



Who are we?

Coram SCARF is the leading UK charity provider of relationships, health, wellbeing, and drugs education.

Trained Educators use evidence-based, interactive, engaging methods and resources to provide memorable learning experiences for 1 in 10 children in England and Scotland.

What children experience

Children's experience of Coram SCARF workshops is fun, engaging and memorable. Children meet Harold, our giraffe puppet mascot ('Healthy Harold'). They have discussions and watch short films about healthy eating, legal and illegal drugs and their effects, the body and how it works, and friendships and their influence. They begin to understand the impact of their choices and behaviours on every aspect of their health and wellbeing, both online and in real life – and learn the skills and information needed to make positive, informed health choices.

SCARF

Alongside our Life Space or in-classroom visits, our online resource SCARF provides a curriculum and a whole-school framework for building the essential life skills to support physical and emotional wellbeing - crucial for children to achieve their best, academically and socially.

Meeting all DfE requirements for statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), SCARF is a complete curriculum consisting of over 350 lesson plans and related assessment tools that give teachers the skills and tools to teach a comprehensive RSHE, PSHE and Wellbeing programme throughout the primary years.

What will my child learn in SCARF lessons?

For each year group, there are six suggested themed units which provide a complete PSHE and wellbeing curriculum. They are:

Me and My Relationships

Explores feelings and emotions, develops skills to manage conflict, helps identify our special people and equips children to recognise the qualities of healthy friendships and how to manage them.

Valuing Difference

Includes a strong focus on British Values and supports children to develop respectful relationships with others. Children also learn how to recognise bullying, both online and in real life, respecting the rights of others, and the role of an upstander.

Keeping Myself Safe

Covers a number of safety aspects from statutory Relationships Education including being able to identify trusted adults in their lives, what to do when faced with a dilemma, positive ways to interact online, and recognising appropriate and inappropriate touch.

Rights and Respect

Explores broader topics including looking after the environment, economic education and the changing rights that children have as they grow older, alongside the need to respect the rights of others and to respect their environment.

Being My Best

Includes a focus on keeping physically healthy, developing a growth mindset to facilitate resiliency, setting goals and finding ways to achieve them.

Growing and Changing

Has age-appropriate plans to cover the physical and emotional changes that happen to children as they grow older, including changes at puberty and how to approach this with confidence. Age-appropriate lessons on Relationships and Sex Education are also included.

Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships Education in primary schools should teach the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, both online and in real life, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults. Coram SCARF believes that children should learn about relationships as well as the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, human sexuality and sexual health in an age-appropriate way. This goes beyond learning about relationships, to include puberty, how a baby is conceived and born, body ownership and safeguarding. Although we refer to our resources as our Relationship Education programme, they also include elements of Health Education as well as non-statutory Sex Education. Therefore, we often refer to this as RSE: Relationships and Sex Education.

Our Relationships and Sex Education resources help children and young people to be safe, healthy and happy, both as they grow, and in their future lives. These lessons help to meet safeguarding and emotional wellbeing requirements, as well as ensuring that schools cover the requirements of the Department of Education's RSHE guidance.

A comprehensive set of age-appropriate lesson plans within SCARF online

SCARF RSE-specific lessons are designed to cover key skills, attitudes and values children need to explore in order to develop healthy relationships with their peers. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe and to ask for help when they need it.

4-5 year olds: being the same and different; our special people; different families, different homes; our feelings; being unique and special; being kind, caring and friendly; keeping safe, keeping healthy; resilience; life stages and growing from young to old.

5-6 year olds: explores themes around families and their special people; the importance of respecting others including those that are different from us; recognising that genitals are private and their correct names; develops understanding of the difference between surprises and secrets (good or bad secrets) and when not to keep bad adult secrets; helps develop judgement of what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable and how to respond to this (including who to tell and how to tell them).

6-7 year olds: looks at the process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change; explores the opportunities that increasing independence can bring. Along with this comes the growing need to respect themselves and others and that this respect extends to keeping themselves and others safe.

7-8 year olds: introduces themes about change, including menstruation and bereavement; healthy and unhealthy relationships (friendships) both online and real life; how images online do not always reflect reality and the impact of this on people's thoughts and feelings; the nature and consequences of discrimination; the importance of protecting personal information, including not sharing images online without permission; understanding risk and building

resilience; making informed choices; resisting pressure and recognising when and how to ask for help.

8-9 year olds: builds on the themes covered in previous years, looking more closely at body changes as they approach and move through puberty including: menstruation and human reproduction; conflicting emotions; what positively and negatively affects their physical, mental and emotional health; understanding good and not-so-good feelings; recognising and challenging stereotypes; consequences of their actions; pressures to behave in an unacceptable, unhealthy or risky way and that marriage and civil partnerships is a commitment freely entered into by both people.

9-10 year olds: builds on the themes covered previously and in greater depth, looking more closely at: critical thinking skills and digital literacy, how to keep their personal information private online (and why this is important), recognise disrespectful behaviour online and how to report it, body changes and feelings during puberty; how their changing feelings can affect those they live with; what makes relationships unhealthy; exploring risky behaviour in more detail; different types of bullying including homophobic and transphobic; and, where a need has been identified; sexual intercourse.

10-11 year olds: builds on and reinforces all the themes of the previous years, with new content built into the lesson plans looking at: body image and the media; taking a critical approach to what they see and hear online, forced marriage; female genital mutilation (FGM); sexual intercourse; HIV; managing pressure online, and, where a need has been identified; online sexual content.

Common questions asked about RSE

Is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory?

It's compulsory for primary schools to teach Relationships Education and Health Education.

Whilst Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools, the DfE recommends that primary schools teach Sex Education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their RSE policy. Schools should ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve.

Schools should also ensure that, when they consult with parents, they show parents a representative sample of the resources that they plan to use and, if requested, ensure that parents are able to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE i.e., those materials shown to pupils during the teaching of a topic. This can provide reassurance for parents and helps to continue the conversations started in class at home. Parents are not able to veto curriculum content.

Where a primary school chooses to teach aspects of Sex Education (which go beyond the statutory national curriculum for science requirements), the school must set this out in their policy and all schools should consult with parents on what is to be covered. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Does SCARF cover non-statutory Sex Education?

There is very little in the SCARF programme that is non-statutory. We interpret Sex Education to mean explaining the details of sexual activity which would align with teaching about conception and birth, in the primary phase. The guidance states that Relationships Education does not involve explaining the details of different forms of sexual activity, therefore content that does would be non-statutory and parents are allowed to exercise their right to withdraw their child from this content.

Sex Education in the primary phase ensures children know how a baby is conceived; referring to what happens during sexual intercourse before an egg and sperm meet (reproduction). We include sexual intercourse and IVF, as well as condoms, in our Year 6 *Making Babies* lesson. For further information see our website [FAQs](#) page.

We've also been asked whether teaching about HIV at primary level is statutory. HIV, along with a reference to condoms, is included in the SCARF lesson *What is HIV?* as it helps schools to meet their statutory requirements under Health Education (in the Health and Prevention category) for all children by the end of year 6 to know:

- *About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing.*

SCARF is a well-sequenced curriculum and so previous lessons would have covered hygiene, bacteria and the importance of hand washing, this naturally leads on to discussions about different viruses, of which HIV is important to understand.

The purpose of this particular SCARF lesson is to raise awareness and reduce stigma and misconceptions surrounding HIV. This follows the guidance of the Sex Education Forum, of which we are members ([see curriculum design tool](#)).

Although talking about viruses is statutory, talking about HIV and condoms, specifically at primary level, is not. Your school will have made a decision as to whether there is any reason not to teach it at Year 6.

Schools are best placed to assess their pupils' needs and as SCARF is flexible, teachers can adapt content to meet these needs. They will consider whether the children have already mentioned it, whether they are referring to HIV either appropriately or inappropriately, and whether they have a good understanding of how it can and can't be passed on. An understanding of these issues will help them explain the reasons for including this SCARF lesson - or not - in order to meet pupils' needs.

The statutory guidance aims to provide a balance between what *must* be taught by the end of Year 6, alongside decisions about how and when the school delivers the content. Parent consultation helps each school to strike a balance that's appropriate to the needs of its children.

In the revised 2025 RSHE guidance, the DfE acknowledge that there may be a situation where the school knows that pupils have seen pornography, and which schools may feel the need to discuss online sexual content with those pupils. SCARF provides schools that have identified this need with an optional lesson to cover this content. Schools that plan to teach this lesson will inform parents of this decision and invite parents to view any relevant materials.

Flexible Curriculum

Schools will develop their curriculum so that it is relevant, age- and stage-appropriate, and accessible to the pupils in their community. Where appropriate, this includes working with local partners and other organisations to understand specific local issues and ensure that pupils' needs are met.

Some topics included in SCARF will require schools to decide whether they should form part of their own curriculum. While parents cannot veto curriculum content, schools must consult parents when developing their RSHE policy. It is important that parents are able to see what their children are being taught - particularly around sensitive topics - and schools should respond positively to requests to view teaching materials. Topics that your school will consider threading through relevant lessons are; Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), gender reassignment, masturbation/self touch, and same sex relationships.

When will my child's school be delivering Relationships and Sex Education?

If your child's school has already consulted parents regarding their revised RSE policy, in line with the 2025 guidance, and shared sample resources with you, then they could start delivering it from now. If not, they have until September 2026 to consult parents before they start delivering RSE. The school should ensure they communicate with parents what they will be covering and when.

What can I do to support my child's learning at home?

The statutory guidance is clear in recognising that a parent/carer is a child's primary educator in these matters. There are many things you can do to support your child's understanding and encourage them to ask questions. Here are some

1. If you feel it is time to talk to your child about growing up and the changes they are likely to experience it's best to offer it in small chunks, rather than do it in one go, often known as 'The Talk'. This gives children time to digest the new information and ask you further questions as they develop more understanding.
2. If your child asks you questions, try to stay calm, and not worry if you don't know the answer. There are plenty of websites that you can use together to help you find the answers to their questions in a factual, honest, age-appropriate way (see details below for resources on our website).
3. Use everyday opportunities to bring up the topic. Things you see on TV or hear on the radio can be great conversation starters to talk about topics such as relationships, sex and body image. Reading books with your child is also a great way of introducing topics and helping children to understand themselves, their bodies and the world around them.
4. If you do have family names for genitals, ensure your child also knows their scientific names too. Knowing the correct words for their genitals will help them to report abuse if it did ever happen.
5. By showing your child that you are comfortable with them asking you questions now, you are helping to develop a relationship with them where they can seek your advice and support in their adolescent years.
6. Visit the specially created [SCARF webpage](#) for more information including a list of books and websites that will support both you and your child along with some activities you to support their learning.