ongoing professional reflection, identify challenges, and implement adaptive strategies. This fosters a culture of accountability and strengthens therapeutic relationships across the organisation.

### **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers play an essential role in supporting behavioural development. Elysian fosters strong relationships with families through:

- Proactive and regular communication regarding learner behaviour
- Collaborative work with external agencies where appropriate
- Ensuring shared understanding of behavioural expectations and interventions

### **Learners**

Learners are supported to take meaningful responsibility for their behaviour. Elysian promotes:

- Clear and differentiated communication of expectations and consequences
- Tailored support to understand the reasons behind behaviour

- Encouragement to develop regulation strategies and actively contribute to their learning environment

Acknowledging that behaviour is often linked to individual circumstances or conditions, Elysian prioritises empathetic support and guidance to help learners reflect, grow, and thrive.

### **Staff Training and Support**

Elysian provides and promotes a variety of training and support processes to enable staff to effectively manage challenging behaviour, promote the Elysian therapeutic ethos and tackle discriminatory practice.

All staff and volunteers receive an individual induction programme including the familiarity with Elysian policies and procedures. Mandatory INSET training for staff is also provided on the following areas relative to behaviour management:

- Safeguarding / Child Protection (all areas required in KCSiE)
- The Elysian Approach Training

All staff and volunteers are expected to complete refresher training on these areas at least once per year, which will be tied into their CPD file and annual appraisal. Where relevant Elysian will support staff to attend relevant external training related to behaviour management and will provide further INSET training.

There also exists a high level of support processes and systems for Elysian staff and volunteers regarding effective behaviour management relative to their role. These include the following:

- Daily morning briefings and end of day debriefs where behaviour management is discussed, effective practice is shared, and behaviour strategies are agreed as a team and overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Regular opportunities for co-working
- Regular team meetings
- Supervisions
- Open door policy
- Teachers and Key worker observations and feedback
- Individual shadowing / mentoring as appropriate

### **Procedures and Framework for Managing Behaviour**

#### ***Standards and Expectations***

Elysian has high expectations of the standards of behaviour displayed by learners. However, learners' behaviours are linked to diagnosis and or their Education Health and Care Plan and as such there must be great understanding, sensitivity and skill when dealing with behaviour. Inappropriate behaviours or responses are often embedded, learnt behaviours, which have manifested due to disrupted personal backgrounds and experiences. As such, high levels of support and input are required for the learners to be able to meet the standards within this policy. Elysian therefore works extensively with learners in a consistent, person centred and intentional manner to help them to be able to display the following positive behaviours:

- Treating others, the environment and the animals with respect and consideration
- Being helpful and kind to others
- Using appropriate language
- Contributing to a calm, imaginative and inclusive learning environment
- Informing staff when having difficulties

Where learners display unacceptable and or inappropriate behaviour, Elysian works with them through various processes to help them learn and understand why their behaviour is unacceptable or inappropriate and helps learners learn and develop strategies for managing their behaviour and responses more appropriately. Unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Absconding from site
- Physical Aggression / Violence to others
- Threats and intimidation
- Damage to property
- Harm to animals
- Verbal aggression including swearing directed at others
- Disruption (stopping others from learning)
- Invading personal space
- Cyber Bullying
- Not handing in mobile phones on arrival

Elysian does not expect learners to display these unacceptable behaviours. However where learners have had historic difficulties and or incidences displaying these types of behaviours, Elysian understands that there is an increased likelihood of incidences of these behaviours occurring. To effectively manage this, pre-emptive structured processes are put in place through Individual Learner Risk Assessments, one-page-profiles and the use of appropriate learning environments with high staffing levels. This ensures that, as much as is practically possible, learners are educated in an environment and manner that is conducive to displaying positive behaviours and is safe for all other learners, staff and volunteers. The nature of the farm environment lends itself to imaginative ways of managing behaviour and allowing a sense of space for learners struggling with their behaviour.

### ***Learner Ground Rules***

To present and foster a culture where behaviours are addressed promptly and openly, staff will discuss with learners what is expected of them and why and how Elysian will work to support learners to achieve this. Learners are encouraged to question and engage in discussion regarding the ground rules in order that they are accepted and clearly understood. Ground rules are then revisited at various times throughout the school year as necessary. Non-negotiable Elysian ground rules will include the following:

- We are kind because bullying is not tolerated
- We stay on site so that staff know we are safe, unless we have permission from a staff member to leave
- We leave cigarettes, lighters, vapes and any other smoking-related items off site
- We are gentle and respectful to people and animals
- We follow instructions, particularly safety instructions around the farm

### ***Early Intervention (including Preventing Bullying)***

Elysian is committed to anticipating behavioural challenges before they arise and responding with empathy and structure. Our approach is rooted in understanding each learner as an individual with unique needs, circumstances, and strengths. We prioritise environments and teaching methods that promote regulation, engagement, and relational safety.

In line with our values of Respect, Integrity, Care, and Inclusion, Elysian places early intervention at the heart of our behavioural support strategy. Rather than reacting to incidents, staff work pre-emptively to identify potential risks and create conditions for positive behaviour to emerge.

### **Core Processes for Early Intervention**

Staff across all roles apply the following processes to guide individualised learner support and prevent bullying or other harmful behaviours:

- Holistic understanding of each learner: Insight into prior behaviours, incidents, and known emotional or environmental triggers
- Risk assessments: Regularly updated to reflect the changing needs and circumstances of the learner
- Personal Education Plans (PEP): Developed with learners, families, and professionals to ensure cohesive planning
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP): Integrated into daily practice to guide therapeutic and educational support
- Personal Learning Plans (PLP): Tailored strategies that align with learners' specific goals and support needs
- Curriculum-based support: Use of relevant curriculum content to enhance emotional literacy, social understanding, and self-regulation
- Structured learner behaviour reviews: SEN reviews, EHCP reviews, and team discussions that facilitate ongoing responsiveness

These processes are not static—they are dynamic and reflect our commitment to evolving practice based on real-time observations and collaborative learning.

### **Reflection as a Tool for Growth**

In the event of unwanted behaviour, reflection is used not as a punishment, but as a therapeutic and developmental tool. Learners are supported to explore their actions in a safe, non-judgemental space where responsibility can be understood and addressed constructively.

Reflection is facilitated as soon as possible after the incident, allowing for timely emotional processing and the development of targeted support strategies. Staff are encouraged to reflect as well, promoting an open culture of shared responsibility.

### **Approach to Physical Intervention**

Elysian does not believe in the regular use of physical intervention and places strong emphasis on relational and preventative strategies. Physical intervention is used only in exceptional circumstances, where:

- A learner is at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others
- There is a threat of serious damage to property

In such instances, intervention will be proportionate, legally compliant, and carried out by trained staff under strict procedural guidelines. All incidents will be reviewed with transparency and documented in line with safeguarding protocols.

### ***Knowledge of Learner Needs / Prior Behaviours***

Elysian staff are made aware of, and proactively seek information on learners' previous behaviours and incidents and current needs through use of the following:

- From learners themselves
- Elysian Admission Information and Consent Form
- EHC Plans
- Personal Education Plans
- Previous school reports
- Discussions with learners / parents / carers
- Agency reports as appropriate

### ***Individual Risk Assessment***

Based on information gained about previous behaviours, incidents and current needs, a robust risk assessment is drawn up which details the potential risks a learner may present for certain activities around the farm. The risk assessment then directs the learning environment and methods of working with the learners by agreed action and detail in the following areas:

- Likely triggers
- Indicators of escalation
- Strategies for managing behaviours
- Strategies for de-escalation
- Strategies to support reflection

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow the individual behaviour management strategies in place for each learner. These strategies are reviewed termly, and updated promptly following any incident, near miss, or significant change in the learner's circumstances.

Task-specific risk assessments are also conducted and integrated with each learner's individual risk profile. This ensures that environments and activities are thoughtfully structured to support positive behaviour throughout the day.

Structured control measures for staff include:

- Learners are supervised always whilst at Elysian; this includes breaks and lunch times.
- All offsite education is pre-planned and agreed by the Senior Leadership Team, which is discussed at morning briefing.
- All staff are made aware in briefing meeting which learners will be in and out of the farm.
- All staff are made aware in briefing of any expected meetings or visitors to Elysian.

Should the Senior Leadership team not be available, staff will be made aware of an alternative contact for advice / guidance on behavioural management. Elysian also expects staff to employ the following approaches throughout all their work with learners to promote positive behaviour:

- Model positive social interactions
- Use active listening
- Stay as calm as possible
- Use appropriate tone and level of voice to the situation
- Use appropriate body language
- Be aware of personal triggers
- Use positive reframing
- Follow any psychology report recommendations
- Give clear firm boundaries
- Give clear instructions
- Give regular praise after instructions have been followed
- Ignore behaviour where appropriate
- Offer time out or 1-1 support where necessary
- Call for help from other staff if behaviour escalates to unmanageable level

### ***Relevant Curriculum work***

All learners are encouraged and supported to engage in Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and 'Prevent' curriculum work. This includes work relevant to early intervention of behavioural concerns and bullying prevention through the following curriculum areas, where appropriate:

- Emotional Wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyles
- Relationships behaviour and practices in the workplace
- Personal Safety
- Diversity prejudice and discrimination
- British rule of law
- E-safety and cyber bullying
- Sex and relationships education

### **Actions and Consequences**

Elysian uses a variety of generic and individual strategies for managing learners' behaviour and promoting positive behaviour. Positive behaviour will be promoted by pro-social modelling by all staff and volunteers, discussions with learners on expectations, reflections on previous incidents, ongoing work on behaviour management, encouragement and praise and use of appropriate learning environment and methodology relative to the learners' individual needs. Unwanted behaviours will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Elysian does not promote the use of sanctions or punishments of any kind. However, staff do apply natural and logical consequences, dependent on the challenge faced. For example,

- a learner who absconds from the farm has shown that they cannot keep themselves safe and may therefore be stopped from taking part in an offsite trip.



- a learner who does not follow safety instructions around animals may be prevented from taking part in equine-related activities for a period of time.
- A learner who brings vapes in to the farm may be asked to take part in a meeting with SLT and parents/carers.

Elysian does not work in a punitive way but aims to support the learners to take responsibility of their actions and to learn that there are always consequences to the actions they take and decisions they make. Consequences agreed for any significant behaviours will be recorded in CPOMs. However, in the event of more serious behaviours e.g., intentional harm to others or intentional serious damage to property, suspensions or exclusion may be a consideration.

### **Suspensions/Exclusions**

A decision to suspend or exclude a young person, either internally, for a fixed period or permanently is seen as an absolute last resort by the Elysian. The physical and emotional health of our young people and staff is our primary concern. However, we accept that in some serious situations, suspension or exclusion may be necessary. The decision to suspend or exclude will usually follow a range of strategies and be seen as a last resort, or it will be in response to a very serious breach of Elysian non-negotiable behaviours.

Suspension/Exclusion may be the result of persistently challenging behaviour or a serious single incident. Any suspension or exclusion will be at the decision of the Head of Education, in consultation with members of the Senior Strategic Leadership Team.

### **Types of suspension and exclusion**

#### **Internal Suspension/Reflection Time**

Internal Suspension or Reflection Time is when a learner has time away from their usual group and must work and reflect, away from their group for a fixed amount of time. An internal suspension/reflection time is a discretionary measure, where a young person's behaviour is escalating and more serious measures need to be taken, but there are not yet grounds for an external, fixed-term suspension. Typically, a young person receiving a consequence of this level should be receiving additional support for their behaviour, intended to help them to avoid their behaviour escalating to a point where a fixed term suspension is necessary (examples: support from the teacher and or the therapist, meetings with parent/carers etc).

#### **Temporary / Fixed-Term suspension**

A temporary / fixed term suspension is when a young person is suspended from Elysian and must remain home for a fixed amount of time. This should be for the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the breach of policy. Wherever possible, a reintegration meeting with the parent/carer and children should be held on or before the day of return to Elysian. However, the period of suspension must not be extended to accommodate this.

#### **Permanent exclusion**

If a series of incidents, repeated misbehaviour or a serious incident occurs, or behaviour puts the safety of the learner or other learners at risk, it is at the discretion of the Head of Education and the Senior Strategic Leadership Team to exclude the young person permanently.

## **The Decision to Suspend/Exclude**

If the Head of Education and the Senior Strategic Leadership decides to suspend or exclude a young person, they will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision.
- Contact the parents, explain the decision and ask that the child be collected or be at home to receive them.
- Send a letter to the parents confirming the reasons for the suspension/exclusion, whether it is a permanent or temporary/fixed term exclusion.
- The length of the suspension and any terms or conditions agreed for the children's return.
- Plan how to address the children's needs and integration back into their Elysian site on their return.
- Plan a meeting with parents and children on their return to be conducted by a suitable member of staff, prior to their return wherever reasonably practical. This may also happen over the telephone.

## **Involvement with Parents/Carers and other Agencies**

Elysian seeks to involve parents/carers and other agencies in many aspects of behaviour management and decisions are shared through the following processes:

- Personal learning plans (PLPs)
- Risk Assessments
- Evaluations
- Annual reviews of EHC Plans
- Personal education plans (PEPs)
- Multi agency meetings
- Home Visits where appropriate
- Regular phone and email updates
- Termly reports

Where necessary, relative to a specific highlighted risk or following an incident, a member of Senior Leadership will arrange a meeting with parents/carers and involve all other relevant agencies to discuss and agree specific behavioural strategies which will be reviewed regularly throughout the year.

## **Sharing Good Practice**

Elysian will seek to share good practice and seek best practice from others in behavioural management with parents/carers, and other agencies in order that effective practice can be consistently employed for the benefit of the learners. This will be shared through IEP's, annual reviews of EHC Plans, multi-agency meetings, home visits where appropriate and termly reports.

**This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Strategic Leadership Team, representatives from site Senior Leadership Teams, and will be further agreed by the Chair of Governors.**

**June 2025**

**For the purposes of this policy, where the term Elysian is used, it refers to Elysian Animal Assisted Interventions Ltd including Elysian School and Elysian Animal assisted Therapy and Learning. This policy is applicable to all Elysian sites.**