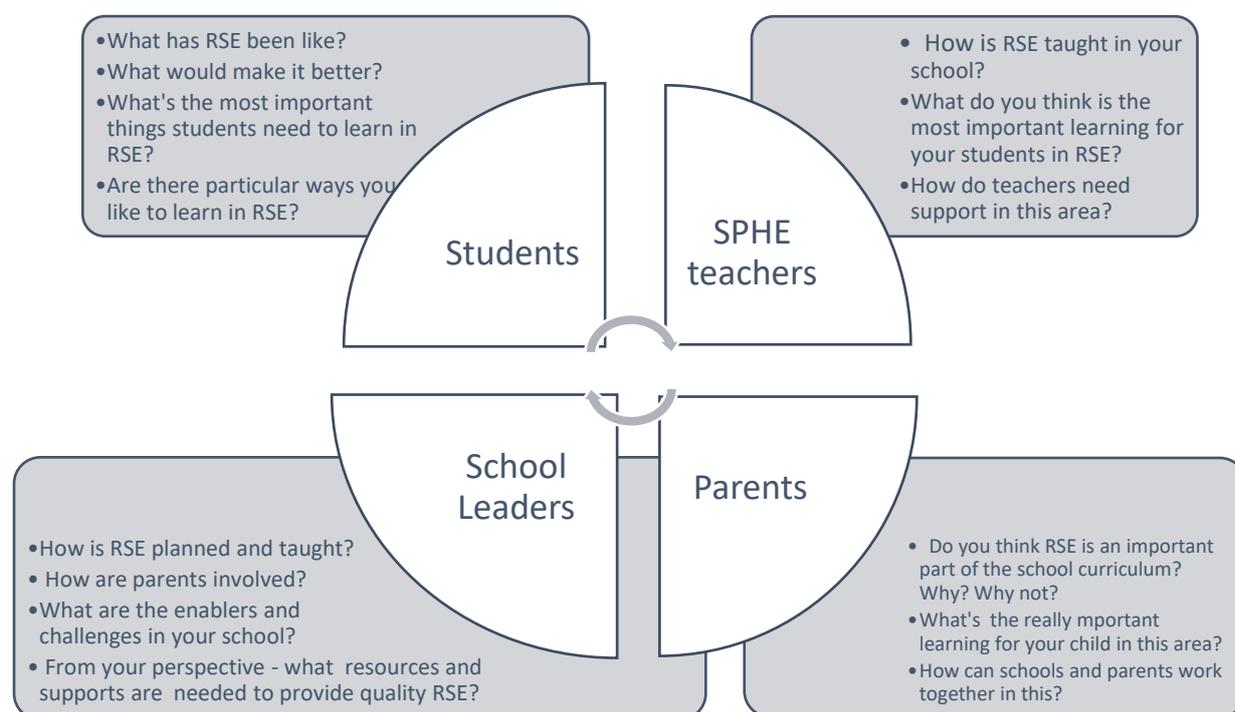


Relationship and Sexuality Education Review in post-primary schools

The NCCA has been charged with undertaking a major review of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in primary and post primary schools. This provides an important opportunity to consult with schools and hear directly from teachers, students, school leaders and parents about the reality of RSE as experienced in schools and what supports are needed to improve learning in this important area. Some of the questions that will frame consultations in schools are set out below.

Key Questions



Methods of engagement

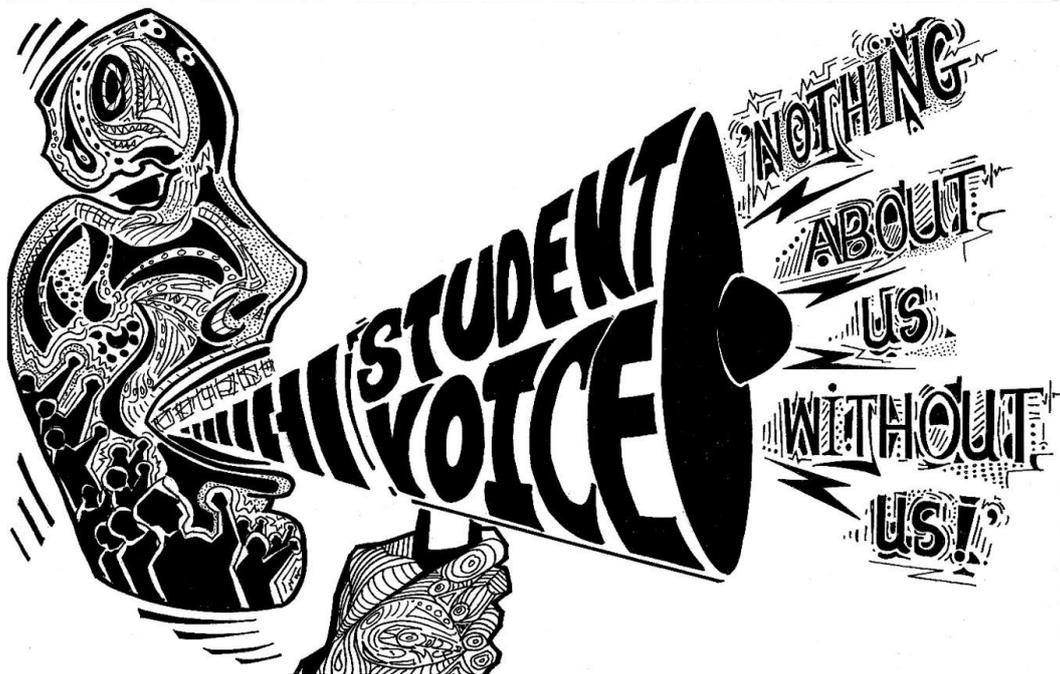
Focus groups will be the main method of engagement with school groups. Questions such as those listed above will frame the conversation with schools leaders, teachers, parents and students.

An online tool will be developed to facilitate parental engagement for those parents who cannot attend a meeting or are reluctant to share their views in a public space. The survey tool will also provide a link to the NCCA website where people can find information about the review and RSE's place within the curriculum.

Student voice

'Authentic listening to the voices of children and young people is central to the development of programmes that provide positive and relevant experiences of RSE. 'Authentic listening happens when the views and suggestions of young people are sought and acknowledged, and there is a meaningful response to them' (Flynn, 2014)

When working with children and young people we are informed by best practice in student voice and participation as well as child safety guidelines. (See appendix 3).



(Graphic created by students at St Joseph's Secondary School, Rush)

Consulting students about RSE in post-primary schools

Sample introduction

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) advises the Minister for Education and Skills about curriculum (what is taught in schools) and assessment (how to collect evidence about what students have learnt).

Right now, the NCCA is reviewing the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) which is part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) in both primary and post primary schools.

We want to hear your views because young people have a right to have a say on matters that affect them. Also we recognise that when it comes to their learning students are the 'experts' and are best placed to say what works and what doesn't.

Specifically, the NCCA wants to hear your ideas about how RSE could be made better. The NCCA will use the feedback from students to improve the RSE programme so that it better meets the needs of students.

First years survey (Appendix 1)

A short survey is attached which can be used to open up a conversation with 1st year students about their primary school memories and experience of RSE. The advantage of this approach is that students can respond honestly and have a voice which doesn't always happen in group settings. This might work particularly well for younger students who are still finding their feet in post primary schools and may not feel comfortable talking out loud with their peers.

Fourth and sixth years' workshop (Appendix 2)

This workshop can be used with a whole class group, or with a focus group from the same class/the same year group. It would require a minimum of one hour and preferably 1 hour and 20 mins. It is important that the students involved are from the same year group but represent a range of experiences and backgrounds. It may be the case that some students may need time to build their confidence to participate fully in such groups. That said, it is important to include the quieter, less vocal students and students with special educational needs in order to understand the full range of experiences of RSE in the school.

Guidelines for safe approaches to consultation (Appendix 3)