

Elysian

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



Reviewed: September 2025

Consultation with parents / carers: 01/09/25 – 19/09/25

Date to review: August 2026

Scope

This policy applies to all Elysian sites, encompassing Elysian Providing 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. High-quality RSE plays a crucial role in preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges of adult life.

What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE provides young people with the knowledge, skills and values to understand and navigate relationships, respect themselves and others, and make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing. At Elysian, RSE helps pupils develop resilience, self-worth and empathy, equipping them to recognise risks, seek support, and build positive, respectful relationships throughout their lives.

Goals of RSE

The aims of RSE at Elysian are to provide accurate, age-appropriate knowledge; develop skills for communication, decision-making and self-care; and promote positive values and attitudes such as respect, empathy and inclusivity. Pupils are taught how to recognise risks, protect themselves from harm, and seek help when needed, ensuring that they can make safe, informed and responsible choices. Through this approach, RSE supports holistic development and prepares pupils for the complexities of adult life and healthy, fulfilling relationships.

Rationale for RSE at Elysian

RSE is vital to safeguarding children, reducing harmful behaviours and providing a safe, nurturing environment for young people to explore their identities, values and future decisions. Our curriculum is guided by the statutory requirements set out in the DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance (July 2025) and adapted to meet the needs of young people with complex SEN.

The unique farm environment and animal-assisted learning at Elysian provide meaningful contexts for discussing themes such as trust, consent, families, responsibility and reproduction. This approach makes learning more accessible, relevant and engaging.

Guiding Principles

Our RSE programme is built on the guiding principles set out in the 2025 guidance. We engage pupils in shaping the curriculum to ensure it is relevant and meaningful, and we are transparent with parents and carers by making all teaching materials available on request. The curriculum promotes positivity by focusing on healthy, respectful norms and is carefully sequenced to build knowledge progressively. It is

responsive to the needs of our young people and delivered by skilled staff trained in safeguarding and sensitive facilitation. RSE is embedded within a whole-school approach, closely linked with behaviour, safeguarding and wellbeing policies, ensuring that learning about relationships and health is reinforced across all areas of school life.

Delivery of the RSE Programme

RSE is delivered through group lessons, 1:1 sessions, paired activities and practical experiences, creating a safe and non-judgmental environment for learning. It is embedded within PSHE and science, with content carefully tailored to pupils' developmental stage and inclusive of diverse experiences and backgrounds. Lessons are supported by evidence-based resources and are adapted to ensure accessibility for pupils with SEND and vulnerable learners. Coverage and progress are tracked using the Seesaw app, ensuring consistency across sites. Staff receive regular professional training and CPD in RSHE, safeguarding and trauma-informed practice to ensure high-quality delivery.

Parental Involvement

Parents and carers are actively involved in the delivery of RSE at Elysian. They are consulted during policy reviews to ensure transparency and shared understanding, provided with advance notice of sensitive topics, and offered opportunities to view teaching materials. Staff also provide guidance to help parents continue these important discussions at home, fostering a consistent and collaborative approach to young people's learning and wellbeing.

Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to request withdrawal from some or all sex education delivered as part of RSE, except for the parts taught within the science curriculum. In secondary schools, headteachers may decline withdrawal requests in exceptional safeguarding circumstances. Pupils may choose to opt back into sex education from three terms before their 16th birthday, even if previously withdrawn. If a pupil is withdrawn, Elysian will provide purposeful alternative education during that time.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

RSE is delivered in a safe environment where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and express their views. Staff respond honestly and appropriately, taking into account pupils' age, developmental stage and maturity, and may defer answers to ensure accuracy. While confidentiality is respected wherever possible, any disclosure indicating that a pupil may be at risk is referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with Elysian's Child Protection Policy. Staff are trained to manage sensitive discussions carefully, avoiding content that could normalise harmful behaviours or expose pupils to unsafe ideas.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

RSE at Elysian is inclusive and reflects the diversity of our school community. Teaching represents a wide range of family structures and circumstances positively and promotes gender equality, tolerance and respect for all protected characteristics. Lessons are adapted to ensure accessibility for pupils with SEND and those who may be especially vulnerable. By embedding equality and inclusion throughout the curriculum, we provide a safe, respectful and supportive environment where all young people feel represented and valued.

Curriculum Content

By the End of Primary

By the end of primary education, children should understand that families provide love, care and stability, even though they may look different, and that marriage and civil partnerships represent a legal commitment. They should know how to make and sustain friendships, how to resolve conflict, and when to seek help. Pupils learn about respect, boundaries and self-esteem, and how stereotypes and bullying can cause harm. Online safety is introduced early, with children learning about privacy, risks from strangers, and the permanence of sharing content. They are also taught about personal safety, body ownership, and how to ask for help when something feels wrong.

At Elysian, we recognise that some of our young people may have missed out on significant aspects of RSE during their primary years. To address this, our curriculum is carefully designed to revisit and cover both the primary and secondary content, ensuring pupils have the essential foundations in place before progressing to more complex topics. This approach allows us to close gaps in learning, support understanding at the right developmental stage, and prepare pupils effectively for the challenges of adolescence and adulthood.

These foundations are then built upon in secondary education to ensure a smooth progression and to prepare young people for more complex relationships.

By the End of Secondary

By the end of secondary education, pupils should have the knowledge and skills to develop safe and healthy relationships of all kinds. They learn about families, including the myths surrounding “common-law marriage,” the responsibilities of parents and carers, and how to identify unsafe situations. In their learning about respectful relationships, pupils explore the importance of consent, power dynamics, kindness, and tolerance, while recognising and challenging prejudice, stereotyping and misogyny.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe online, including the risks of sexting, sextortion, scams, deepfakes, AI technologies and harmful online subcultures. They also explore the damaging impact of pornography and the dangers of harmful online content.

In relation to personal safety, pupils develop the skills to communicate and respect boundaries, understand the laws around consent, sexual assault, harassment, rape, coercion and exploitation, and recognise offences such as strangulation, suffocation, virginity testing, hymenoplasty, FGM and forced marriage. They learn about domestic abuse, including coercive control, and the recognition of children as victims in their own right under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Pupils are encouraged to understand the signs of grooming, financial or criminal exploitation, and to develop strategies for keeping themselves safe in public and online spaces.

Finally, pupils learn about intimate and sexual relationships and sexual health. They are given accurate and impartial information about pregnancy choices, contraception and safer sex, as well as STIs and HIV, including prevention and treatment options. Lessons also address the impact of alcohol and drugs on decision-making and signpost pupils to confidential support and healthcare services.

At Elysian, we acknowledge that some pupils may not have had consistent access to RSE during their primary years. To ensure no young person is disadvantaged, our secondary programme is designed to revisit and consolidate primary content where necessary, providing secure foundations before introducing more advanced material. This ensures that all pupils, regardless of their prior experiences, are fully prepared to engage with the secondary curriculum and progress with confidence.

Safeguarding Links

This policy works alongside the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, and Equality and Inclusion Policy to ensure consistency and a whole-school approach to pupil safety and wellbeing.

Monitoring and Review

The delivery of RSE is monitored through lesson observations, planning reviews and pupil voice. Impact is evaluated through feedback, safeguarding records and evidence of progress in PSHE and RSE learning. This policy is reviewed annually by the Heads of Education, with full consultation with parents and carers. Updates are published on the school website and made available free of charge to anyone who requests a copy.