



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Review date: December 2026

SPARKEN HILL ACADEMY | Sparken Hill, Worksop, Notts S80 1AW

Aims

Through our PSHE programme, we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. In providing children with an understanding of healthy and respectful relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider effective RSHE to be a fundamental part of our approach to supporting pupils to grow into confident, caring, responsible and respectful young citizens.

At Sparken Hill Academy, RSHE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. In addition, some aspects of the RSHE programme will be covered through:

- Science curriculum
- Computing
- Circle times
- Assemblies
- Stories
- PE in the context of health and hygiene

RSHE is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral and emotional development. It should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

The aims of Relationships, Sex and Health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Provide a consistent standard of relationships, sex and health education across the school
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Promote responsible behaviour
- Create a positive culture of communication around issues of relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Give pupils an understanding of reproduction and sexual development
- Ensure that all pupils, by the time they reach secondary school age, are well equipped and on an equal footing to deal with the secondary RSHE curriculum
- Provide all pupils with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to make positive and healthy choices concerning relationships as they grow up and deal with risk
- Combat exploitation and promote safeguarding

These aims complement those of the Science curriculum in KS1 and KS2.

Statutory Requirements

As a standalone Academy, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

This policy has been written in accordance with the statutory guidance document 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (DfE, 2019, updated 2024).

Department for Education guidance states that all primary schools must teach Relationships and Health Education. The teaching of Sex Education in primary schools remains non-statutory, with the exception of the elements of sex education contained in the science national curriculum: including knowledge of the main external body parts, the changes as humans develop to old age and reproduction in some plants and animals. Other related topics that fall within the statutory requirements for Health Education, such as puberty and menstrual wellbeing, will be included within PSHE education lessons.

Within the statutory guidance document for RSHE and Health Education, the DfE also encourages schools to deliver age-appropriate sex education if they feel their pupils need this information:

"It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement..."

"It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science – how a baby is conceived and born."

For the full guidance from the Department for Education, please visit:

[Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance](#)

Definition

Within this policy, as in the DfE guidance, Relationships Education is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to respectful friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults, including online.

For the purpose of this policy, Health Education is defined as teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing, focusing on recognising the link between the two and being able to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Sex Education is defined as teaching children how human reproduction occurs, including how a baby is conceived and born. This draws on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science. For the purposes of this policy, we specifically identify any non-statutory Sex Education that falls outside of Science and those related elements (the physical changes associated with puberty) within statutory Health Education.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Statutory RSHE Curriculum Content

Our RSHE curriculum is embedded within our PSHE curriculum and is set out as per Appendix 1, however, this will be adapted when necessary to meet the evolving needs of our pupils.

We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an age appropriate manner so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

Key objectives of the statutory Relationships Education curriculum are outlined below:

Families and People Who Care for Me

Children should know:

- That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- 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
- 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
- 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
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

Caring Friendships

Children should know:

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
- 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

- 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

Respectful Relationships

Children should know:

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- The conventions of courtesy and manners
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- 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
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying to an adult and how to get help

Online Relationships

Children should know:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- 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
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- How information and data is shared and used online

Being Safe

Children should know:

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- 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
- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult

Health Education

Key objectives of the statutory Health Education curriculum include teaching pupils about:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid

Non-Statutory Sex Education

At Sparken Hill Academy, we recognise the importance of preparing our pupils for the transition to secondary school. We teach age-appropriate, non-statutory sex education to ensure pupils understand:

- How a baby is conceived and born (building on the statutory science curriculum)
- The physical and emotional changes associated with puberty (in addition to those covered in Health Education)

This content is taught sensitively and age-appropriately, primarily in Years 5 and 6, to ensure pupils are well-prepared for secondary education.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board

The Trust Board will approve the RSHE policy, and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal.

All RSHE teaching takes place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our school ethos and values. Staff will respond appropriately to all questions, taking into account the age and developmental stage of pupils, cultural and faith factors, and parents' wishes before questions are answered.

Pupils

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

Parents and Carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSHE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

- Will carry out our statutory duty to consult with parents and governors on the contents of this policy
- Inform parents about the school's RSHE policy and practice; this includes informing parents by letter or email before beginning to teach a unit of RSHE
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSHE of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSHE in the school
- Acknowledge parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE. However, this rarely happens as, by working in partnership with parents, they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education
- Keep a register of any pupils who are removed from lessons and distribute this to all teachers involved

Parents' Right to Withdraw

As previously stated, the RSHE curriculum consists of both statutory and non-statutory elements:

- Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSHE
- Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from statutory relationships education, health education or the science curriculum

Parents wanting to withdraw their children are invited to speak to the class teacher. The class teacher will explore the concern of the parents and the possibility of adjusting the programme or approach and will discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. They will talk with the parents about the possible negative experiences or feelings that may result from withdrawal of the child and the ways in which these may be minimised. If the parent still wishes to withdraw the child, requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Principal (See Appendix 2 for request form). Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in sex education until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and that child will go to another class for the duration of the lesson.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct RSHE lessons in a sensitive manner. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the

teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse or exploitation. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Principal as a matter of urgency. Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police (either by the teacher to whom it is disclosed or by the DSL).

Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. We aim to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained and try to encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers to provide support. If confidentiality has to be broken, pupils are informed first and then supported by the designated teacher throughout the whole process.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities will be given the opportunity to fully participate in RSHE lessons, and a differentiated programme will be provided where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding. We recognise that some pupils may need additional support or adapted content to access the curriculum effectively.

Equalities and Diversity

Schools, like all public institutions, have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. Planning and resources are reviewed to ensure they comply with equalities legislation and the school's equal opportunities policy. All RSHE is taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities such as those contained within the Equality Act (2010). Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSHE will not influence the teaching of the subject in school. In our school we seek to recognise and embrace the diverse nature of our community. We aim to value and celebrate religious, ethnic and cultural diversity as part of modern Britain. We will explore different cultural beliefs and values and encourage activities that challenge stereotypes and discrimination and present children with accurate information based on the law. We will use a range of teaching materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our community and encourage a sense of inclusiveness. We do not use RSHE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints or concerns about the Relationships and Sex Education programme should be made to the class teacher in the first instance. Parents can choose to follow the Sparken Hill Academy complaints procedure if they feel things are not resolved.

Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, Science Coordinator and PSHE Coordinator through, for example, planning scrutinies, learning walks and lesson observations.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if legislation or DfE guidance changes.

The School Environment

The school will ensure that the whole school environment reflects the values of respect for themselves and others. It will:

- Ensure that posters, digital displays and wall displays use positive images and celebrate difference and diversity
- Use anonymous question boxes (including Worry Boxes) or similar items enabling children to have questions and concerns answered privately where needed
- Ensure that communication between staff and pupils is welcomed and encouraged, and children know how to access members of staff
- Provide provisions for pubertal girls, including sanitary wear and free sanitary products
- Ensure that discriminatory behaviour is always challenged in any context

Equal Opportunities

Sparken Hill Academy is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. In RSHE this will include:

- Examining and challenging gender stereotyping
- Celebrating difference and diversity
- Ensuring a programme of Relationships Education that is relevant to all pupils

Related Policies

In conjunction with this policy, please also see:

- Relationships and Behaviour Regulation Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equalities Policy

Please see below useful resources and guidance:

[DfE: Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education FAQs](#)

[PSHE Association Resources](#)