



Challenge questions

Challenge questions promote critical thinking. Drawing from what parents have said during our small group chats and via the national survey we pose challenge questions across 10 key areas for consideration.

1. Resources for parents to support learning at home

While most parents are talking and learning with their child across the themes and topics raised in *theChat*, they have also asked for support in the shape of information on what is age-appropriate learning, they have requested book suggestions and online resources to explore with their child.

Who is best placed to signpost to, or develop the advice and learning materials that parents want to support learning at home? How do we ensure that resources meet the needs of parents of children with additional support needs?

2. Keeping children safe online

Parents are increasingly aware that when they give their child a smartphone or access to the digital world there is a responsibility to protect them from harm. Parents worry about risks in the online world – predatory adults, bullying, harmful social media content, the impact of sending and sharing images, and of pornography. Parents want access to information that helps them to understand the online/digital world and what they can do to protect their child. They also want support from government and from schools to take action that supports efforts at home.

Who is best placed to signpost to, or develop the advice and learning materials that parents need to keep their children safe? What are schools, local authorities and government doing or planning to do by way of guidance, legislation or influence on social media companies that will support parents to keep their children safe?

3. Home/School communication

Around half of nursery/primary school parents feel informed about school-based learning, around 1 in 4 parents of secondary school learners feel informed. Three-quarters of parents want to know more.

What is needed to support and ensure nurseries and schools engage parents in a conversation about RSHP learning? How can we support and encourage nurseries/schools to provide links to the learning materials they use? Specifically, when using material from the national RSHP resource at www.rshp.scot or from resources provided by the Scottish Catholic Education Service <https://sces.org.uk/health-relationships/> and here <https://sces.org.uk/equality-learning-and-teaching/>

4. Professional training and competence

Parents want to ensure that educators are confident and competent when they deliver nursery and school-based RSHP learning.

How are nursery practitioners and schoolteachers trained to deliver RSHP learning? Can information about professional training be shared with parents so that they can be assured about professional confidence and competence? Are there gaps in what is on offer to practitioners and teachers? Is there consistency of training and support across the country? What is needed to support practitioners and teachers when it comes to teaching and learning for children with additional support needs/disability?

5. Children with additional support needs and learning at school

Parents of children with additional support needs support their child's learning at home and want to see the best experiences of RSHP learning in school – whether a mainstream or ASN setting.

How are children with ASN accessing RSHP learning in mainstream settings? What approaches or adjustments are required to ensure that children with additional support needs participate, comprehend and learn alongside their peers? How are children in ASN settings accessing RSHP learning? What shared home/school approaches would support learners to participate, comprehend and gain skills and knowledge?

6. Age and stage appropriateness of teaching and learning materials

Most parents are content with most nursery and school-based learning. However, there are concerns about some topics being introduced too early. Parents can have concerns when resources for learning are offered in broad stages, rather than as learning material for a specific age or year group.

How are teaching and learning resources (at the national RSHP resource www.rshp.scot or provided by the Scottish Catholic Education Service - <https://sces.org.uk/equality-learning-and-teaching/>) informed by evidence on child development and age appropriateness? If they are, how is this communicated? In consideration of concerns, can national teaching and learning materials be reviewed, to affirm they are grounded in what we know about child development, age-appropriateness and readiness to learn? Are there benefits in structuring national resources by more targeted age or year groupings?

7. Learning through the prism of faith and culture

The religious beliefs of a parent guides how they fulfil their role as their child's primary and most important educator, this will include how they talk and learn about the topics of interest to theChat. It will also inform opinions about school-based learning.

How might we better support nursery and school practitioners and teachers to understand how faith and culture inform learning at home? How might home/school communication be used to answer parent questions, allay fears and build respect and trust around home and school-based learning?

8. Learning in single sex groups/The experience of girls and young women

All girls/young women and boys/young men have a right to learning as part of the health and wellbeing curriculum. Some parents have concerns about the current approach of teaching and learning on all RSHP topics in mixed sex groups. TheChat has also heard broader concerns about the lived experience of girls and young women, and the need to address harmful social media content, misogynistic language and behaviours, the importance of consent and consider the impact of pornography on attitudes towards women.

Is it time to reflect on the possible benefits of single sex learning for some elements of RSHP learning? Could schools do more by way of teaching and learning that addresses gender/sex-based harassment, hate or violence?

9. The impact of the pandemic/When children are out of school

When children are absent from school – as they were during the pandemic, or because of non-attendance now – parents are concerned that children have lost or will lose out on learning as part of their health and wellbeing curriculum, including RSHP learning.

Did children and young people lose out on RSHP learning because of disruption to learning during the pandemic? Who makes up for lost learning? When a child is not in school, what is done to make RSHP learning available?

10. Rebuilding trust

Trust has been lost between some parents and schools when it comes to RSHP learning. But most parents do continue to trust some sources for information and support – including the NHS and their child's school.

How can we support the rebuilding of relationships? Following theChat – who keeps the conversation going, and how?