



Relationship and sex education policy



Approved by:	LGB	Date: 08 October 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

1. Aims

At Spring Lane Primary School, Relationships and Sex Education forms part of our wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. It supports our commitment to ensuring that every child is safe, included, respected and prepared for life.

Our aims are to:

- provide a safe framework in which sensitive and important discussions can take place;
- help pupils build healthy, respectful relationships and understand kindness, honesty, privacy, personal space, permission-seeking and appropriate boundaries;
- prepare pupils for puberty and adolescence, including the physical and emotional changes they may experience;
- teach pupils accurate, age-appropriate vocabulary for their bodies, including the correct names of body parts;
- help pupils develop self-respect, confidence, empathy, resilience and the skills to seek help;
- equip pupils to recognise unsafe, abusive or exploitative behaviour, online and offline, and know how to report concerns;
- promote respect for difference and for the range of families and backgrounds represented within our community; and
- support pupils to make informed, safe and healthy choices.

These aims complement Spring Lane's curriculum intent: children learn to communicate effectively, become expert learners, be caring citizens, lead healthy lives and have aspirations. Our PSHE curriculum also reflects our school values of Respect, Resilience and Integrity.

2. Statutory requirements and legal framework

Spring Lane Primary School is an academy. Relationships Education is compulsory for all primary-aged pupils and Health Education is compulsory in state-funded schools under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019. From 1 September 2026, the school has regard to the Department for Education's revised statutory guidance, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025).

Primary schools are not required to provide sex education beyond the content of the science curriculum. Spring Lane chooses to provide a carefully sequenced, age-appropriate programme of additional sex education in Year 6 so that pupils are prepared for adolescence and transition to secondary school. This policy clearly distinguishes this non-statutory content from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and science.

In developing and delivering this policy, the school has regard to relevant legislation and statutory duties, including:

- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Education Act 1996, including section 403 and relevant provisions concerning sex education and withdrawal;
- Education Act 2002 and Academies Act 2010;
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019;

- Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; and
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

The school also has regard to current statutory safeguarding guidance and relevant guidance on behaviour, online safety, mental health, political impartiality, bullying and fundamental British values.

3. Policy development and consultation

Schools must maintain an up-to-date written RSE policy and proactively engage and consult parents when developing and reviewing it. Spring Lane's policy is informed by the views and needs of pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors.

The review process includes:

- reviewing current legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding guidance and the school's curriculum;
- staff consultation and professional discussion;
- meaningful pupil voice appropriate to pupils' age and understanding;
- consultation with parents/carers, including opportunities to understand the planned curriculum and resources; and
- approval by the Local Governing Body.

The policy is published on the school website and a copy is available free of charge on request. Where the school needs to respond to an emerging issue by making a material change to planned RSE content, parents/carers will be informed appropriately.

4. What we mean by RSE

Relationships Education teaches the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including families and people who care for us, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Health Education includes physical health and mental wellbeing. In primary school this includes puberty, menstrual wellbeing and, from September 2026, the correct names of body parts. These are statutory elements and are not subject to parental withdrawal.

Sex Education at Spring Lane means the additional primary content that goes beyond statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and science. At Spring Lane, this is taught in Year 6 through the planned 'Making babies' learning within the SCARF Growing and Changing unit, where content goes beyond statutory science and health requirements.

RSE is not about promoting sexual activity. Teaching is factual, evidence-based, age-appropriate and sensitive to pupils' developmental stage.

5. Curriculum

Spring Lane uses Coram Life Education's SCARF programme as the core scheme for PSHE, including Relationships and Health Education and our planned primary Sex Education. SCARF is taught as a spiral curriculum so that knowledge, vocabulary and skills are revisited and developed progressively.

PSHE is taught through a weekly 45-minute lesson from Reception to Year 6. The six half-termly SCARF units are:

- Me and my Relationships
- Valuing Difference
- Keeping Safe
- Rights and Respect
- Being my Best
- Growing and Changing

Teaching is supported by discussion, role play, stories, videos, scenarios, collaborative learning and age-appropriate resources. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of Spring Lane pupils and may be adapted to reflect local issues, safeguarding themes, health and wellbeing information and pupil voice.

5.1 Spring Lane's Growing and Changing curriculum

Spring Lane has reviewed and adapted the SCARF Growing and Changing sequence. The school's progression document identifies the precise vocabulary and content to be used. Key points include:

- In EYFS and Key Stage 1, learning develops understanding of life stages, growing, body autonomy, privacy, safe and unsafe touch, appropriate anatomical vocabulary and how to seek help.
- In Year 3, pupils revisit privacy, body space, safe and unsafe secrets, online privacy and basic first aid.
- In Year 4, pupils learn about puberty and body changes. Spring Lane uses the identified Year 3 'My changing body' lesson at this point, but only the content and vocabulary specified in the school progression document; sperm, erections and labelling internal male/female diagrams are excluded from this Year 4 lesson.
- In Year 5, pupils learn in greater depth about puberty, menstruation, body changes, hygiene, emotions, body autonomy and managing change. This is statutory Health Education.
- In Year 6, pupils learn about body image, media manipulation, online pressure, change, puberty and keeping safe. The 'Making babies' lesson includes additional primary Sex Education. Parents/carers will be informed in advance about this lesson and the elements from which they may request withdrawal.

5.2 Links with other curriculum areas

RSE and PSHE connect with science, computing and online safety, physical education, religious education, safeguarding, behaviour and the wider personal development curriculum. Spring Lane also reinforces equality, diversity and inclusion through No Outsiders lessons and assemblies, alongside wider cultural and community learning.

6. Teaching approach, safe learning and questions

Teaching will be positive, inclusive and carefully sequenced. From the start of primary school, pupils develop understanding of kindness, consideration, honesty, truthfulness, personal space, privacy, permission-seeking and appropriate boundaries. These provide foundations for later learning about consent.

Teachers establish a safe learning environment and use appropriate distancing techniques so that pupils are not expected to share personal experiences. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Staff will answer questions honestly, factually and in a way that is appropriate to the pupil's age and developmental stage.

If a question goes beyond the planned primary curriculum, staff will use professional judgement about whether it should be answered briefly, deferred, answered individually, or referred to parents/carers. Staff

will not introduce explicit sexual detail simply because a pupil asks a question. Where a question or disclosure raises a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures will be followed immediately.

The same standards of respect, safety and behaviour apply online and offline. Pupils are taught progressively about privacy, sharing information and images, harmful content or contact, peer pressure, media manipulation, deepfakes and how to seek help, in an age-appropriate way.

7. Safeguarding

RSE is an important part of safeguarding. Teaching helps pupils recognise appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, safe and unsafe touch, privacy, boundaries, coercion, abuse and exploitation, and how to seek help from a trusted adult.

Pupils will be taught that abuse is never the fault of the child who experiences it and that victim-blaming is unacceptable. Staff understand that sensitive teaching may lead to disclosures. Any concern or disclosure will be managed in accordance with Spring Lane's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil where information indicates that they or another child may be at risk. Staff will explain this sensitively and share information only with those who need to know in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

8. Equality, diversity and inclusion

Spring Lane will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. RSE will be taught in a way that does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

Teaching recognises that families take many forms and may include, for example, single-parent families, same-sex parents, grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers, kinship carers and blended families. No family structure will be presented as the only acceptable model.

Teaching will acknowledge the cultural and religious diversity of the Spring Lane community while ensuring that all pupils receive their statutory entitlement and learn to treat others with dignity and respect. Prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory language, including sexism, misogyny, homophobia and racism, will be challenged.

When protected characteristics are discussed, content will be factual and age-appropriate. The school will distinguish biological sex from the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and will not present contested views about gender identity as fact. Teaching and resources will avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes. Pupils will be taught that everyone is entitled to respect and protection from bullying and discrimination.

9. Accessibility and SEND

Spring Lane is committed to making RSE accessible to all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Teaching will be adapted according to pupils' age, developmental stage, communication needs, cognition, sensory needs and prior experiences without removing their entitlement to important safeguarding knowledge.

Adaptations may include:

- pre-teaching or revisiting vocabulary and concepts;
- visual supports, concrete examples, social stories or alternative communication;
- smaller-group or individual teaching where appropriate;

- additional processing time and repetition;
- careful consideration of sensory and emotional needs; and
- liaison with the SENCO, parents/carers and relevant professionals where this supports access.

All pupils should, as far as possible, develop essential knowledge about body autonomy, body parts, privacy, safe relationships, boundaries and how to seek help.

10. Resources and external organisations

The school remains responsible for all RSE content, including content delivered or supplied by an external organisation. Resources will be checked to ensure that they are accurate, evidence-based, age and stage appropriate, accessible, unbiased, compatible with the school's values and statutory duties, and sensitive to pupils' experiences.

Before using an external organisation or speaker, the school will check credentials, intended content and materials in advance, ensure safeguarding arrangements are clear, consider political impartiality, and ensure a member of school staff remains present. The school will not use an organisation that refuses to allow teaching materials to be made available to parents/carers.

Parents/carers may request to view all curriculum materials used for RSHE. Where materials are protected by copyright, the school will facilitate viewing in a way that respects copyright; copyright will not be used as a reason to refuse access.

11. Roles and responsibilities

11.1 Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body approves this policy and holds school leaders to account for its implementation. Governors will assure themselves that the curriculum is compliant, accessible to pupils with SEND, aligned with statutory guidance and communicated transparently to parents/carers.

11.2 Executive Headteacher / Head of School

School leaders are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently, safely and effectively; that staff are appropriately trained; that resources and external providers are checked; that parents/carers can access curriculum information and materials; and that requests for withdrawal from non-statutory Sex Education are managed correctly.

11.3 PSHE/RSE Lead

The PSHE/RSE Lead oversees curriculum sequencing, subject knowledge, resources, staff support, assessment and monitoring, and ensures that Spring Lane's SCARF curriculum remains aligned with statutory guidance and the needs of pupils.

11.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for high-quality, sensitive and age-appropriate delivery; modelling respectful language and behaviour; adapting teaching to individual need; monitoring learning; and reporting safeguarding concerns. Staff do not have a right to opt out of teaching RSE. Any concerns about teaching particular content should be discussed with school leaders so that appropriate support or training can be provided.

11.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage respectfully and sensitively with RSE learning and with the views, experiences and backgrounds of others.

12. Parents/carers: engagement, materials and right to withdraw

Spring Lane recognises parents/carers as important partners in RSE. The school will proactively communicate what is taught, particularly before Year 6 additional Sex Education, and will provide opportunities for parents/carers to understand the curriculum and raise questions.

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or science, including statutory learning about puberty, menstrual wellbeing, correct anatomical terminology and science content relating to reproduction.

Parents/carers do have the right to request withdrawal from some or all of the additional, non-statutory primary Sex Education taught by Spring Lane. In practice, this applies to the Year 6 'Making babies' content where it goes beyond statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and science.

Requests should be made in writing to the Head of School/Executive Headteacher. Before the withdrawal takes place, the school will offer the parent/carer an opportunity to discuss the request, clarify precisely which content is statutory and non-statutory, explain the purpose and benefits of the learning, and consider any concerns. In a primary school, a request to withdraw from additional Sex Education must be granted. The school will keep an appropriate record of the request and discussion.

A pupil who is withdrawn will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the relevant lesson. The school will support parents/carers who wish to provide Sex Education at home.

13. Staff training

RSE forms part of staff induction and ongoing professional development. Training will reflect curriculum content, safeguarding, responding to disclosures, managing sensitive questions, SEND adaptations, equality and the safe use of resources. Staff can seek support from the PSHE/RSE Lead and senior leaders.

14. Monitoring, assessment and evaluation

Spring Lane uses a multi-faceted approach to assessment in PSHE. Assessment for learning takes place through questioning and live feedback; pupil voice and reflection are captured in floor books; and assessment of learning is completed using the assessment criteria for each PSHE unit.

The PSHE/RSE Lead and senior leaders monitor provision through appropriate activities such as curriculum and planning scrutiny, learning walks, pupil voice, floor books, assessment information, staff feedback and review of curriculum coverage. Monitoring will consider whether teaching remains appropriate for pupils' age, developmental stage, SEND and the changing risks pupils encounter, including online.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements or the needs of the school community materially change. Parents/carers will be consulted when the RSE policy is developed or reviewed, and the policy will be approved by the Local Governing Body.

15. Related policies and guidance

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality / Equality Information and Objectives
- Online Safety arrangements

- SEND Policy / SEND Information Report
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025; for introduction 1 September 2026)

Appendix 1 – Spring Lane SCARF PSHRE long-term overview

Year	1 Me & my Relationships	2 Valuing Difference	3 Keeping Safe	4 Rights & Respect	5 Being my Best	6 Growing & Changing
EYFS	Me and my Relationships: What makes me special; people close to me; getting help	Valuing Difference: Similarities and difference; celebrating difference; showing kindness	Keeping Safe: Keeping my body safe; safe secrets and touches; people who help to keep us safe	Rights and Respect: Looking after friends, the environment and money	Being my Best: Healthy body – food, exercise and sleep; growth mindset	Growing and Changing: Cycles; life stages; girls and boys – similarities and difference
Year 1	Feelings; getting help; classroom rules; special people; being a good friend	Recognising and celebrating difference; respect; accepting others; bullying and getting help	Feelings and safety including online safety; safe/unsafe touches; medicine safety; sleep	Taking care of myself, money and the environment	Growth mindset; healthy eating; hygiene and health; cooperation	Getting help; becoming independent; body parts; taking care of self and others
Year 2	Bullying and teasing; school rules; friendship; feelings/self-regulation	Kindness; celebrating difference; people who help us; listening	Safe/unsafe secrets; appropriate touch; medicine safety	Cooperation; self-regulation; online safety; saving and spending	Growth mindset; body care; hygiene; exercise and sleep	Life cycles; loss; support; growing and changing; privacy
Year 3	Rules; cooperation; friendship; respectful relationships; coping with loss	Respecting diversity; tolerance; community	Managing risk; decisions; drugs and risks; online safety	Skills for growing up; helping; environment; money	Health and wellbeing; skills; empathy	Relationships; changing bodies and puberty; keeping safe; safe/unsafe secrets
Year 4	Healthy relationships; listening to feelings; bullying; assertiveness	Difference including religion/culture; challenging stereotypes	Risk; norms of cigarette/alcohol use; influences; online safety	Making a difference; media influence; spending decisions	Health choices; environment; skills and interests	Puberty body changes; difficult feelings; relationships including marriage
Year 5	Feelings; friendship and compromise; assertiveness; cooperation; emotional needs	Difference including religion/culture; social-media influence and pressure	Risk including online safety; legal drugs; decision-making	Rights/respect/duties relating to health; making a difference; lending/borrowing/spending	Independence; healthy choices; media awareness and safety; community	Difficult feelings; managing change; feelings and safety; getting help
Year 6	Assertiveness; cooperation; safe/unsafe touches; positive relationships	Difference; prejudice-based bullying; bystander behaviour; gender stereotyping	Emotional needs; online safety; drugs – norms, risks and law	Media bias/social media; communities/environment; earning/saving; democracy	Aspirations; goal setting; risk; mental health	Coping with change; keeping safe; body image; sex education; self-esteem

Appendix 2 – Classification of key Growing and Changing content

Year group	Key content	Status	Withdrawal?
EYFS–Y3	Growing, life stages, body autonomy, privacy, safe/unsafe touch, correct body vocabulary, seeking help	Relationships / Health / safeguarding learning	No
Year 4	Puberty and body changes using Spring Lane's adapted vocabulary/content; relationships including marriage	Health / Relationships Education	No
Year 5	Puberty, menstruation, body changes, hygiene, emotions and body autonomy	Statutory Health Education	No
Year 6	Puberty, body image, online pressure, safety and managing change	Statutory Relationships / Health Education	No
Year 6	'Making babies' content where it goes beyond statutory science and Health Education	Additional primary Sex Education	Yes – parents/carers may request withdrawal from this additional content

Appendix 3 – Parent/carer request for withdrawal from additional primary Sex Education

Pupil name: _____

Class: _____

Parent/carer name: _____

Date: _____

I request that my child is withdrawn from the following additional, non-statutory Sex Education content:

Reason / information I would like the school to consider (optional):

Parent/carer signature: _____

Date: _____

School record

Discussion held with parent/carer: Yes / No

Content from which withdrawal applies:

Alternative purposeful education arranged:

School leader signature: _____ Date: _____