



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne
Department of Education & Children's Services

Summary Paper - Parent Consultation
Relationships, Sexual Health, and Parenthood
11th March 2024



INTRODUCTION

Copies of the consultation were circulated digitally to parents of all children in Lewis Primary Schools and their attached Sgoil Àraich's.

INFORMATION ABOUT COMPLETION

In total, the RSHP Working Group received 406 responses from a total of 1016 families which represents 40% of families. Of these, 40 responses were discarded as parents had made duplicate submissions, or because parents had not identified themselves appropriately. The final number of responses which were included in the analysis was 366 from 1016 families. This then represents an overall response rate of 36%. Typical survey response rates can lie anywhere in the region between the 5% to 30% range.

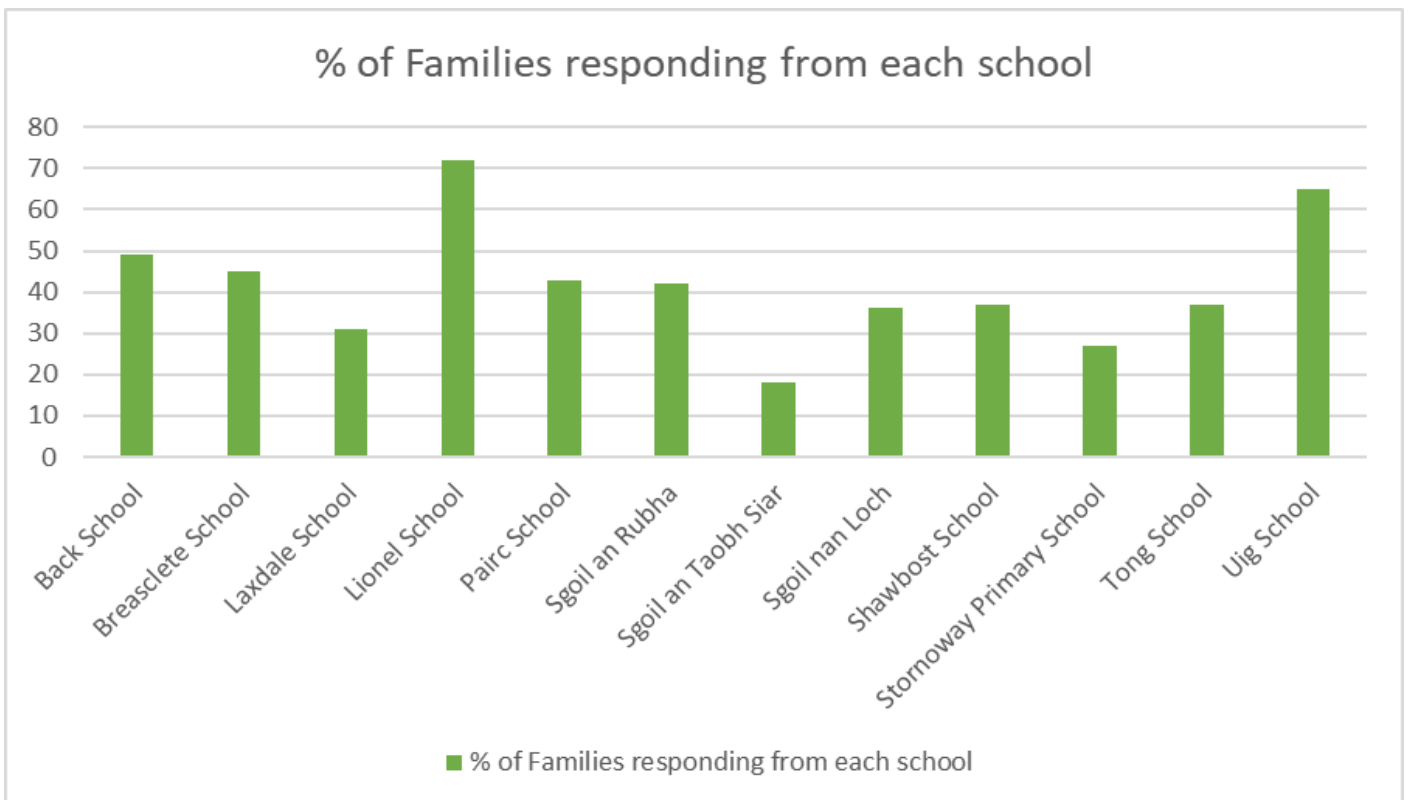
Please note that all percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number so responses may not total exactly 100%.

SECTION 1 - PERSONAL DETAILS

Q1 – Name

Responses where parents were unidentifiable were excluded from the analysis. As indicated to parents in Question 1 only one submission per family has been verified. Respondents who stated that they had visited the Lewis Blog had their responses included. Where two parents of a child indicated this, the first response submitted was the one which was accepted.

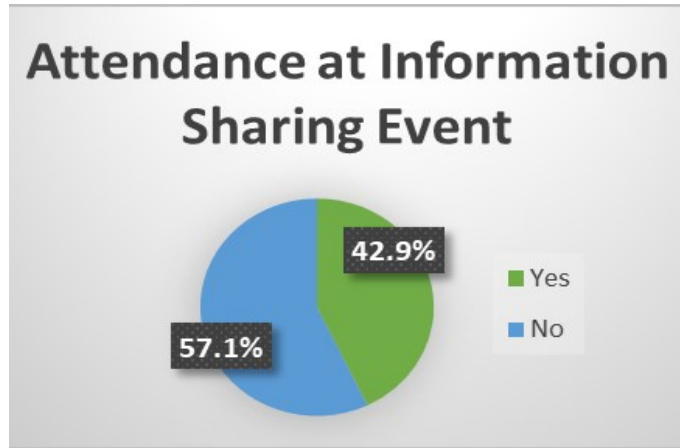
Q2 – Respondents indicated which schools their children attended.



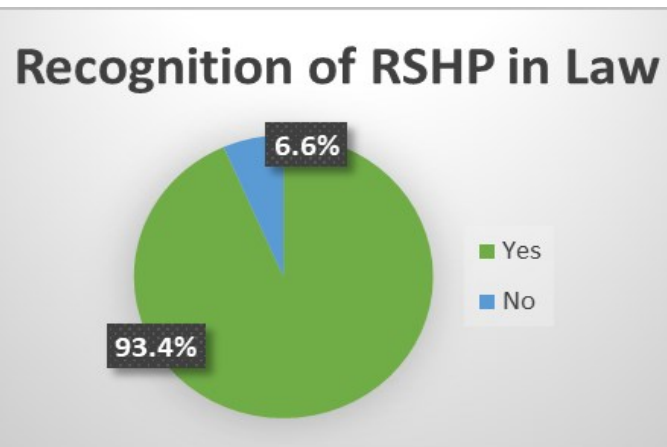
The lowest percentage of respondents from any one school was 18% whilst the highest percentage of respondents from any one school was 72%.

Q3 - Information Sharing Event

- 42.9% of respondents indicated that they had previously attended an Information Sharing event at their child(ren)s school, whilst 57.1% had not.



SECTION 2 - STATUTORY MATTERS

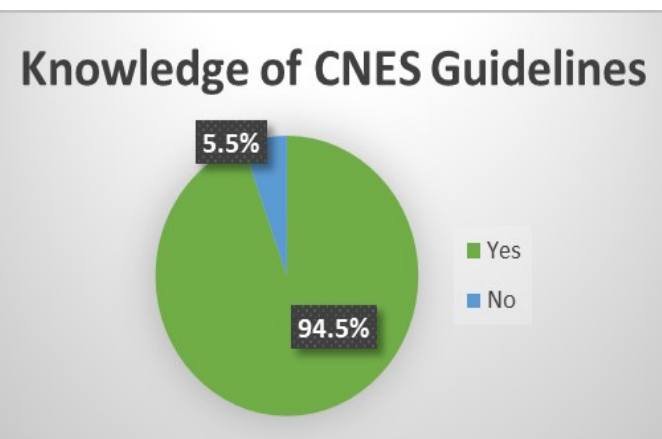
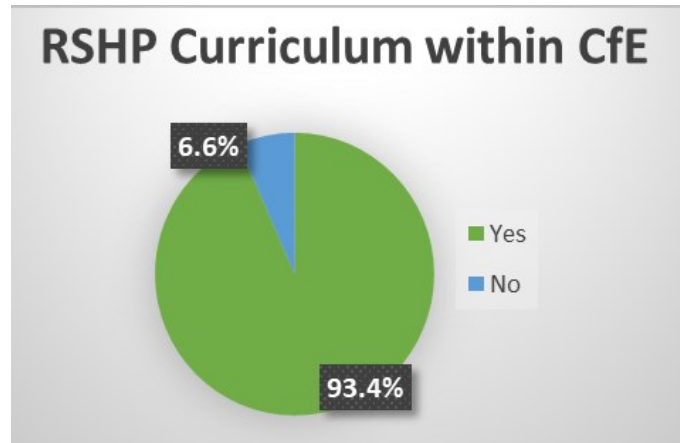


Q4 – Recognition in Law

- 93.4% of respondents indicated that they understood that RSHP Education is recognised in law in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000) and that there is national statutory guidance in place that defines how RSHP Education in Scotland should be conducted.

Q5 – RSHP within CFE

- 93.4% of respondents indicated that they understood that the RSHP curriculum in Scotland is set out in Health and Wellbeing experiences, outcomes and benchmarks within Curriculum for Excellence.

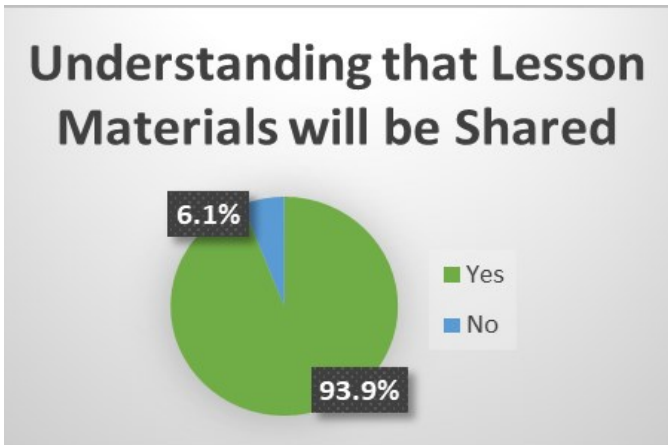
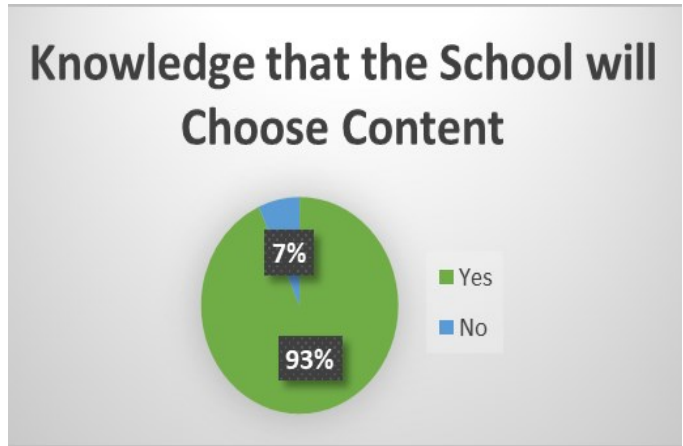


Q6 - Local Western Isles Guidance

- 94.5% of respondents indicated that they were aware that the Comhairle had established local Western Isles Guidance for the delivery of RSHP.

Q7 – Matter for the School to Choose Content

- 93% of respondents understood that it was a matter for the school to choose the content of RSHP lessons, selected from the approved planners and resources on the Lewis Blog, taking account of national and local guidance.

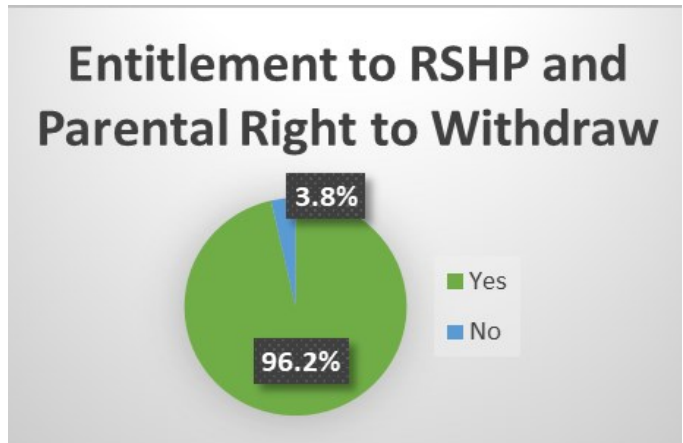


Q8 – Sharing of Lesson Materials

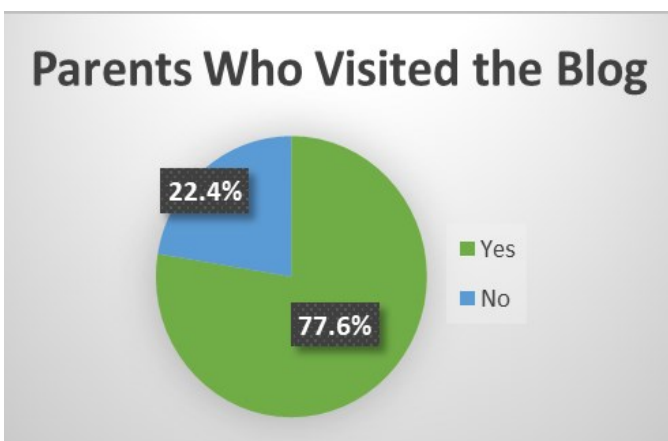
- 93.9% of respondents understood that the exact lesson materials to be used would be shared with parents in good time, by school staff every year, prior to any teaching taking place.

Q9 – Child’s Entitlement to RSHP and Parental Right to Withdraw

- 96.2% of Respondents indicated that they understood that their child(ren) had an entitlement to access RSHP education and that as parents, they also had a right to withdraw them from the sexual health and physical changes elements of the programme.



SECTION 3 - QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BLOG

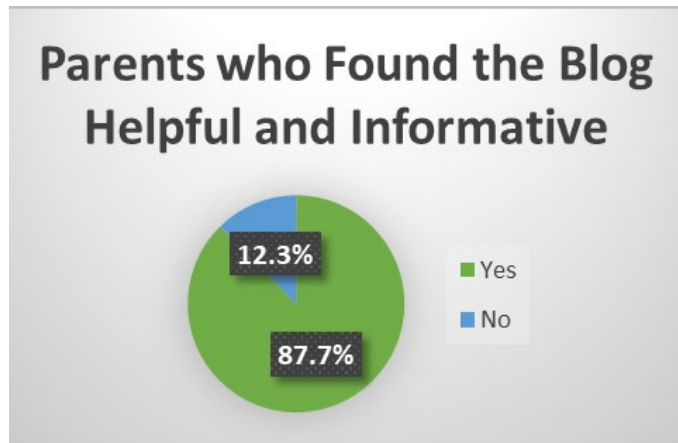


Q10 – Visited the Blog

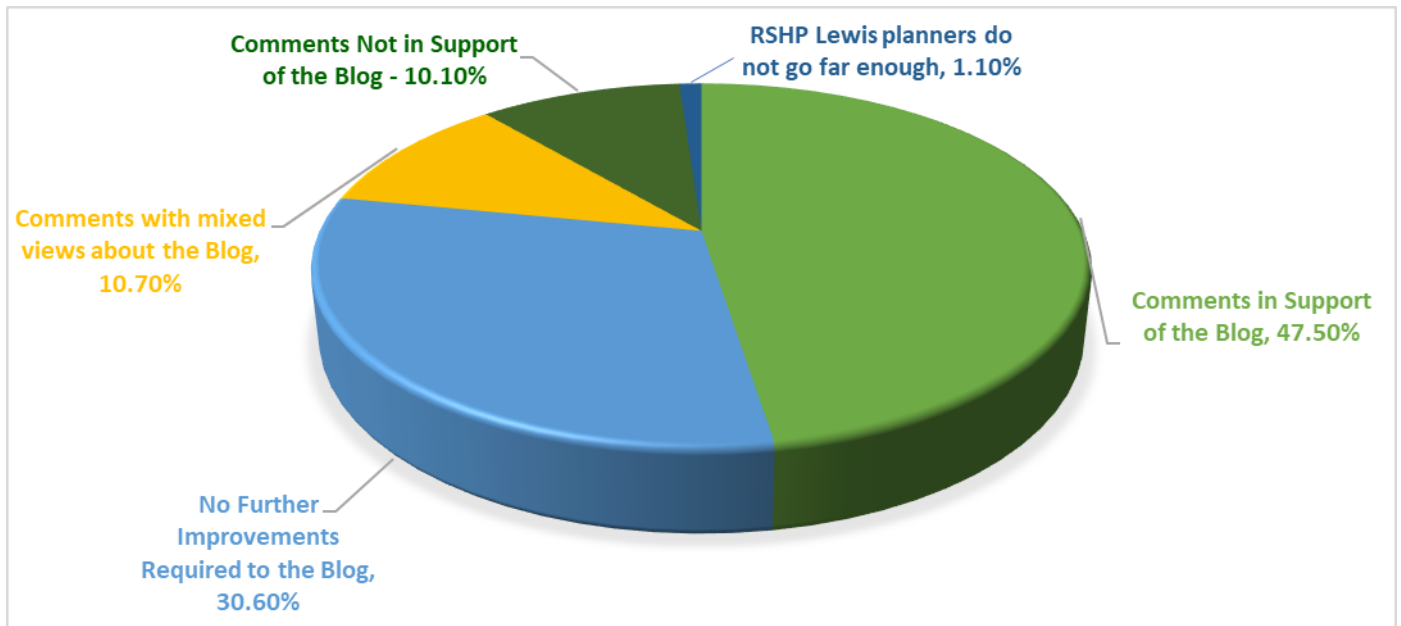
- 77.6% of respondents stated that they had visited the Lewis Blog and viewed the programme materials and resources.
- 22.4% of respondents who stated that they had not visited the Blog were unable to answer Q11 to Q15 which followed, all of which were about the Blog.

Q11 – Blog- Helpful and Informative or Not?

- 87.7% of respondents who answered this question stated that they had found the material on the Lewis Blog to be helpful and informative.



Q12 – Open Question about Parental Views



Key Themes

Comments in support of the Blog - 47.5%

- Almost half of the parents who viewed the Blog positively, stated that they believed the Lewis Blog to be informative and easy to navigate.
- Almost one third of parents who commented on the Lewis Blog said that they were pleased with the content of the lessons which had been prepared.
- A few parents commented positively on the amount of work which had been done in order to make adjustments to the programme to bring it into line with the Experiences and Outcomes and the Curricular Benchmarks at the milestone stages.
- A number of parents also indicated their appreciation of this, for the benefit of their children.

Comments with Mixed Views about the Blog - 10.7%

A small number of parents made comments which were mixed and had both positive and negative points within. The key themes which this group of parents outlined were that:

- The Blog was appreciated by parents but a number felt it could be simplified and made easier to navigate. A small number of parents indicated that they felt the Blog to be too education focused, and overwhelming for parents.
- Some parents felt that not all resources were easy to access on all devices. A few parents felt that links to live web pages would be easier to navigate than the PDF files.
- The clear message coming through from this group of parents was that they wanted to ensure that they would see all the content of what would be taught to their children **and** be given adequate time to view the resources, prior to learning taking place.
- Abstinence should be included in the programme and promoted as a valid life choice.

Key Themes Continued

Comments Not in Support of the Blog - 10.1%

Those parents who commented negatively about the Blog cited the following reasons for their dissatisfaction:

- They felt that it included unnecessary content. A small number of parents felt that the language was either too explicit or too advanced. They felt that the correct terminology for the body parts, taught throughout the programme was inappropriate.
- A few parents did not find the Blog easy to navigate and felt it was too teacher oriented. They wanted to see a simplified version of it.
- Some parents commented on not finding it easy to see where changes and revisions had been made and wanted a section added to show the different versions of the planners as a quick reference point.
- A very small number of respondents stated that school staff were not listening to the views expressed by some parents and councillors.

No Further Improvements Required to the Blog - 30.6%

- Almost one third of respondents (30.6%) indicated that they had no further suggestions for improvements to the Blog.

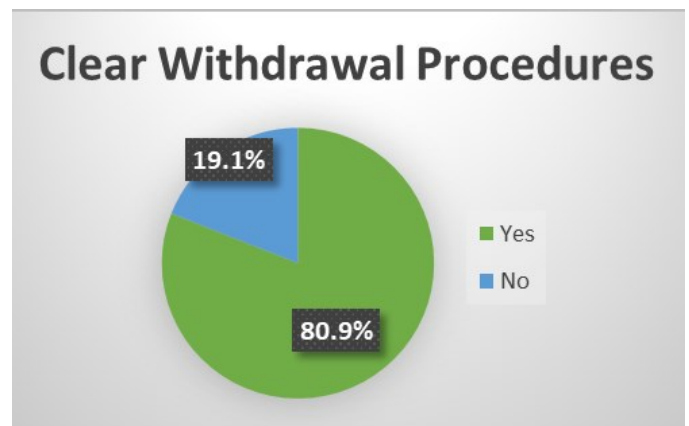
RSHP Planners Do Not Go Far Enough - 1.1%

A few respondents commented that the content of the programme outlined in the Blog did not go far enough in teaching RSHP Education. The key themes here were that:

- A few respondents wanted their children to receive the same entitlement as every other child in Scotland and felt that the National Resource (rsdp.scot) be the resource of choice for schools in the Western Isles. They also expressed views that they did not wish God's Loving Plan to be used.
- A small number of parents wanted to ensure that the RSHP programme would be delivered at pace as children have missed out in previous years.

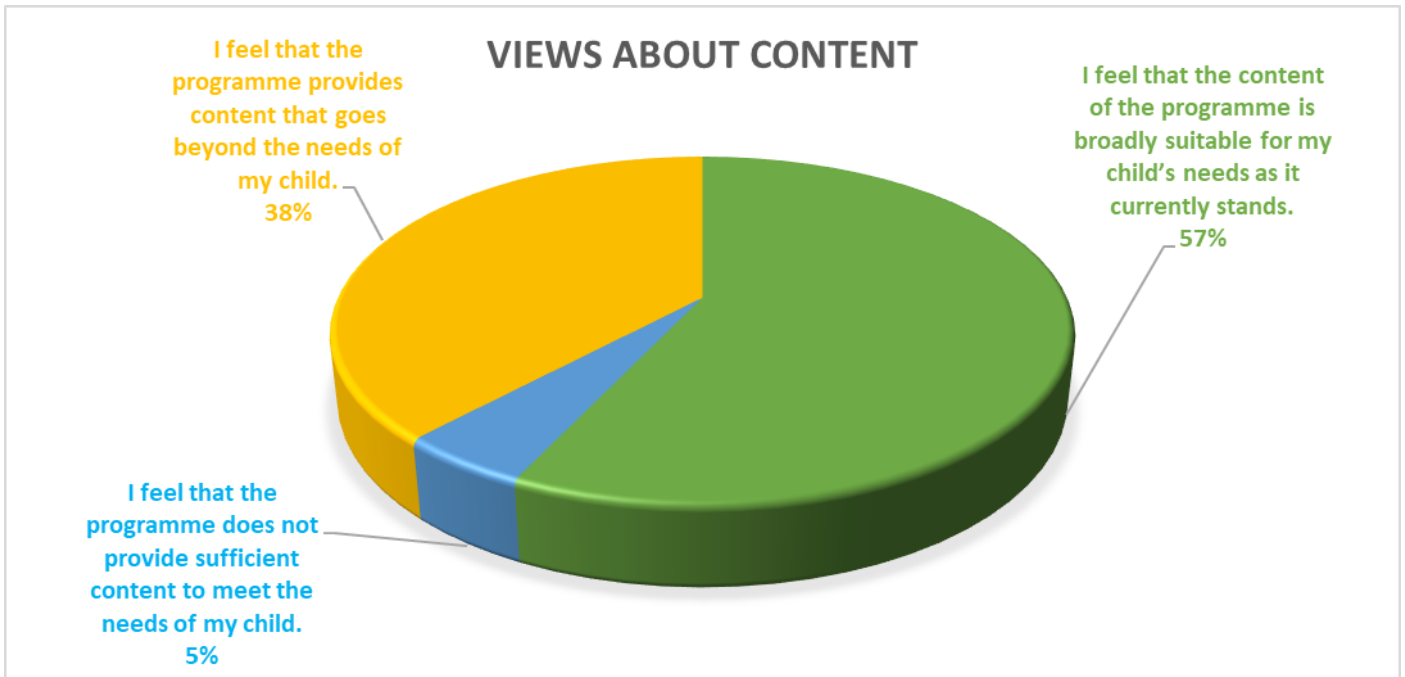
Q13 – Withdrawal Information

- 80.9% of respondents believed that information about how they could withdraw their child(ren) from the sexual health elements of the programme were explained and were sufficiently clear.

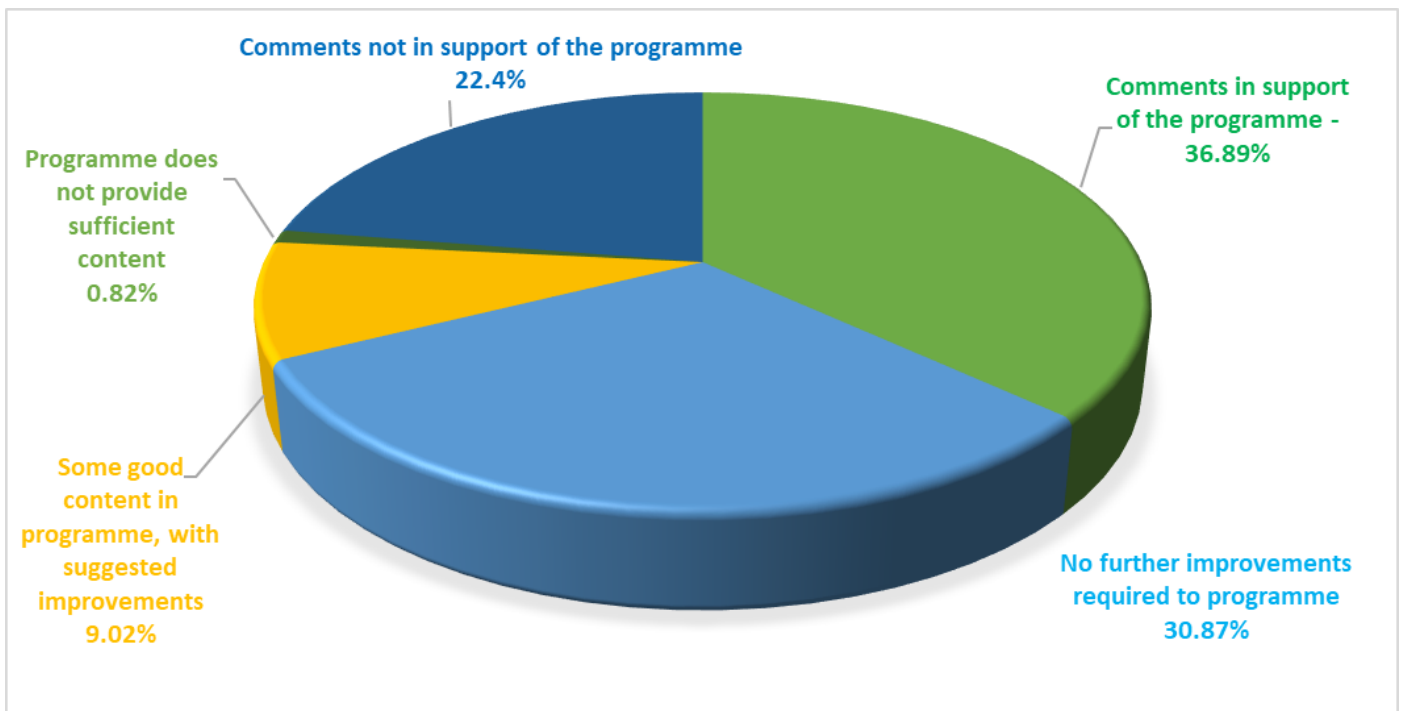


Q14 – Multiple Choice about Lewis Programme

The chart below details the views of respondents who answered this question.



Q15 – Open Question to provide detail on previous question



Comments which supported the suitability of the Programme - 36.89%

Just over one third of parents (36.89%) added further positive comments about how the Lewis RSHP Programme would meet the needs of their child(ren).

- One third of parents were happy with the content of the programme, they felt it was appropriate and suitable for their child/children.
- Respondents were reassured that they had an option to withdraw if required .
- Some respondents felt that the content of the programme did not go far enough and some felt strongly that their child/children should receive their full entitlement to RSHP Education.
- Respondents who supported the suitability of the programme, also strongly expressed the view that the Scottish Catholic Education Service's resource 'God's Loving Plan' should not be used at all in the teaching of RSHP within non-denominational schools.

Some Good Content in Programme with Suggested Improvements – 9.02%

A small number of respondents made comments which were mixed and had both positive and negative points within. The key themes which this group of parents outlined were as follows:

- The programme met the needs of respondents children but they had issues with areas which went beyond what they felt to be necessary for certain age groups.
- A number of parents remained unhappy with intimate body parts terminology being introduced from the Early Level and reference to masturbation at Second Level.
- A few parents felt that the sexual health information was being introduced at too early a stage for pupils. Some parents felt this would lead to children exploring sexuality before they were ready to do so.

Negative Comments About the Programme – 22.4%

Those respondents who commented negatively about the programmes of work which had been made available on the Blog cited the following reasons for their dissatisfaction:

- The content and the language being taught was not appropriate to the age and stage of children.
- A small number of respondents wanted to leave the teaching of RSHP solely to parents.
- A small number of respondents expressed concern about the suitability of the programme for children with additional support needs or children who have experienced trauma.

No Further Improvements Required to the Programme – 30.87%

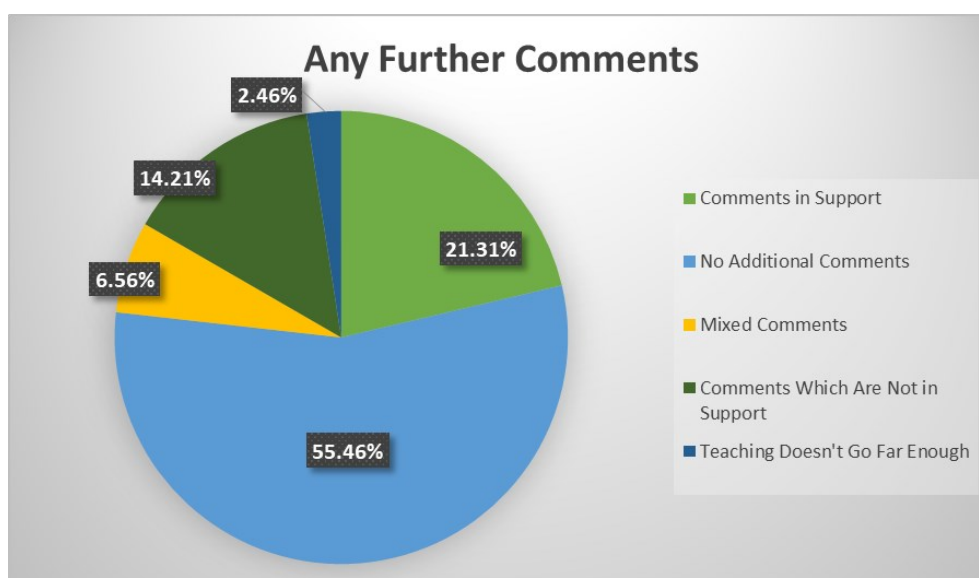
- Almost one third of parents (30.87%) indicated that they had no further comments to make in relation to how improvements could be made to the Lewis RSHP Programme. Neither did they make further comment about how the further improvements could meet the needs of their child(ren).

Programme Does Not Provide Sufficient Content – 0.82%

- A few parents stated that they did not believe that the content of the programme went far enough. These parents made it very clear that they wanted to see the programme going much further in terms of Relationship education to include more recognition of a society which acknowledges the LGBTQ+ community. They wanted to see greater diversity in the types of relationships being taught about and they wanted greater recognition for people who would identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

SECTION 4—FURTHER COMMENTS

Q16 – Any Further Comments



Key Themes

Parents were invited to make any further comments about the consultation. Over half the respondents (55.46%) had no additional comments to make and 21.31% of respondents made further comments in support. This represents 76.77% of respondents in this consultation.

Comments in Support of the Programme – 21.31%

- Respondents were happy that RSHP would now be taught in Lewis schools and that their children would get their full entitlement to RSHP education.
- Comments conveyed a strong sense of frustration to the delays and lack of teaching RSHP over a significant period of time and that decisions of the Comhairle had halted the teaching of RSHP, thereby letting children in the Western Isles down.
- Respondents indicated a view that teaching staff are and should be trusted to deliver age appropriate lessons to their classes.
- The majority of respondents appreciated that they have been consulted on the subject and they appreciated the continued dialogue with staff and being kept informed of developments.
- The majority of respondents expressed satisfaction that they would get advance notice of lessons and resources being taught.

Mixed Comments About the Programme– 6.56%

- Respondents expressed strong views that the proposed content was an improvement on the national resource (rshp.scot) and on previous teaching materials.
- The majority of these respondents indicated a willingness to trust staff in school and allow implementation to take place before making further comments on the suitability of the programme.
- The use of correct terminology for intimate body parts (at all levels) remained a concern.
- The majority of these respondents wanted to ensure that resources and lessons were shared with them timeously ahead of teaching.

Comments which are not in Support of the Programme– 14.21%

- The majority of respondents who were not in support of the RSHP programme stated that they felt that the content was unsuitable for children at the primary stages.
- A few parents expressed concern about the process of withdrawal. Some respondents expressed concerns about what the arrangements for their children would be if and when they were withdrawn.
- A few parents expressed that they were opposed to the programme because of their own religious beliefs.

No Additional Comments – 55.46%

- Over half of respondents (55.46%) indicated that they had no further comments to make in relation to the consultation.

Teaching Doesn't Go Far Enough – 2.46%

- Some parents stated that they wanted their children to receive their full entitlement of teaching in relation to RSHP and that they wanted more teaching around a society which recognises the LGBTQ+ community, as happens in all other areas of Scotland.
- Strong views were expressed about a 'vocal minority' who appeared to be driving opposition to the programme.
- A few parents felt that too much content had been removed from the RSHP programme and that subsequently there were gaps in the programme including digital technology and safeguarding in relation to RSHP.

CONCLUSION

Following the special meeting of the Comhairle on 25 April 2023, the Councillors unanimously accepted a report from the Department of Education, Skills and Children's Services. This report was passed with an amendment which required the Education, Skills and Children's Services Department to consult about the RSHP programme with parents, prior to implementation.

The purpose of this consultation was to provide parents and carers with an opportunity to express their views on the content of the Relationship, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) programme within Lewis schools and early years settings as found within the Lewis Blog (<http://bit.ly/lewisandharrisrshp>).

The consultation provided robust data around parental views of the RSHP Programme.

- The consultation results showed that respondents had a good understanding of the place of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education in the Scottish curriculum. Throughout, strong views were expressed that children should receive their full entitlement as happens in all other areas of Scotland. It also showed that respondents were eager for full implementation to take place in the current session (2023-24).
- Some parents remained dissatisfied with the content of the programme and for many of these respondents, it was clear that their issue was with the RSHP Organiser of the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum, Curricular Benchmarks and also with the current Statutory Guidance around RSHP. These were aspects that were out with the scope of the consultation because they are set nationally and are not determined by the Education Authority.
- Whilst there were some parents who were opposed to the RSHP programme and others who felt it did not go far enough, the great majority of respondents expressed satisfaction with the content within the RSHP programme which had been developed for Lewis Primary Schools. Respondents were appreciative of the bespoke nature of the RSHP programme which had been developed locally.
- Some parents did not find the Blog easy to navigate. It should be noted that the Blog was written by teachers for teachers and that in the interest of openness and transparency it has been made available to parents. As a result of the consultation, the Blog has now been updated and refreshed to make it more user friendly and accessible for all.