

# MY BODY: LUMPS, BUMPS, & HAIRY BITS



## Lesson Objectives:

- Children will be informed of the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty for both girls and boys including menstruation.
- Children will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss their worries regarding puberty.
- Children will be given the opportunity to refresh their knowledge around naming the parts of the body, with an emphasis on personal body parts and using the correct names for the genitals.

## Key Messages:

Puberty is occurring earlier and earlier to our young people. Unfortunately, the latest statistics we have from the Sex Education Forum suggest that still, 1/4 of all girls in the UK will have their first period before any adult talks to them about it, either at home or school... That should not be the case.

The reason for this is that often that lesson about puberty doesn't happen until the summer term of year 6 - where it has traditionally sat... we think children, both girls and boys deserve better.

As a result children in year 4, 5 and 6 will all learn about puberty as part of the programme. Each year building on knowledge and experience in an age appropriate way. We also ensure that both girls and boys receive the same messages. We do not split the class at any point - but both the girls and boys learn together. This is important as it helps to reinforce the message that puberty is natural and is something we should be able to talk about together.

## Closing:

So now you know all about the amazing changes that will take place during puberty. But remember puberty isn't a race or competition. It is important to be supportive to one another. It is ok to have questions or worries about puberty and you can talk about anything that is on your mind with me or with other trusted grown ups.

## Key Messages continued:

Children will learn about both the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty. This will be done in a body positive manner - and should be fun.

*“Puberty is when a child’s body begins changing into that of an adult... You will be starting soon - in fact some of you may have already have started...*

*But don’t worry if you haven’t - puberty isn’t a race...*

*Puberty doesn’t just happen all in one go - it is a long drawn out process that won’t be complete until you are 25 years old and fully grown! so you all have a long way to go.*

*Puberty can be a confusing time - but is definitely nothing to panic about so today is an opportunity to ask questions and make sure we all know what to expect.”*

Children will learn about personal hygiene, keeping clean and looking after their body as they grow up. Children will learn about the development of their sexual organs, and use the correct name for both boys and girls genitals. We will use Penis, testicles, vulva and vagina.

We will also talk about privacy and how the rules may change as they get older - this will include an explanation that girl’s breasts can be sensitive and should now be included in her private parts. We know that we should never ask to see or touch anyone else private parts. Both girls and boys will learn about the basics of menstruation.



## Useful Links:

- To find recommended books about puberty and menstruation click here...

# CARRYING ON THE CONVERSATION AT HOME:



Some children will naturally find the thought of discussing puberty embarrassing. Traditionally, it always has been and children internalise the messages of older peers, and adults around them who still talk about the horror stories from their days. But it doesn't have to be that way. We are working very hard to change all that.

Before the lesson, talking to your child and mention that they will be learning about puberty. Explain that it should be fun, light hearted and really interesting and certainly nothing to worry about. Stress that it is all about growing up and that it happens to everyone. Tell them that you would love to hear all about it when they get home. Again, this gives children the green light to listen and come home and ask questions. It shows you want to be involved and you are available.

Puberty is less scary when you know what to expect. When your child comes home, ask them to tell you what they learned about both girls and boys... but don't expect too much. There is a lot of information to take in all in one lesson. The more you can talk things through, correct any misconception the better... this will also help to cement the notion that they can approach you if they have any questions later on.

Take your time and allow lots of questions - there is no rush. This doesn't have to be only a single conversation - but is better spread over little and often, every time something relevant comes up... whether it is about showering regularly, or getting pubic hair.

Next time you and your child are in the supermarket, take a detour and spend sometime in the feminine hygiene section. Show them all the various products on offer. Show that you aren't embarrassed and that it is perfectly natural. Periods shouldn't be a taboo in this day and age. This is a conversation that both girls and boys should have and it shouldn't just come from the mums either, Dads need to get involved too... otherwise what happens when dad is on duty?

Now is a good time to prepare for your daughters first period. Buy some pads together. Show them where they are kept and how to use them. Sanitary towels don't come with a sell-by date. Yes, this may feel way too soon - but is far better to be prepared (for both of you!) periods are far less scary when you know what to expect.