Changing bodies and feelings

Year: Y5

Subjects and Issues

Body parts Feelings Growing and changing Puberty Science Relationships education Reproduction Periods Menstruation LGBT+ Masturbation Wet dreams Emotions National Curriculum science - relationships elements

Teacher guidance

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.

If the children haven't already been taught the puberty lesson in Y4/P5 (Sco) then we suggest that you start with the next lesson in this half-termly unit, Growing up and Changing Bodies and follow it with this lesson.

Note also that this lesson plan includes two versions of the male labelling body parts activity sheet, one showing an uncircumcised penis and a separate sheet showing a circumcised penis. Please use as appropriate to meet the needs of your group. The procedure is usually requested for social, cultural, or religious reasons (e.g. families who practice Judaism or Islam). There is rarely a clinical indication for circumcision. Please be aware that in situations where boys may be circumcised when they are older, e.g., when they reach puberty, the law states that they should be fully informed of the process by their parents/carers and

their views taken into account. If someone is likely to suffer, or is suffering, emotional harm from the process, it may be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported according to your usual procedures. Find further information about non-therapeutic male circumcision here.

Please note a scenario in the true or false activity facilitates a conversation about self-touch/masturbation. This is to help you meet the statutory requirements under the categories of Developing Bodies and Being Safe. Please refer to your RSE policy regarding the inclusion of this content in your curriculum, based on pupil need.

Introduction

Refer to group agreement or develop one if not already done. Look at suggested ground rules/ class agreement.

Ask the children what they remember from their previous session about puberty. Responses could include:

- We looked at different objects and what a person might need during puberty
- Learning about how male and female bodies develop
- What periods are
- That sometimes people commit crimes against a girl's body which involve cuts being made to her vulva (Female Genital Mutilation - FGM).

Explain that we are now going to think about puberty in a bit more detail, acknowledging that male and female bodies have differences, and things in common. We'll learn about both kinds of bodies today. This is important for all pupils – to have an awareness and understanding of what all the changes bodies go through during puberty, to help them be respectful and supportive of those around them.

Activity 1 – Recap names of body parts

Recap the names for the private parts of the male and female body:

Female:

- Vulva (External parts of female genitals which are visible. This includes the clitoris, two sets of labia - the inner and the outer - and the entrance to the vagina.)
- Vagina (Inside the body - the opening of the reproductive part of the girl's body (the passage which leads to the womb. This is also where tampons and Mooncups or Menstrual cups are placed during menstruation.)
- Ovaries (Where eggs are stored)
- Eggs (Cell needed for reproduction)
- Womb (Space for baby to grow)
- Clitoris (A small, soft pea shaped bud which lies above the urinary opening and is protected by the clitoral hood. Very sensitive part of the body.)
- Labia (includes both the smaller lips/folds of skin that surround the entrance to the vagina and urinary opening (wee hole), and the outer lips/folds of skin that surround the inner lips)
- Breasts (These develop and grow during puberty. Breasts produce milk after childbirth, to feed a baby.)

Male:

- Penis (This is the shaft-shaped reproductive organ that hangs outside the male body. It helps transport urine (wee) and sperm away from the body.)
- Testicles (produce millions of sperm everyday once a boy starts puberty)
- Scrotum (sack of skin that holds the testicles outside the body)
- Sperm (cell needed for reproduction)

Both:

- Nipples (help a baby to drink milk from its mother's breasts. Boys and girls have nipples but only females grow breasts when they're older. Some babies are breastfed, some babies are bottle fed.)

- Anus (end of the digestive system, where poo comes from)
- Pubic Hair (Hair which starts to grow around the genitals during puberty..

Emphasise that nobody should ask to see or touch these parts of the body [unless we give permission, e.g. to see a doctor] These parts are private, but remember, your whole body belongs to you.

Activity 2 – Labelling external body parts

Distribute the female and male external body parts (Activity sheet a & b) Ask the children to label each of the parts using the correct words provided in the box at the bottom of each sheet.

Note: there is also a separate, single sheet of the male external body parts which shows a circumcised penis. There is no foreskin label included on this sheet. Please use as appropriate to meet the needs of your group. The procedure is usually requested for social, cultural, or religious reasons (e.g. families who practice Judaism or Islam). There is rarely a clinical indication for circumcision. Please be aware that in situations where boys may be circumcised when they are older, e.g., when they reach puberty, the law states that they should be fully informed of the process by their parents/carers and their views taken into account. If someone is likely to suffer, or is suffering, emotional harm from the process, it may be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported according to your usual procedures. Find further information about non-therapeutic male circumcision.

Using the Puberty Glossary as a guide, explain the role of each body part or how it relates to puberty. The glossary may also help to answer any further questions children may have. NB: explain that the term *vulva* is used to refer to *all* of the female external body parts - it is part 8 on the Activity sheet and doesn't have an arrow, since it's a more general area.

Activity 2 – Emotions and feelings: true or false?

Explain to the group that we are going to look at some of the thoughts and feelings or emotions that may come up when a person is going through puberty.

Spilt the class into small groups (up to 5) and distribute the *Emotions and feelings: true or false?* Activity sheet (c) to the groups. Allocate 3-4 statements to each group. Explain that they need to decide if the statements are **true** or **false**. Circulate around the groups to check for understanding as they do this activity.

Come back together and using the Teacher answer sheet for guidance, ask each group to pick a statement they think is **true** and why; ask other groups whether they thought the same. Repeat this, but this time asking them to pick a statement they think is **false** - and why; again asking other groups whether they thought the same. Continue until all statements have been covered.

Note that one of the scenarios references masturbation or an increased desire for a person to touch themself for pleasure. In addition to the information provided by the teaching answers sheet, it is also important to recognise that this activity provides an opportunity to teach children that touching their own private parts is a private activity, which means it must be carried out in a private place e.g. their bedroom, or bathroom at home, where curtains can be drawn and/or doors locked.

The language we use in our RSE workshops is developmentally appropriate and supportive of safeguarding. For example, educators in consultation with a school may say:

"As children go through puberty, their bodies and feelings can change towards themselves and others, and they may become more aware of their bodies. It is normal if they do want to explore or touch their body, and it is normal if they don't."

Sometimes children in our workshops ask, *"Is this called masturbation?"* We respond factually, saying: *"Yes, that's*

a term that's used." We then emphasise privacy, boundaries, and safety, helping children understand that touching their own private parts is something done in private.

Not only does this help safeguard them from acting inappropriately in public, but it also helps them identify others, particularly adults, who may be acting inappropriately in public, and report it to a trusted adult.

Summing up

Ask the class to identify trusted adults they could talk to if they are worried about puberty or the changes happening to their body.

Extension (optional)

Pupils could ask parents/carers at home what they remember about their body changing and what worries they had, e.g. did they start puberty earlier than average or later?

Adapting lessons for learners with additional needs

Teachers will need to consider the individual needs of children in their class in order to ensure the activities are inclusive. Advice from specialist teachers or the school SENDco may be helpful. Examples might include:

- It would be particularly useful for children with SEND to have physical self-care/puberty product objects that they can look at and be shown how they are designed to be used.
- Dependent on the level of need, it may be useful to build in time each day with pupils to practice using different products, e.g. brushing teeth, combing hair, and using deodorant.
- Using the Widgit symbols provided in this booklet provided by the NSPCC may be useful for some learners to access the learning, particularly as part of pre-teaching or overlearning opportunities

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

Did you know?

Our specially trained educators can deliver RSE workshops that include the topics covered in this lesson. The advantages include providing staff with the opportunity to observe someone, which gives them the confidence and skills to deliver RSE going forward. Contact your local team to check the availability of these workshops for your school

Version History

Thu, 09 Apr 2026

- Explanation added regarding how covering self-touch/masturbation helps meet statutory requirements

Thu, 02 Apr 2026

- Wording updated to include explanation of the names for private parts for male and female bodies
- Vocabulary updated to include testicles, scrotum, nipples, vulva, vagina

Fri, 21 Nov 2025

- Extra content added to support conversations about self-touch/masturbation.

Thu, 31 Jul 2025

- Extra ideas added for learners with additional needs

Learning Outcomes

Children will be able to:

- Know the correct words for the external sexual organs;

- Discuss some of the myths associated with puberty.

Key Vocabulary

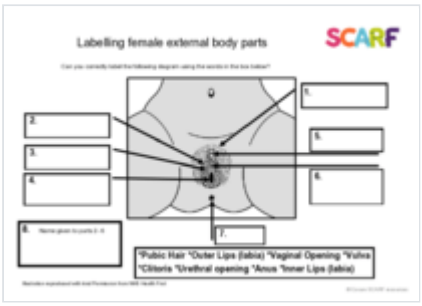
pubic hair
clitoris
vaginal opening
urinary opening
lips (labia)
penis
menstruation cup
period protection
sweat
washing
body confidence
emotions
spots
hair removal
body autonomy
vaginal discharge
involuntary erections
wet dreams
body odour
hormones
hydration
exercise
sleep
breast development
height gain
hips widen
periods
FGM/cuts to the vulva
menstruation
genitalia
deodrant
shower gel
tissues
washing powder
spot cream
facial wash
period products

circumcised
If using the film clips, the following words are also used:
Taking care of your body
chemicals
oil glands
good hygiene
showers
soap
shampoo
clean underwear
acne
pimples
zits
acne cream
medication
doctor
hair growth
under arm
chest hair
healthy food
vagina
vulva
testicles
scrotum
nipples

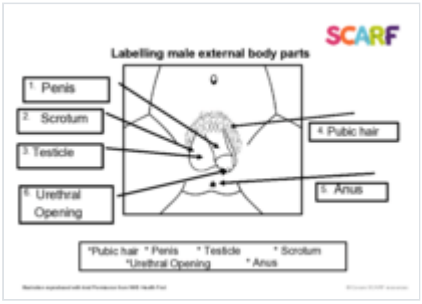
Emotions and feelings: true or false? - Activity sheet (c) - enough for working in small groups of up to 5

Emotions and feelings: true or false? - Teacher answer sheet (d) - one copy for reference

Labelling body parts - circumcised penis version - print copies as needed



Labelling external body parts- male and female- activity sheet - print both worksheets - enough copies for two per group



Labelling female and male external body parts - Teacher resource to display on IWB

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory

requirements

- Relationships Education Being safe 7. How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- 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)

- Being Safe 3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.
- 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.
- Developing bodies 3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.

PSHE Association Learning Opportunities

- H30 . To identify the external genitalia and internal reproductive organs in males and females and how the process of puberty relates to human reproduction.
- H31 . About the physical and emotional changes that happen when approaching and during puberty (including menstruation, key facts about the menstrual cycle and menstrual wellbeing, erections and wet dreams).
- H36 . Strategies to manage transitions between classes and key stages.