

spark at a Glance:

A 360-Degree System for High-Quality Early Years Practice

spark is a 360-degree early years child development and parent partnership system. It helps everyone in the nursery work around the same central question: what does this child need next, and how do we know?

At child level, spark helps educators record meaningful observations, understand development, identify what may come next and plan from what children already know and can do. It supports responsive practice rather than a rigid timetable or a pre-set scheme of work for every session.

At family level, spark recognises that parent partnership is not one-size-fits-all. Every parent can receive the Learning Journey Profile, giving them a clear picture of their child's progress and what they may be ready for next. Most settings will use Learning Stories and sparkLINK to share meaningful moments and keep parents connected. Parents who want to be more actively involved can use spark@HOME to contribute to their child's learning from home.

At leadership level, spark gives proprietors and senior managers visibility without needing to dictate every activity in every room. Leaders can see what is happening across children, staff, rooms, groups and parent communication. They can identify whether children are being supported, whether staff are using the system consistently, whether families are being engaged, and where practice, provision, mentoring or training may need strengthening.

In this way, spark supports high standards across the whole nursery while keeping the child at the centre. It gives educators professional freedom, parents appropriate routes into partnership, and leaders the evidence they need to understand quality across the setting. For anyone who wants the detailed breakdown, the full feature map can be shared separately.



spark is right for you if you want:

To build quality across the whole setting.

The value of spark is strongest when managers and educators use it together: to understand children, improve provision, involve parents and support better teaching.

More than a basic online learning journal.

It is designed for nurseries that want software to support child development, planning, assessment, parent partnership and quality of teaching, not just store photographs and comments.

Observations to lead somewhere.

Rather than simply recording what happened, spark helps educators understand what the child can already do, what may come next, and how learning can be scaffolded in a developmentally appropriate way.

Parents to be genuine partners.

Every parent can receive the Learning Journey Profile. Most settings can use Learning Stories and sparkLINK to share meaningful moments. Families who want to be more involved can use spark@HOME to contribute to their child's learning from home.

Different levels of parent engagement.

Not every family will engage in the same way, and spark recognises that. It allows settings to offer appropriate levels of involvement without pressuring every parent to do everything.

Leaders to have real visibility.

spark helps leaders see whether observations are happening, whether children are being followed up, whether parent messages are being addressed, and whether staff are using the system consistently.

To strengthen staff practice.

The system supports educator reflection, coaching, mentoring and professional conversations. It helps leaders see where staff may need support, rather than relying on guesswork.



Reports that have a purpose.

Reports in spark are not just paperwork. They can support parent conversations, professional discussions, health visitor meetings, transition to school, Ofsted evidence, local authority conversations and internal reflection.

Value professional judgement.

spark provides structure, automation and guidance, but it does not remove the educator's thinking. It supports skilled adults to make better decisions for children.

Planning to stay live and responsive.

Room activity plans, key person plans, group ideas and scaffolding ideas are designed to reflect what is happening now. Printed versions are snapshots of live planning, useful when needed, but the system itself stays responsive.

Area	Brief Overall
Child development	spark starts with what the child can do now and what may come next.
Observations	Observations build a meaningful picture and feed reports, next steps and planning.
Parent partnership	Families can engage at different levels: Learning Journey Profile, Learning Stories, sparkLINK and spark@HOME.
Reports	Reports support the right conversation with the right person, not paperwork for its own sake.
Graphs and charts	Visual information helps leaders spot patterns across children, rooms, groups and provision.
Quality of teaching	spark supports reflection, accountability, coaching and evidence-informed leadership.
Planning	Planning tools are live and responsive, with printable snapshots when needed. New staff have sparkTUTOR to back up how each function is used.
Optional modules	Settings can choose to add tools such as sparkDIARY and sparkCHAT to match the organizational.

