

Elysian

Behaviour Policy



Last Review: December 2025

Next Review Due: December 2026

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1. Policy Statement

Elysian is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment. Our approach to behaviour is rooted in therapeutic care, empathy, and respect, recognising behaviour as a form of communication.

2. Policy Principles

This policy is guided by Elysian's core values: Respect, Integrity, Care, and Inclusion. It aims to:

- Promote positive behaviour, self-esteem, and mutual respect
- Ensure consistency and fairness
- Enable early intervention through proactive and targeted support
- Help learners understand and positively change their behaviour

This policy should be read alongside Elysian's Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Suspensions and Exclusions, and Equality policies.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Directors/Governors: provide strategic oversight and ensure that the Behaviour Policy aligns with Elysian's vision, ethos, and aims. They guide the SSLT in shaping policy direction and are responsible for hearing appeals related to suspensions and exclusions, ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability.

Strategic Senior Leadership Team (SSLT): Responsible for policy alignment, implementation, and quality assurance across all sites.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Site-based SLTs ensure consistent application, staff training, and communication with stakeholders.

Staff and Volunteers: Expected to model positive behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents, and engage in reflective practice.

Parents and Carers: Play a key role through collaboration, communication, and shared understanding of behavioural expectations.

Learners: Supported to take responsibility for their behaviour through tailored guidance and reflection.

4. Staff Training and Support

All staff receive:

- Individual induction
- Mandatory INSET training (Safeguarding, Elysian Approach)
- Annual refresher training

- Targeted training in response to emerging patterns and trends
- Access to ongoing support: briefings, debriefs, mentoring, supervision, and team meetings

5. Standards and Expectations

Learners are supported to demonstrate:

- Respect for others, the environment, and animals
- Kindness and helpfulness
- Appropriate language
- Engagement in a calm and inclusive learning environment
- Communication with staff when struggling

Unacceptable Behaviour Includes:

- Absconding
- Physical aggression or threats
- Property damage
- Harm to animals
- Verbal aggression
- Disruption
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Refusal to hand in mobile phones

Ground Rules (Non-Negotiables):

Elysian maintains a set of non-negotiable ground rules designed to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of all learners, staff, volunteers, and animals on site. These expectations are clearly communicated and revisited regularly with learners to promote understanding and ownership. We recognise that these behaviours may build over time and will work with all learners to understand their behaviour and to make better choices.

Where a ground rule is broken, consequences may include fixed-term suspension for a number of days. In rare circumstances, permanent exclusion or end of placement may be considered and implemented. These decisions are based on the seriousness and impact of the behaviour, always with the aim of maintaining a safe and therapeutic environment for all. Each situation is assessed individually, and Elysian will always conduct a full investigation before any of these actions are taken.

Elysian Ground Rules:

- We have zero tolerance for repeated, sustained bullying.
- We will not accept physical aggression towards people or animals
- We expect learners to stay on site unless permitted by staff
- We do not allow smoking-related items or behaviours (e.g., cigarettes, lighters, vapes)

- We have zero tolerance for bringing substances on-site, including prescription and non-prescription medications (unless handed in on arrival and agreed with staff) and all classes of drugs.
- Learners must follow safety instructions

6. Early Intervention

At Elysian, early intervention is central to our therapeutic approach to behaviour. We aim to anticipate challenges before they escalate, using proactive, person-centred strategies that promote emotional regulation, relational safety, and engagement. Our commitment to early intervention is rooted in understanding each learner's unique profile and creating environments that support positive behaviour.

Core Strategies for Early Intervention:

- **Holistic Learner Understanding**
Staff build a comprehensive picture of each learner through admission information, previous school reports, agency input, and direct conversations with learners and families. This includes identifying emotional triggers, behavioural patterns, and environmental factors that may influence behaviour.
- **Risk Assessments**
Individual risk assessments are developed and regularly updated to reflect current needs, known triggers, escalation indicators, and agreed de-escalation strategies. These assessments guide staff in structuring safe and supportive learning environments.
- **Personal Learning Plans (PLPs)**
Created in collaboration with learners, families, and professionals, PLPs outline educational goals, support strategies, and behavioural targets. These plans are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and effective.
- **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Personal Learning Plans (PLPs)**
EHCPs are integrated into daily practice, informing therapeutic and educational support. PLPs are informed by EHCP's and provide tailored strategies aligned with each learner's strengths, challenges, and aspirations.
- **Curriculum-Based Emotional and Social Learning**
Learners engage in PSHE curriculum work, including topics such as emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships, personal safety, diversity and inclusion, and cyberbullying. These sessions are designed to build emotional literacy, resilience, and social understanding.
- **Regular Reviews and Team Discussions**
Behavioural progress is monitored through case studies reviews, EHCP reviews, and daily team briefings and debriefs. These forums allow staff to share insights, adapt strategies, and maintain a consistent approach across the team.

7. Reflection as a Tool for Growth

Reflection is a cornerstone of Elysian’s therapeutic approach to behaviour. It is not used as a punishment, but as a meaningful opportunity for growth, learning, and emotional processing. We recognise that behaviour is often a response to underlying needs, and reflection provides a safe space for learners to explore these responses and begin to understand the impact of their actions.

For Learners:

- Reflection is facilitated as soon as possible after an incident, allowing learners to process emotions while the experience is still fresh.
- Staff guide learners through structured reflection conversations, helping them identify triggers, recognise consequences, and consider alternative responses.
- Reflection may take place in a calm, private space or through supported dialogue with a trusted adult, such as a key worker or therapist.
- Learners are encouraged to take ownership of their behaviour and to contribute to planning strategies that support future regulation and success.
- Where appropriate, reflection is documented and used to inform updates to risk assessments, PLPs, or therapeutic support plans.

For Staff:

- Staff engage in reflective practice individually and as part of team processes (e.g., debriefs, supervision, peer discussions).
- Reflection helps staff identify what worked well, what could be improved, and how their own responses may have influenced the situation.
- This ongoing professional reflection fosters a culture of openness, learning, and shared responsibility, strengthening therapeutic relationships and improving outcomes for learners.

At Elysian, reflection is seen as a dynamic and collaborative process—one that empowers both learners and staff to grow, adapt, and contribute to a safe and supportive community.

8. Physical Intervention

Elysian places strong emphasis on relational, preventative, and therapeutic strategies to manage behaviour. Physical intervention is not part of routine practice and is used only in exceptional circumstances, where all other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted or are deemed ineffective in the moment.

Physical intervention may be considered only when:

- There is an immediate risk of harm to the learner, other learners, staff, volunteers, or animals
- There is a serious and imminent risk of significant property damage
- All other strategies have failed to reduce the risk, and intervention is necessary to prevent escalation

In such cases, intervention must be:

- Reasonable, necessary and proportionate to the level of risk and the behaviour presented
- Legally compliant, in line with relevant legislation and statutory guidance (e.g., DfE guidance on the use of reasonable force)
- Carried out only by trained staff (where possible), who have received appropriate instruction in safe handling and physical intervention techniques
- Documented thoroughly, including a full incident report, safeguarding record (e.g., CPOMs), and follow-up reflection with the learner and staff involved
- Reviewed promptly, with oversight from the Strategic Senior Leadership Team to ensure transparency, accountability, and learning

Following any incident involving physical intervention:

- The learner will be supported to reflect on the event in a safe and therapeutic space
- Parents/carers will be informed and, where appropriate, invited to discuss the incident and next steps
- Risk assessments and behaviour support plans will be reviewed and updated to reduce the likelihood of recurrence
- Staff involved will receive supervision and support to process the incident and refine future strategies

Elysian remains committed to minimising the use of physical intervention and prioritising environments where learners feel safe, respected, and empowered to regulate their behaviour.

9. Individual Risk Assessments

Individual risk assessments are a vital part of Elysian’s proactive approach to behaviour management. They ensure that each learner is supported in a way that is safe, responsive, and tailored to their unique needs and circumstances.

Development and Content

Risk assessments are developed using a wide range of information sources, including:

Learner History and Needs: Information is gathered from EHCPs, previous school reports, admission forms, agency input, and direct conversations with learners and families. This helps build a comprehensive understanding of the learner’s background, diagnosis, and behavioural history.

Likely Triggers and Escalation Indicators: Staff identify specific emotional, environmental, or relational triggers that may lead to dysregulation. Observable signs of escalation are documented to enable early intervention.

Behaviour Management and De-escalation Strategies: Each assessment includes agreed strategies for managing behaviour, including preventative approaches, de-escalation techniques, and staff responses tailored to the learner’s profile.

Reflection Support: Guidance is provided on how to facilitate therapeutic reflection following incidents, ensuring that learners are supported to process their behaviour constructively and safely.

Review and Responsiveness

Risk assessments are:

- Reviewed termly as part of the learner's ongoing support plan
- Updated immediately following any significant incident, near miss, or change in the learner's circumstances
- Integrated with task-specific risk assessments to ensure that all activities and environments are appropriately structured and supervised

Implementation and Staff Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Familiarise themselves with each learner's risk assessment
- Follow the agreed strategies consistently
- Contribute to reviews and updates through team discussions and supervision
- Use the risk assessment to inform planning, supervision, and interaction throughout the day

Structured control measures include:

- Continuous supervision of learners, including during breaks and lunch
- Pre-planned and approved offsite education activities
- Daily briefings to communicate learner-specific updates, expected visitors, and staffing arrangements
- Clear escalation pathways when SLT is unavailable, ensuring staff know who to contact for behavioural guidance

10. Curriculum Support

Elysian integrates a broad range of PSHE curriculum topics to support learners in developing emotional literacy, social awareness, and personal responsibility. These areas are tailored to meet individual needs and are delivered through therapeutic, experiential, and discussion-based learning.

- **Emotional Wellbeing**
Learners explore strategies for emotional regulation, recognising and naming feelings, managing anxiety, and building resilience. Sessions may include mindfulness, journaling, and creative expression.
- **Healthy Lifestyles**
Focuses on physical health, nutrition, sleep hygiene, and the impact of lifestyle choices on mental wellbeing. Learners are encouraged to set personal goals and reflect on habits.

- **Relationships and Workplace Behaviour**
Covers respectful communication, boundaries, consent, and appropriate behaviour in social and professional settings. Learners practice conflict resolution and teamwork skills.
- **Personal Safety**
Includes awareness of physical and emotional safety, recognising unsafe situations, and knowing how to seek help. Topics may include online safety, peer pressure, and risk-taking behaviours.
- **Diversity and Discrimination**
Promotes understanding of different cultures, identities, and lived experiences. Learners examine prejudice, stereotyping, and the importance of inclusion and allyship.
- **British Law and Values**
Learners are introduced to key principles such as democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance. These are explored through real-life scenarios and current events.
- **E-Safety and Cyberbullying**
Focuses on responsible digital behaviour, recognising online risks, and understanding the impact of cyberbullying. Learners are supported to develop safe online habits and digital resilience.
- **Sex and Relationships Education**
Delivered in an age-appropriate and inclusive manner, covering topics such as healthy relationships, consent, sexual health, and identity. Emphasis is placed on respect, safety, and informed decision-making.

11. Actions and Consequences

Elysian does not use punitive sanctions. Instead, natural and logical consequences are applied, such as:

- Restricted offsite access after absconding
- Temporary removal from animal activities for safety reasons
- Meetings with SLT and parents/carers
- Restorative conversations and actions

Consequences are recorded in CPOMs. Serious incidents may lead to suspension or exclusion. For specific information about fixed-term suspensions and permanent exclusions, please refer to the Suspensions and Exclusions Policy.

12. Parent/Carer and Agency Involvement

Behavioural strategies are shared and reviewed through:

- Annual review meetings
- Phone conversations or meetings following incidents
- Multi-agency meetings
- Termly reports

- Home visits
- Reports and evaluations
- Regular weekly communication

13. Policy Review

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.

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.