

Match learning to children's development

Develop classroom programmes that respect the diverse values and beliefs of students and of the community.

In years 1 to 3

- Children are interested in pregnancy and birth. Some may be aware of the connection between “making babies” and sexual pleasure.
- Some children will become aware that not everyone is heterosexual.
- Children have a growing awareness of sanctioned gender roles, such as “girls don’t like motorbikes” or “boys don’t cry”.

Focus areas for this age group include:

- friendships, belonging and the different types of relationships
- changes in growth and identifying body parts
- questioning and discussing gender stereotypes and norms
- Understanding personal identities and how they can differ
- identifying stereotypes
- contributing to and following inclusive guidelines
- sharing and expressing feelings.

In years 4 to 8

- All children need to know about pubertal change before it happens
- Sometimes children feel anxious about puberty
- Children may go into and out of gender segregation, applying harsh gender stereotypical rules and censure to each other’s behaviour
- Some children will have an interest in expressing their sexuality in dress
- Children may begin to show an interest in ‘who loves who’

Focus areas for this age group include:

- pubertal change as well how to support ourselves and others through that change
- developing a positive body image
- how pubertal change can impact on wellbeing, and how it relates to social norms around gender and sexuality
- how social messages and stereotypes about relationships, sexuality, and gender affect your wellbeing, and the wellbeing of others
- planning strategies for positive relationships
- messages related to gender, sexuality, and diversity.

