

Learning objective	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore how bodies change during puberty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify some physical changes that happen during puberty. I can use correct terminology to talk about puberty changes. I can recognise that everyone experiences puberty at different times.

Before the lesson

This lesson includes the option to upload an image of the class's PSHE agreement to the *Presentation: PSHE agreement* (see Teacher knowledge).

Watch

Pupil video: How will I grow and change during puberty?

Have ready

- Presentation: PSHE agreement* (optional – see Teacher knowledge).
- Presentation: Pairs.*
- Presentation: Changes.*
- Presentation: How will I grow and change?*
- Presentation: Puberty.*
- Presentation: Who can I talk to?*
- Whiteboards and pens (one each).
- Scissors (one between two).
- Sticky notes or small pieces of paper (one each).
- Wonder box (see Wrapping up).

Print

Print in advance of the lesson.

- Activity: Boys, girls or both? (one between two).
- Resource: Puberty (support – see Adaptive teaching).

Teacher knowledge

Subject knowledge

Talking about puberty

Children and adults may find conversations about puberty uncomfortable or embarrassing. It is important to create a safe and supportive environment so that the children feel able to talk openly and ask questions.

- Use correct scientific terminology and model this language confidently. This helps show respect for the topic and can reduce embarrassment. Avoid slang, jokes or gender stereotypes.
- If the children giggle or make inappropriate comments, respond calmly. Acknowledge that it is normal to laugh when something feels new or unfamiliar. Reinforce that these changes happen to everyone and should be discussed respectfully.
- Be prepared for spontaneous or unexpected questions and address them in a safe, sensitive way. Ensure all questions are acknowledged and answered in an age-appropriate manner. Encourage the children to use the wonder box to ask questions or share any worries they may have.

It is common for some boys to develop temporary breast tissue during puberty due to hormonal changes; this is known as gynaecomastia. It usually settles on its own over time and does not require treatment. Reassure children that this is a normal part of puberty for some people and nothing to be worried or embarrassed about.

Age-appropriate information about puberty and growing up is available at the link below to support teaching in this lesson. This resource can be used by teachers to reinforce learning and may also be shared with children and families for reassurance and further advice.

Link Puberty - information from Childline- **this is an external website and we do not have control over its content - please check before showing it to the children.**

Misconceptions

Some children may think that:

- 'Puberty happens at the same time for everyone' - puberty happens at different times and at different rates for everyone. Starting earlier or later than others is completely normal.
- 'There is something wrong with me if my body is changing faster or slower than my friend' - everyone's body develops in its own way and at its own pace. Differences in timing do not mean there is anything wrong.
- 'Only physical changes happen during puberty' - puberty can also affect emotions and feelings and it is normal to feel worried, embarrassed, excited or confused at times.
- 'Talking about puberty is embarrassing and should be kept secret' - puberty is a normal part of growing up. Talking to a trusted adult can help answer questions and reduce worries.
- 'Only girls need to learn about puberty' - puberty affects everyone. Learning about changes helps all children understand their own bodies and respect others.
- 'Only boys or men grow hair under their arms or on their legs' - people of all genders grow hair under their arms and on their legs during puberty. Some women and girls choose to remove this hair by shaving or waxing, which is a personal choice and not something everyone does.

Lesson organisation

Before the lesson, place the *Resource: Emotions and feelings* on the walls around the classroom.

PSHE agreement

This lesson has the option to upload an image of the class's PSHE agreement to the *Presentation: PSHE agreement*.

Uploading images to a presentation

- Open Presentation mode.
- Prepare the lesson with the chosen resources.
- Select the cloud icon.
- Select the 'Upload image' button and choose the saved image.

This image will now appear in the *Presentation: PSHE agreement* to display within the lesson.

Cautions

If you know a child has specific issues, consider discussing the lesson with them in advance and adapting it as needed. They might benefit from adult support. If problems emerge during the lesson, consult your Senior Leadership Team. It is the teacher's responsibility to check all resources and lesson content to ensure it is suitable for their class setting.

Ensure this lesson is delivered in accordance with your school's RSE policy and that parents/carers have been informed as appropriate.

Sensitivities

SEND

Some pupils may require simplified explanations, visual prompts or additional reassurance. Some pupils may already be experiencing puberty. Handle this sensitively and avoid singling individuals out.

Cultural and family context

Some pupils may have limited prior discussion or vocabulary related to puberty. Present information clearly and factually, without assuming prior knowledge. Acknowledge that families and cultures may approach this topic differently.

Talking about emotions and feelings

Emotions are automatic, immediate and often subconscious responses. Feelings are the conscious, individual interpretations given to emotions. Present all emotions and feelings as natural and valid, rather than labelling them as 'good' or 'bad'.

Cultural differences

Recognise that families and cultures may have different understandings of mental health and emotional expression. Avoid assumptions and ensure teaching reflects a broad, inclusive view of emotional wellbeing.

Inclusive language

This lesson focuses on the changes that typically happen during puberty. References to 'girls' and 'boys' refer to biological sex. Consider using language such as 'female bodies' and 'male bodies' where appropriate to ensure inclusivity inclusive and appropriate for all children in the class.

Recap and recall

Optional: remind the children of the PSHE agreement they created in the [Introductory lesson: Setting rules for RSE & PSHE lessons](#) and recap the rules they agreed on. If required, upload an image of the agreement to the *Presentation: PSHE agreement*.

Arrange the children into pairs. Show the *Presentation: Pairs*. Ask the pairs to match each word to its correct definition.

Take feedback.

Ask the children to choose one word and say a sentence using it. Share with a partner.

Take feedback.

Suggestions might include:

- **Boundaries:** having boundaries means deciding what feels okay for me and my body.
- **Uncomfortable:** I feel uncomfortable when someone stands too close to me.
- **Communicate:** I can communicate by saying how I feel and listening to others.

Attention grabber

Show the *Presentation: Changes*. Ask the pairs to discuss how they have changed since Nursery or Reception.

Presentation: Changes

Upload your own image on presentation mode

Take feedback.

Examples may include:

- Bigger shoe size.
- Likes and dislikes have changed.
- More mature.
- Have learnt new things.
- Taller.
- More hair.
- Have made new friends.
- Voices have changed slightly.

Summarise that the children have already experienced many changes as they have grown. Explain that today's lesson focuses on **puberty**, the time when the body and mind begin changing from childhood towards adulthood. These changes are a normal part of growing up.

Main event

Show slide 1 of the *Presentation: How will I grow and change?*

Ask pairs to discuss:

1. **How are the friends different?** (Answers may include: one is taller than the other; they have different colour hair and eyes; they are wearing different clothes.)

Take feedback. Explain that everyone is different and there is no need to compare ourselves to others, because our differences make the world special and interesting. Bodies grow and change as children get older. These changes happen to everyone but not always at the same time or in the same way.

Explain that when a child starts to grow into an adult, the body goes through **physical** changes. These changes are called puberty.

Show slide 2 and talk through the examples of physical changes. Reassure the children that these changes are normal and show that the body is growing healthily. They are all changes that happen during puberty.

Move to slide 3 and talk through what puberty is.

Explain that everybody is different and changes at different times, which is completely normal. Point out that it is really important to learn about what changes happen during puberty so that they feel prepared.

Ask:

1. Which changes happen during puberty? (Answers may include: Skin can become oily or develop spots; voices may get deeper, especially for boys; hair can grow under the arms and on the face for boys; bodies change shape; people grow taller.)

Hand out whiteboards and pens (one each). Ask the children to divide their whiteboards into four sections, with the headings: Everyone, Boys, Girls and Feelings.

Explain that they will watch a video and record one example under each heading. Pause the video if needed.

Play the *Pupil video: How will I grow and change during puberty?*

Pupil video: How will I grow and change during puberty?

Ask:

1. Which changes happen to everyone during puberty and which changes are different for boys and girls? (Answers may include: everyone gets taller and stronger; hair grows under the arms and near private parts; skin can change and people may get spots; boys' voices deepen and facial hair grows; girls develop breasts and their hips widen; some changes happen to everyone and some are different.)
2. How might someone feel about the physical changes happening during puberty? (Answers may include: feeling worried if changes start early or late; feeling embarrassed about body changes; feeling excited about growing up; feeling relieved when learning that changes are normal.)

Sorting changes

Show the *Presentation: Puberty*. Read the statement at the bottom of the slide. Ask the children whether it applies to girls, boys or both. Drag and drop it into the correct part of the Venn diagram. Complete one further example together.

Hand out the *Activity: Girls, boys or both?* (one between two). Ask the children to:

- Cut out the statements.
- Read each one carefully.
- Sort them into the correct section of the Venn diagram.

Take feedback and complete the Venn diagram on the presentation. Clarify that voice changes can apply to both boys and girls, although it is usually more noticeable in boys.

Reassure the children that it is normal to feel unsure or worried about puberty. Everybody goes through puberty. These changes happen very slowly and are not painful. Remind them that there is always a trusted adult or an older friend they can speak to if they have questions.

Wrapping up

Show the *Presentation: Who can I talk to?*

Presentation: Who can I talk to?

Upload your own image on presentation mode

Ask pairs to discuss:

1. **Why is it helpful to learn about puberty before it happens and to talk to trusted adults about it?** (Answers may include: it helps people feel prepared; it can stop people worrying; trusted adults understand because they have been through it; adults can answer questions and give reassurance; knowing what is normal helps people feel less scared.)
2. **How could you support a friend who is going through puberty?** (Answers may include: listening to them; being kind and patient; not making jokes or comments about their body; reminding them that changes are normal; giving them space if they want it; encouraging them to talk to a trusted adult.)

Display slide 2. Read the sentence starter and ask the children to repeat it. Ask them to complete the sentence in pairs.

Ask:

1. **Who can you talk to about puberty?** (Answers may include: parents or carers; teachers; friends and relatives).

Invite the children to share their sentences.

Clarify that both physical and emotional changes during puberty are normal and nothing to be embarrassed about. There is always someone who is happy to offer advice and guidance.

Give the children a moment to consider their personal response to the lesson's enquiry question: **How will I grow and change during puberty?**

Wonder box

Remind the children to use the wonder box if they have any comments or questions. Explain that if they need an adult to help them, they should write their name or initials on their note.

Vocabulary

armpits

The soft areas under your arms between your shoulder and your chest.

breasts

Part of the body that starts to grow on the chest during puberty for girls.

physical

Something you can touch, see or feel with your body.

puberty

The time when your body and mind start to change from being a child to becoming an adult.

pubic hair

Hair that starts to grow around your private parts.

Assessing progress and understanding

Adaptive teaching

Pupils with secure understanding can:

- Identify and correctly name some physical changes that happen during puberty.
- Use appropriate terminology to talk about puberty changes with confidence and respect.
- Recognise that everyone goes through puberty and that changes happen at different times and rates.

Pupils working at greater depth can:

- Suggest how some physical changes are linked to emotional changes by explaining how feelings might change as bodies change.
- Suggest ways to support a friend who is going through puberty, showing empathy and understanding.
- Use correct terminology confidently and independently when discussing puberty changes in different activities.

Pupils needing support:

- Could use the *Resource: Puberty* to support understanding during the Main event and Wrapping up.
- Could pre-learn key vocabulary to build confidence when discussing puberty changes.
- Could rewatch the *Pupil video: Puberty* to complete the activity by pausing after each change is mentioned and placing it on their Venn diagram before continuing the video.

Pupils working at greater depth:

- Should suggest ways to support a friend who is going through puberty to show empathy and understanding.
- Could link physical changes to emotional changes by explaining how feelings might change as bodies change.
- Could add words to describe how they feel about the changes around the edge of their Venn diagram to show links between physical changes of feelings.