Taking care of a baby

Year: Y1

Subjects and Issues

Caring Emotional needs
Growing and changing Hygiene Trust
Family Relationships education LGBT+
Communication Life cycles
National Curriculum science - relationships elements

Please note from September 2026 pupils should be taught the correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts. The RHSE guidance does not specify when pupils should be taught this content; that is a decision for the school.

Look at suggested ground rules/ class agreement, share with children at the start of the lesson.

Introduction

Ask the class if anybody has a new baby in their family or if you have a younger brother or sister. Does anyone remember when their sibling was born?

Ask them to tell you what the baby is/was like? (Answers will probably include: crying, small, sleeps a lot, always needs feeding.)

Explain that new babies are very small and not able to do very much when they are born. They mostly sleep and eat.

Ask next who looks after a new baby. (Answers may include mum, mum and dad, mum and mum or dad and dad, or granny or grandad, or other family members.)

Explain that a new baby can be hard work because they need lots of attention. Parents/carers or other family members will have lots of jobs to do for the baby but older brothers, sisters and other family members can help too.

Activity 1 - What do babies need?

Ask the class to think of some of the things that babies need. (Answers may include: milk, dummy, nappies, cuddles.)

Split the class into small groups and give each group a copy of the *What do babies need?* Activity sheet. Each group now completes the sorting activity. They need to cut out the pictures and then put them into two piles: things that babies need and things they don't need.

Activity 2 - Answers and discussion points

Go through each pile, encouraging children to think and share ideas about each of them - why they are important/not important; what alternatives are there to some of the items, etc.

Things that babies do need: milk – either from breast or bottle, toys, nappies (disposable or reusable), bibs, bath, blankets, Moses basket, car seat, dummy, to be carried (either pram or sling), love/eye contact.

Things that babies don't need: motorbike, chocolate, makeup, football, handbag, mobile phone.

Ask the class follow-up questions to reinforce their learning:

What do new babies eat? They need lots of milk either from the breast or bottle. They drink this in small amounts lots of times (because their stomachs are very small) often throughout the day and night. This can be very tiring for a parent.

Where do babies sleep? New babies sleep a lot, and need somewhere safe like a Moses Basket so they won't be disturbed or fall.

How do babies get from one place to another? Babies need someone to carry them. They need to be held or carried, either in a pram or sling. They also need a special car seat to travel safely.

How do babies go to the toilet? They can't! So they need to wear nappies, which need changing a lot! These can be disposable ones that just get thrown in the bin when they are dirty, or reusable which can be washed and used again. [Discussion of changing a nappy might include naming parts of the body that are private, but that babies need help with cleaning: penis, testicles, scrotum, vulva. Explain that these body parts are private, but babies can't yet go to the toilet by themselves so it's ok for an adult to see and touch these parts to help them.]

How do babies wash themselves? Babies need help getting bathed as they can't sit up on their own. This can be a fun time for babies. [Discussion might include parts of the body that are private, but that babies need help with cleaning: penis, testicles, scrotum, vulva, nipples. Explain that these body parts are private, but babies can't yet wash by themselves so it's ok for an adult to see and touch these parts to do this for them.]

How do babies have fun? Babies need playtime. They really enjoy stories, playing with toys and being played with.

Reinforce that most importantly, babies need love. They need lots of love and attention, and that they can help with this too, by making sure baby is happy by talking to them, giving them lots of cuddles and playing with them. Giving a baby attention and love helps it to be healthy, just as much as sleep and food.

Summing up

Ask the children to complete the following sentences (this can be done as part of a circle activity, if preferred):

Babies need help to....

Babies like to...

Adapting lessons for learners with additional needs

Our additional Signposting and Support page provides further guidance on adapting SCARF lessons to meet the needs of learners with additional needs.

Learning Outcomes

Children will be able to:

- Understand some of the tasks required to look after a baby;
- Explain how to meet the basic needs of a baby, for example, eye contact, cuddling, washing, changing, feeding.

Key Vocabulary

caring
love
needs
attention
help
penis
testicles
scrotum
vulva
nipples

What do babies need - Activity sheet - enough copies for working in small groups

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements

- Relationships Education Families and people who care for me 2. 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.
- Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education) Changing adolescent body 1. Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements (2025)

- Developing bodies 1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.

- Developing bodies 2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
- Families and people who care for me 2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as 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.

PSHE Association Learning Opportunities

- H26 . About growing and changing from young to old and how people's needs change.
- R2 . To identify the people who love and care for them and what they do to help them feel cared for.
- R4 . To identify common features of family life.
- L2 . How people and other living things have different needs; about the responsibilities of caring for them.

National Curriculum Links

- Science Y2 Animals including humans Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.
- Science Y2 Animals including humans Find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air).
- Science Y2 Animals including humans (Non-statutory guidance) Pupils should be introduced to the basic needs of animals for survival, as well as the importance of exercise and nutrition for humans.
- Science Y2 Animals including humans (Non-statutory guidance) Pupils should also be introduced to the processes of reproduction and growth in animals. The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to

understand how reproduction occurs. Growing into adults can include reference to baby, toddler, child, teenager, adult..