

Sample answer – additional support for young people during puberty

- A trusted adult in all settings.
- On-going work on the development of the young person's voice and self-esteem so that they understand that they do not have to accept everything that may happen to them and they are confident to raise concerns.
- Clear information about body changes presented in an accessible format, including regular reminders as necessary.
- Excellent modelling by staff in encouraging privacy and dignity while managing all aspects of personal care. (Cleanliness can be a pressing issue in puberty. Schools and families may collaborate in supporting young people to develop strong personal hygiene regimes which will continue into adult life.)
- Additional emphasis on being grown up, becoming an adult, etc., and the positive side of that.
- Specific routine taught to manage menstruation as privately and independently as possible at home, school and in wider community.
- Specific teaching about appropriate and inappropriate touching.
- Specific teaching about managing emotions in an accessible format.
- Clear and consistent messages about where and when masturbation is not acceptable without engendering guilt.
- Specific teaching about sex as appropriate to cognitive level.
- A structured sexuality and relationship learning programme which may include the following topics: body parts, pubertal changes, personal care and hygiene, medical examinations, social skills, sexual expression, and the rights and responsibilities of sexual behavior.

This can be a particularly difficult time for parents and they are likely to value support from the school around managing puberty.