

# Is this normal?

Year: Y6

## Subjects and Issues

- ◆ Body parts
- ◆ FGM
- ◆ Growing and changing
- ◆ Puberty
- ◆ Relationships education
- ◆ Periods
- ◆ Menstruation
- ◆ Body changes
- ◆ Female genital mutilation (FGM)

## Preparation and considerations before this session

Ensure a safe and familiar location.

To maximise the session, gather children's own questions about puberty. This is best done anonymously - for example, by using a question box in the classroom where pupils can write and post any questions they have on this topic without being identified. This will also help to help involve them all.

You can turn some of the questions into Agony Aunt-style letters for the children to reply to themselves, as in the Activity sheet provided. This will help to answer some of the questions in an interesting and depersonalised way.

## Introduction

Thank children for their questions and explain that as many as possible will be answered within the session.

Use an 'ice-breaker' activity to establish a comfortable atmosphere. One possible activity is to ask children in two equal lines to arrange themselves in order of birthday date without speaking. They could try to be quicker than the other line.

Introduce the focus for the session – puberty.

What does puberty mean?

Gather ideas and clarify that 'puberty' is the word given to the time in a person's life when their body begins to change from a child's body to an adult's body capable of reproduction. Clarify that puberty involves physical, emotional, and psychological changes.

Today we are going to have a chance to talk together about the different changes and challenges that happen when a person reaches puberty.

## Activity

Hand out the *Puberty statements: true or false?* Activity sheets for children to discuss in pairs. Allow a few minutes for them to consider and discuss these.

Go through the statements and address misconceptions.

NB: Please see the *Puberty statements: true or false?* Teacher answer sheet for guidance on the answers to the questions.

Reassure the children that most people go through puberty with little difficulty but explain that for some the time can be more challenging.

With any challenge, what sort of things help people? Having a trusted person to talk things through with; being prepared; understanding that solutions can be found; feeling confident etc.

Do the children know what an Agony Aunt is? Explain that they communicate in writing with someone who writes to them with a problem. They write a letter back with advice.

Give out the *Agony Aunt letters* Activity sheet. Working individually or in pairs, the children read and record their ideas as 'Agony Aunts' to support and help a range of young people with challenging situations in puberty.

Share some of their responses to the problems. Praise thoughtful and considerate advice.

Emphasise that young people have the right to decide what happens to their body.

Who is the best person to decide what happens to a person's body? Very occasionally, young people have things done to their bodies that are criminal in this country. These crimes involve cuts made to female genitalia – the vulva - the external area around the opening to the vagina.

If you were concerned about yourself, or another young person you know, are there people you can think of who can help?

In the unlikely event of any safeguarding issues being raised during this discussion, these should be dealt with through the school's Safeguarding policy.

How can young people show respect to one another during such challenging times?

## Summing up

Reassure the children that puberty brings changes but that they gradually occur, not all at the same time. You might like to share this video as a way of bringing the session to a close (please check content for suitability before sharing it with the class):

### **Puberty and finding out who you are**

Praise children for their mature approach to the session and check questions have been answered.

Reiterate the people and places where help, if needed, can be sought.

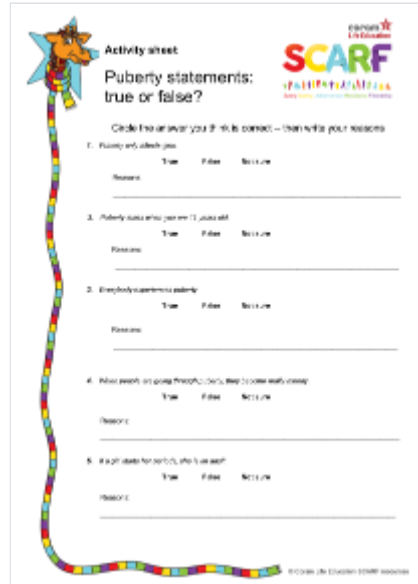
## **Additional teacher guidance**

Our [Puberty Glossary](#) provides appropriate wording when defining puberty and RSE-related words. It may be of particular support when answering children's questions on this subject.

## **Learning Outcomes**

Children will be able to:

- Define the word 'puberty' giving examples of some of the physical and emotional changes associated with it;
- Suggest strategies that would help someone who felt challenged by the changes in puberty;
- Understand what FGM is and that it is an illegal practice in this country;
- Know where someone could get support if they were concerned about their own or another person's safety.



**Activity sheet**

**Puberty statements: true or false?**

Circle true or false if it is correct – then write your reasons

1. Puberty starts when you are 11 years old

True    False    Not sure

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Puberty starts when you are 12 years old

True    False    Not sure

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Everybody experiences puberty

True    False    Not sure

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Most people are going through puberty, they're coming really slowly

True    False    Not sure

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

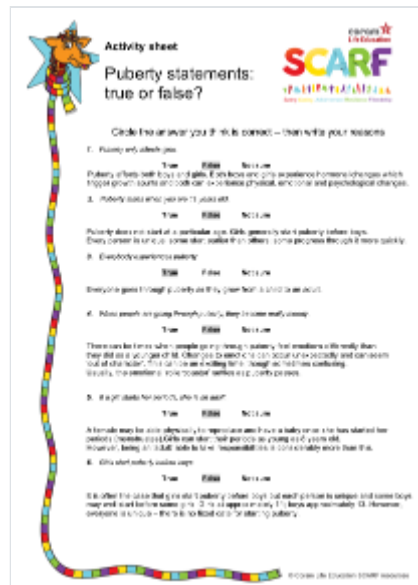
5. It's not ready for people who's not ready

True    False    Not sure

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Puberty Statements: True or false? Activity sheet** - enough for completing individually or in pairs, as appropriate



**Activity sheet**

**Puberty statements: true or false?**

Circle true or false if it is correct – then write your reasons

1. Puberty starts when you are 11 years old

True    False    Not sure

Puberty starts when you are 11 years old. It varies from girl to girl and boy to boy. It's not the same for everyone. It's a process that takes time and changes which happen over time. Some girls start when they're 10, some when they're 12, some when they're 13, some when they're 14, some when they're 15, some when they're 16, some when they're 17, some when they're 18, some when they're 19, some when they're 20, some when they're 21, some when they're 22, some when they're 23, some when they're 24, some when they're 25, some when they're 26, some when they're 27, some when they're 28, some when they're 29, some when they're 30, some when they're 31, some when they're 32, some when they're 33, some when they're 34, some when they're 35, some when they're 36, some when they're 37, some when they're 38, some when they're 39, some when they're 40, some when they're 41, some when they're 42, some when they're 43, some when they're 44, some when they're 45, some when they're 46, some when they're 47, some when they're 48, some when they're 49, some when they're 50, some when they're 51, some when they're 52, some when they're 53, some when they're 54, some when they're 55, some when they're 56, some when they're 57, some when they're 58, some when they're 59, some when they're 60, some when they're 61, some when they're 62, some when they're 63, some when they're 64, some when they're 65, some when they're 66, some when they're 67, some when they're 68, some when they're 69, some when they're 70, some when they're 71, some when they're 72, some when they're 73, some when they're 74, some when they're 75, some when they're 76, some when they're 77, some when they're 78, some when they're 79, some when they're 80, some when they're 81, some when they're 82, some when they're 83, some when they're 84, some when they're 85, some when they're 86, some when they're 87, some when they're 88, some when they're 89, some when they're 90, some when they're 91, some when they're 92, some when they're 93, some when they're 94, some when they're 95, some when they're 96, some when they're 97, some when they're 98, some when they're 99, some when they're 100.

2. Puberty starts when you are 12 years old

True    False    Not sure

Puberty does not start at a particular age. Girls generally start puberty when they are 10-14 years old. Boys generally start puberty when they are 11-15 years old. Some people start when they're 9, some when they're 11, some when they're 13, some when they're 15, some when they're 17, some when they're 19, some when they're 21, some when they're 23, some when they're 25, some when they're 27, some when they're 29, some when they're 31, some when they're 33, some when they're 35, some when they're 37, some when they're 39, some when they're 41, some when they're 43, some when they're 45, some when they're 47, some when they're 49, some when they're 51, some when they're 53, some when they're 55, some when they're 57, some when they're 59, some when they're 61, some when they're 63, some when they're 65, some when they're 67, some when they're 69, some when they're 71, some when they're 73, some when they're 75, some when they're 77, some when they're 79, some when they're 81, some when they're 83, some when they're 85, some when they're 87, some when they're 89, some when they're 91, some when they're 93, some when they're 95, some when they're 97, some when they're 99, some when they're 100.

3. Everybody experiences puberty

True    False    Not sure

Everybody goes through puberty at the same time. It's a process that takes time and changes which happen over time. Some girls start when they're 10, some when they're 12, some when they're 14, some when they're 16, some when they're 18, some when they're 20, some when they're 22, some when they're 24, some when they're 26, some when they're 28, some when they're 30, some when they're 32, some when they're 34, some when they're 36, some when they're 38, some when they're 40, some when they're 42, some when they're 44, some when they're 46, some when they're 48, some when they're 50, some when they're 52, some when they're 54, some when they're 56, some when they're 58, some when they're 60, some when they're 62, some when they're 64, some when they're 66, some when they're 68, some when they're 70, some when they're 72, some when they're 74, some when they're 76, some when they're 78, some when they're 80, some when they're 82, some when they're 84, some when they're 86, some when they're 88, some when they're 90, some when they're 92, some when they're 94, some when they're 96, some when they're 98, some when they're 100.

4. Most people are going through puberty, they're coming really slowly

True    False    Not sure

There can be times when people go through puberty, but sometimes it's really slow. It's a process that takes time and changes which happen over time. Some girls start when they're 10, some when they're 12, some when they're 14, some when they're 16, some when they're 18, some when they're 20, some when they're 22, some when they're 24, some when they're 26, some when they're 28, some when they're 30, some when they're 32, some when they're 34, some when they're 36, some when they're 38, some when they're 40, some when they're 42, some when they're 44, some when they're 46, some when they're 48, some when they're 50, some when they're 52, some when they're 54, some when they're 56, some when they're 58, some when they're 60, some when they're 62, some when they're 64, some when they're 66, some when they're 68, some when they're 70, some when they're 72, some when they're 74, some when they're 76, some when they're 78, some when they're 80, some when they're 82, some when they're 84, some when they're 86, some when they're 88, some when they're 90, some when they're 92, some when they're 94, some when they're 96, some when they're 98, some when they're 100.

5. It's not ready for people who's not ready

True    False    Not sure

A female may be able to get pregnant even if she's not ready for it. It's a process that takes time and changes which happen over time. Some girls start when they're 10, some when they're 12, some when they're 14, some when they're 16, some when they're 18, some when they're 20, some when they're 22, some when they're 24, some when they're 26, some when they're 28, some when they're 30, some when they're 32, some when they're 34, some when they're 36, some when they're 38, some when they're 40, some when they're 42, some when they're 44, some when they're 46, some when they're 48, some when they're 50, some when they're 52, some when they're 54, some when they're 56, some when they're 58, some when they're 60, some when they're 62, some when they're 64, some when they're 66, some when they're 68, some when they're 70, some when they're 72, some when they're 74, some when they're 76, some when they're 78, some when they're 80, some when they're 82, some when they're 84, some when they're 86, some when they're 88, some when they're 90, some when they're 92, some when they're 94, some when they're 96, some when they're 98, some when they're 100.

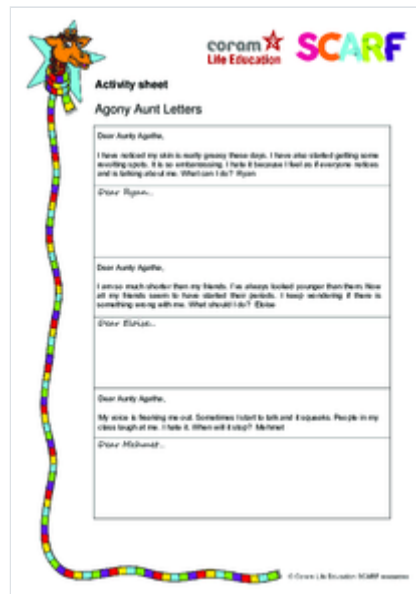
6. Girls start puberty earlier than boys

True    False    Not sure

It is often the case that girls start puberty earlier than boys. It's a process that takes time and changes which happen over time. Some girls start when they're 10, some when they're 12, some when they're 14, some when they're 16, some when they're 18, some when they're 20, some when they're 22, some when they're 24, some when they're 26, some when they're 28, some when they're 30, some when they're 32, some when they're 34, some when they're 36, some when they're 38, some when they're 40, some when they're 42, some when they're 44, some when they're 46, some when they're 48, some when they're 50, some when they're 52, some when they're 54, some when they're 56, some when they're 58, some when they're 60, some when they're 62, some when they're 64, some when they're 66, some when they're 68, some when they're 70, some when they're 72, some when they're 74, some when they're 76, some when they're 78, some when they're 80, some when they're 82, some when they're 84, some when they're 86, some when they're 88, some when they're 90, some when they're 92, some when they're 94, some when they're 96, some when they're 98, some when they're 100.

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**Puberty statements: true or false? Teacher answers and guidance sheet** - one copy, for reference



**Agony Aunt Letters** Activity Sheet- print enough for 1 per person or in pairs

## DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements

- **Relationships Education** **Respectful relationships** 1. The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- **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.
- **Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education)** **Changing adolescent body** 2. About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

## PSHE Association Learning Opportunities

- 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).
- H45. That female genital mutilation (FGM) is against British law, what to do and whom to tell if they think they or someone they know might be at risk.

## National Curriculum Links

- English Y5 & 6 Writing - composition Draft and write by using further organisational and presentational devices to structure text and to guide the reader [for example, headings, bullet points, underlining].
- Science Y5 Animals including humans Describe the changes as humans develop from birth to old age.
- Science Y5 Animals including humans (Non-statutory guidance) Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.