

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

(Independent School Standards: Parts 1, 2 and 8)

Important note: The term ‘Spark’ or ‘Spark Academy Group’ applies to both our tutoring and independent school settings, also referred to as ‘provision’, ‘school’ or ‘organisation’ interchangeably.

Guidance & Legislation

- [Children & Social Work Act 2017](#)
 - [Relationships \(and sex\) education and health education](#)
 - [Education Act 1996](#)
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Last External Review	August 2025
Next External Review	August 2026
Last Update	September 2025
Author	Proprietor
Policy Sign Off	Headteacher

**We Build Communities
Where Everyone Belongs,
Grows & Thrives.**



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Section 1: How this Policy Was Developed

This policy has been developed in consultation, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review: a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation: all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent consultation: parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- Pupil consultation: we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE 5.
- Ratification: once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

Section 2: Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Section 3: Curriculum

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. We teach our pupils at “stage not age”.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don’t seek answers online. The curriculum programme is developed by **our Headteacher** in conjunction with the views of teachers, students, and/parents/carers.

At Spark Vale Academy we will meet the learning objectives and content outlined in the Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance. All content will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our students, including those with SEND.

Section 4: Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional. RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
 - Respectful relationships, including friendships
 - Online and media
 - Being safe
 - Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Section 5: Roles & Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The head of school is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 8).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
 - Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
 - Monitoring progress
 - Responding to the needs of individual pupils
 - Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non statutory/non-science] components of RSE
- Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the head of school.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Section 6: Parents' Rights to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head of school. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The head of school will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Section 7: Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Headteacher and the Proprietor through: Planning scrutinise, Learning walks Lesson Observations. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher at every review, the policy will be approved by the Proprietor.

Section 8: Working with Visitors or External Agencies

Our school may invite external agencies to deliver parts of the SRE scheme of work. In such cases, external visitors will be selected in order to enrich our RSE curriculum and will have the skills and expertise to work with our young people on key topics. When external visitors are in the school, staff will be present throughout these lessons so that they can build on the learning and answer any questions that they may have.

Any external visitors will be expected to comply with the school's policy, and other related policies, including the school's child protection policy. We will ensure that staff from external agencies understand the cohort of young people that are involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics.

They will also be made aware of any issues related to child protection. We will work with the agencies prior to them delivering lessons in the school and ensure that the lessons have been appropriately prepared and planned. We will also have follow up sessions to ensure that we embed learning and provide opportunities for our young people to ask further questions or explore topics/areas that are important to them.

Appendix A: RSE Curriculum Map

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC/THEMES
EYFS (SCARF SOW)	<p>Me and my relationships: All about me, My special people, My feelings, same and different, Different families and homes.</p> <p>Keeping myself safe: People who help keep me safe, keeping my body safe, listening to my feelings.</p> <p>Rights and responsibilities: looking after myself and friends</p> <p>Growing and changes: life stages, move your body, changing bodies</p>
KS1 Year 1 (SCARF SOW)	<p>Health and wellbeing: Our feelings, super sleep, keeping safe, growing and changing</p> <p>Relationships: healthy relationships, feelings and emotions, valuing differences, good friends</p> <p>Living in the wider world: Basic first aid, looking after our money</p>
KS1 Year 2 (SCARF SOW)	<p>Health and wellbeing: what does my body do?, respecting privacy</p> <p>Relationships: bullying or teasing, feeling safe, being happy, acts of kindness,</p> <p>Living in the wider world: Basic first aid, looking after our environment</p>
KS2 Year 3 (SCARF SOW)	<p>Health and wellbeing: risk robot, alcohol and cigarettes, special pets,</p> <p>Relationships: body space, respect, celebrating our differences</p> <p>Living in the wider world: my community, volunteers, earning money</p>
KS2 Year 4 (SCARF SOW)	<p>Health and wellbeing: dangers, risks and hazards, medicines</p> <p>Relationships: body changes and periods, different feelings, moving house</p> <p>Living in the Wider World: stereotypes, volunteering, expenses and taxes</p>

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC/THEMES
KS2 Year 5 (SCARF SOW)	<p>Health and wellbeing: smoking, getting fit, our emotional needs, assertiveness, drugs, puberty and changing bodies</p> <p>Relationships: qualities of friendship, kind conversations,</p> <p>Living in the Wider World: rights, responsibilities and duties, spending money wisely</p>
KS2 Year 6 (SCARF SOW)	<p>Health and wellbeing: self-image, drugs and alcohol, challenging gender stereotypes, media manipulation,</p> <p>Relationships: Let's negotiate, acting appropriately, don't force me</p> <p>Living in the Wider World: facebook friends, tolerance and respect, democracy, jobs and taxes</p>
KS3 Year 7	<p>RSE Content –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puberty and change. • Personal hygiene. • Menstruation and wet dreams. • Mental health and physical changes. • Consent • Types of relationships – families including marriage (both arranged and forced), friendships, online friendships. • Pornography. <p>Science: Human reproductive system, fertilisation, adolescence and puberty, development of the foetus.</p>
KS3 Year 8	<p>RSE Content –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual violence and misogyny. • Pornography and self-image • Consent • Recognising and reporting abuse including FGM and CSE. • Healthy and unhealthy relationships include grooming. • Influence of intoxicating substances on relationships.

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC/THEMES
KS3 Year 9	<p>RSE Content –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent including boundaries and recognising abuse in relationships • How does sex lead to pregnancy. • Sexual Transmitted Infections including HIV and Aids and how to prevent them including methods of contraception. • Drugs impacting on decision making. • Sexual pressure and reporting sexual assault. • Online, social media and body image, social pressure, positive body image and social media and emotional wellbeing • Healthy relationships
KS4 Year 10	<p>RSE Content –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQ+ Relationships linked to the equality act. • Drugs and alcohol impacting on decision making. • Female Genital Mutilation • Child sexual exploitation • Online safety linked to relationships and sex including pornography. • Forced marriage

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC/THEMES
KS4 Year 11	<p>What is consent in a relationship?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent including marriage, abusive relationships • Fertility treatments including for LGBTQ+ Relationships. • Conception and contraception • Miscarriage • Abortion and adoption • Postpartum is linked to mental and physical effects of pregnancy and birth. • Transphobia • Pornography • Domestic violence, abuse, forced marriage and FGM. • Decision making and informed choices, the dangers of sexting, consequences of accessing pornography. • Child sexual exploitation
Sixth Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranged and forced marriage. • Effective communication in relationships including the effect of intoxicating substances • Control in relationships • FGM Awareness • LGBTQ+ Relationships • CSE • Reproductive Health • Consent • Sexually Transmitted infections - including stealthing and contraception.

Appendix B: By the End of KS2 Pupils Should Know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<p>That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability</p> <p>The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives</p> <p>That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care</p> <p>That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up</p> <p>That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong</p> <p>How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed</p>
Caring friendships	<p>How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends</p> <p>The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties</p> <p>That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded</p> <p>That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right</p> <p>How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<p>The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs</p> <p>Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</p> <p>The conventions of courtesy and manners</p> <p>The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness</p> <p>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 those in positions of authority</p> <p>About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help</p> <p>What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive</p> <p>The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults</p>
Online relationships	<p>That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not</p> <p>That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous</p> <p>The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them</p> <p>How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met</p> <p>How information and data is shared and used online</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	<p>What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)</p> <p>About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe</p> <p>That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact</p> <p>How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know</p> <p>How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult</p> <p>How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard</p> <p>How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so</p> <p>Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources</p>

Appendix C: By the End of KS4 Pupils Should Know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<p>That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</p> <p>How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</p> <p>What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. 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</p> <p>Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</p> <p>The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</p> <p>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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: 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</p> <p>Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</p> <p>How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)</p> <p>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</p> <p>About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</p> <p>That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</p> <p>What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</p> <p>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</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<p>Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</p> <p>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</p> <p>Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</p> <p>What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</p> <p>The impact of viewing harmful content</p> <p>That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. 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</p> <p>That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</p> <p>How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</p>
Being safe	<p>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</p> <p>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)</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<p>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</p> <p>That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing</p> <p>The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</p> <p>That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</p> <p>That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</p> <p>The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</p> <p>The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</p> <p>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)</p> <p>How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing</p> <p>About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</p> <p>How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</p> <p>How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</p>

Appendix D: KS3/4 Parent Form: Withdrawal from Sex Education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class/Form	
Name of parent		Date	
Specific content/areas of the units of study for which request is being made			
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	

Appendix E: Compulsory Aspects Set out by the DfE

	KS3	KS4
Relationship Education	Must be taught – no right to withdraw	Must be taught – no right to withdraw
PSHE – Health Education	Must be taught – no right to withdraw	Must be taught – no right to withdraw
Science – Reproduction Education	Must be taught – no right to withdraw	Must be taught – no right to withdraw
Sex Education (beyond compulsory Health and Science aspects of the curriculum)	Must be taught – no right to withdraw	Must be taught – parents can withdraw until three terms before a child's 16 th birthday