



THE LINKS
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Relationships and Sexual Health Education

POLICY

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Contents

Contents.....	2
Introduction	3
Legal Framework	3
Aims and Objectives.....	3
Curriculum Content.....	3
Roles and Responsibilities	5
External Agencies and Support Contacts.....	6
Appendix A: RSHE Curriculum Map Template.....	7
Appendix B: Parental Withdrawal Procedure	11
Appendix C: RSHE Resource Vetting Checklist	11

Introduction

This policy outlines Spark Education Trust's approach to delivering Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) across all schools within our Trust. It is informed by the Department for Education's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025) and will be followed from September 2025.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Education Act 2002, Section 80A
- Education Act 1996, Section 403
- Department for Education statutory guidance: Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (July 2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Equality Act 2010
- Other relevant Trust policies (Safeguarding, SEND, Online Safety & Behaviour).

Aims and Objectives

The aims of RSHE at Spark Education Trust are to:

- Provide a comprehensive, age-appropriate curriculum that reflects pupils' needs and experiences.
- Promote the physical, emotional, and social development of pupils.
- Equip pupils with knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their health and relationships.
- Foster a safe and supportive environment for discussing sensitive issues.
- Ensure teaching is inclusive, respectful, and sensitive to diverse beliefs and backgrounds.

Curriculum Content

Relationships Education (Primary)

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) (Secondary)

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Health Education (Primary & Secondary)

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms, including AI and deepfakes
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- The changing adolescent body
- Suicide prevention and self-harm awareness

Teaching and Learning Strategies

RSHE will be taught using:

- Jigsaw PSHE programme
- Class discussions and debates
- Group work and role-playing
- Multimedia resources
- Guest speakers and external agencies where appropriate
- Interactive workshops

Teachers will establish ground rules to ensure discussions remain appropriate, respectful, and safe.

Guiding Principles

RSHE delivery is underpinned by:

1. Engagement with pupils to ensure relevance
2. Engagement and transparency with families, providing access to materials
3. Positivity, promoting healthy relationships and lifestyles
4. Careful sequencing of age-appropriate topics
5. Relevance and responsiveness to pupil needs
6. Skilled delivery and staff training
7. Whole school approach (Jigsaw) embedding RSHE in all aspects of school life

Inclusion and Equality

- RSHE is inclusive of all pupils, and reflects different family structures, faith backgrounds, cultures, genders and sexual orientations.
- Curriculum adaptations are made for pupils with SEND.
- LGBT+ inclusive content is mandatory and is delivered in an age-appropriate, factual and respectful manner.
- Teaching respects and considers religious and cultural backgrounds while meeting statutory requirements.

Parental Engagement and Right to Withdraw

- Parents/carers will be informed of RSHE curriculum content and may request to view teaching materials
- **Primary:** No right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.
Sex Education: Headteachers/Heads of School must automatically grant parental requests to withdraw from Sex Education which is not statutory until KS3.
- **Secondary:** Parents/carers may request withdrawal from non-statutory sex education beyond biological reproduction. Requests must be made in writing.
- The Headteacher/Head of School (or Senior Leader) will meet with parents/carers (and the pupil, where appropriate) before making a decision. Notes and decisions will be recorded.

Safeguarding and Pupil Welfare

- RSHE will be delivered safely and in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Staff are trained to manage sensitive discussions appropriately, respond to disclosures and follow safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Pupils are informed of confidentiality limits and staff reinforce confidentiality boundaries.
- Staff teach sensitive topics (e.g. abusive relationships, harmful online behaviours, misogyny, self-harm, illegal acts such as strangulation) in a factual and protective way.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Trustees/Trust Board:** Ensure statutory compliance, approve policy, allocate resources.
- **Headteacher/Head of School/Governors:** Implement and monitor RSHE, ensure staff training, evaluate effectiveness.
- **RSHE Coordinators:** Curriculum development, resource selection, parental liaison, monitoring.
- **Teaching Staff:** Deliver RSHE safely and effectively, maintain safe environment, respond appropriately to disclosures.
- **Parents/Carers:** Support learning, engage in consultation, communicate concerns.

Parents/carers may contact the following with RSHE queries:

- RSHE Lead: Mrs Kathryn Barr
- Headteacher/Head of School: Miss Carly Briston
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss Carly Briston

Printed copies of policies/materials available upon request.

Training and Professional Development

All teachers of RSHE receive regular training on covering statutory guidance, safeguarding, inclusive practice, LGBT+ and inclusion, SEND adaptations and online safety. New staff and supply teachers receive relevant induction training.

External Agencies and Support Contacts

- Local sexual health services: <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/6333/Sexual-health>,
<https://www.nhs.uk/services/clinic/sexual-health-teesside-lawson/NQT4C>

- Mental health support: Teesside MIND (01642 257020)

Cruse Bereavement (0808 8081677)

Samaritans (116 123)

Kooth (020 3398 9048)

CAMHS (0300 2000 000)

- National helplines: Samaritans (116 123)

MIND (0300 102 1234)

- RSHE Lead contact- Kathryn Barr (kbarr@thelinksprimary.org.uk)

- Safeguarding contacts – DSL: Carly Briston, DDSLs - Kathryn Barr, Rebecca Kay

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

- Monitoring through lesson observations, learning walks, pupil surveys, assessment of knowledge and attitudes.
- Feedback from pupils, parents, and staff informs curriculum improvement.
- Annual policy review or sooner if legislative updates occur.
- Annual reporting to Trust on RSHE provision and compliance.

Complaints

- Complaints follow the Trust's complaints procedure.
- Alleged breaches of policy are investigated by school leadership and reported to the Trust central team.

Appendix A: RSHE Curriculum Map Template

Key Stage/Year Group	Relationships Education/ Relationships & Sex Education Changing Me and Relationships Jigsaw Unit	Health Education Healthy Me Jigsaw	Notes / School Adaptations
Reception	Children are encouraged to think about how they have changed from being a baby and what may change for them in the future. They consolidate the names and functions of some of the main parts of the body and discuss how these have changed. They learn that our bodies change in lots of different ways as we get older. Children understand that change can bring about positive and negative feelings, and that sharing these can help. They also consider the role that memories can have in managing change.	Personal hygiene and self-care	Continue using age-appropriate and inclusive language Be sensitive to diversity (disability, family structure, gender)
Year 1	Children are introduced to life cycles, e.g. that of a frog and identify the different stages. They compare this with a human life cycle and look at simple changes from baby to adult, e.g. getting taller, learning to walk, etc. They discuss how they have changed so far and that people grow up at different rates. As part of a school's safeguarding duty, pupils are taught the correct words for private parts of the body (those kept private by underwear: vagina, anus, penis, testicles, vulva). They are also taught that nobody has the right to hurt these parts of the body. Change is discussed as a natural and normal part of getting older which can bring about happy and sad feelings. Children practise a range of skills to help manage their feelings and learn how to access help if they are worried about change, or if someone is hurting them. Families & caring relationships Respect & body privacy Respect for difference & inclusion Understanding that bodies grow and change Naming body parts with correct	Personal wellbeing (body awareness, hygiene basics)	Continue using age-appropriate and inclusive language Be sensitive to diversity (disability, family structure, gender) Ensure materials are transparent to parents upon request sex/gender) Remind parents resources are available for viewing Check terminology is legally accurate and inclusive (following 2025 guidance)

	vocabulary Awareness of difference (people/families)		
Year 2	<p>Children compare different life cycles in nature, including that of humans. They reflect on the changes that occur (not including puberty) between baby, toddler, child, teenager, adult and old age. Within this, children also discuss how independence, freedoms and responsibility can increase with age. As part of a school's safeguarding duty, pupils are re-taught the correct words for private parts of the body (those kept private by underwear: vagina, anus, penis, testicle, vulva). They are also reminded that nobody has the right to hurt these parts of the body, including a lesson on inappropriate touch and assertiveness. Children practise a range of strategies for managing feelings and emotions. They are also taught where they can get help if worried or frightened. Change is taught as a natural and normal part of growing up and the range of emotions that can occur with change are explored and discussed. Privacy & personal boundaries (safe/unsafe touch) Respect & difference Growing up from baby → child Basic differences between male/female</p>	Early emotional wellbeing – feelings, respect, boundaries	<p>Continue using age-appropriate and inclusive language Be sensitive to diversity (disability, family structure, gender) Ensure materials are transparent to parents upon request sex/gender) Remind parents resources are available for viewing Check terminology is legally accurate and inclusive (following 2025 guidance)</p>
Year 3	<p>This Puzzle begins learning about babies and what they need to grow and develop including parenting. Children are taught that it is usually the female that carries the baby in nature. Children first look at the outside body changes in males and females. Children discuss how they feel about such changes and growing up and there are opportunities for them to seek reassurance if anything is worrying them. Changing friendships & relationships over time Respect, inclusion, accepting differences Bodies change as we grow (simple concepts) Preparing for eventual change (age-appropriate talk)</p>	Emotional regulation & self-awareness (feelings about change)	<p>Use flexible, stage-appropriate sequencing rather than strict age-based content Provide pastoral support where needed (some may be anxious about changes)</p>

<p>Year 4</p>	<p>In this Puzzle, bodily changes at puberty are revisited with some additional vocabulary, particularly around menstruation. Sanitary health is taught, including introducing pupils to different sanitary and personal hygiene products. The Puzzle ends by looking at the feelings associated with change and how to manage these. Children are introduced to Jigsaw's Circle of change model as a strategy for managing future changes.</p> <p>Healthy friendships during change Respect & inclusion Introduction to puberty concepts (as appropriate) Hygiene, self-care, basic body changes</p>	<p>Hygiene & self-care education, body awareness</p>	<p>Provide clear, inclusive and legally correct information on sex/gender if discussing body differences Offer parent consultation or information session when helpful Ensure RSHE lessons include online safety and consent following 2025 guidance</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>In this Puzzle, the children revisit self-esteem, self-image and body image. They learn that we all have perceptions about ourselves and others, and these may be right or wrong. They also reflect on how social media and the media can promote unhelpful comparison and how to manage this. Puberty is revisited in further detail, explaining bodily changes in males and females. Children are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification about anything they don't understand. Reasons why people choose to be in a romantic relationship and choose to have a baby are also explored. Children look at what becoming a teenager means for them with an increase in freedom, rights and responsibilities. They also consider the perceptions that surround teenagers and reflect whether they are always accurate, e.g. teenagers are always moody; all teenagers have a boyfriend/girlfriend, etc.</p> <p>Respectful relationships during early adolescence Consent, body autonomy, online/respectful relationships (incl. digital)</p>	<p>Mental health & wellbeing: self-esteem, emotional regulation, awareness of online risks</p>	<p>Ensure RSHE lessons include online safety and consent following 2025 guidance Make resources available to parents on request Use inclusive, legally accurate language around sex/gender</p>

	<p>Puberty in more depth: physical, emotional and social changes</p> <p>Body image, self-esteem, media influence</p>		
Year 6	<p>The children learn about puberty in boys and girls and the changes that will happen; they reflect on how they feel about these changes.</p> <p>Sexual intercourse is explained in slightly more detail than in the previous year</p> <p>The children also learn about childbirth and the stages of development of a baby, starting at conception. They explore what it means to be being physically attracted to someone and the effect this can have upon the relationship. They learn about different relationships and the importance of mutual respect and not pressuring/being pressured into doing something that they don't want to. The children also learn about self-esteem, why it is important and ways to develop it. Finally, they look at the transition to secondary school (or next class) and what they are looking forward to/are worried about and how they can prepare themselves mentally.</p> <p>Intimate relationships (age-appropriate)</p> <p>Legal aspects of sex, gender reassignment & identity (explained age-appropriately)</p> <p>Consent, respect, healthy relationships, online safety</p> <p>Human reproduction (age-appropriate, fact-based)</p> <p>Body image, media influence, puberty completion</p> <p>Transition to secondary school: physical & emotional changes, social relationships</p>	<p>Expanded mental health & wellbeing: emotional regulation, grief & loss, preparation for adolescence/secondary school, coping strategies</p>	<p>Update school RSHE policy to reflect 2025 statutory guidance</p> <p>Ensure all content is sequenced by developmental stage rather than fixed by year</p> <p>Allow parents access to RSHE materials and publish policy for transparency</p> <p>Provide teacher training so staff confident with new content (consent, legal framework, online safety, mental health)</p>

Appendix B: Parental Withdrawal Procedure

1. Parent/carer submits written request to the Headteacher/Head of School.
2. A meeting is arranged with the parent/carer (and pupil where appropriate).
3. The Headteacher/Head of School/Senior Leader explains lesson content and discusses concerns.
4. Decision confirmed in writing and recorded.
5. Alternative supervised provision arranged.
6. Re-entry to lessons may be requested at any time.

Appendix C: RSHE Resource Vetting Checklist

Resources must:

- Align with DfE statutory guidance.
- Be age-appropriate.
- Be inclusive and respectful of protected characteristics.
- Be factually accurate.
- Be free from stereotypes.
- Be safeguarding appropriate.
- Be shareable with parents when requested.