



Agreement to participate in a focus group - children/young people

Your school will have a subject inspection soon. As part of the subject inspection, an inspector from the Department of Education will visit your school. The purpose of the visit is to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching in **Physical Education**. During the inspection, the inspector will meet a group of students to hear from them about their experience of learning in the subject. This is called a focus group. If you would like to volunteer to take part in the focus group, please complete this form. To help you decide if you would like to take part, the Inspectorate has prepared a short information video about focus groups and inspection in post-primary schools. You will find the video at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d3832-guide-to-inspection>

Why do we have a focus group with students?

We believe that it is very important to hear from students about their learning experiences in the subject we are evaluating. When we meet students in their classrooms we talk to them about their learning, but we also meet with some students in a focus group as this allows students to speak in more detail with us about particular aspects of their learning.

When and where will the focus group happen and what will we talk about?

The focus group will take place in your school during the normal school day. It will last for one class period. During the focus group, the inspector will explain about the subject inspection and answer any questions you may have about the subject inspection. The inspector will then ask the group members some questions in order to hear about your experiences of learning in the subject. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. We will not discuss the work of individual teachers or individual students. A focus group will have up to ten students. If more than ten students volunteer to take part, then the inspector will select the participants from amongst those who have volunteered.

Participants in a focus group will

- join a group meeting with other students from the school
- share opinions about their experience of learning from their point of view.

Confidentiality and the right to withdraw

Even if you have volunteered to take part, you are free to withdraw from the focus group discussion at any time without giving a reason and without consequence. Students participating in the focus group will not be named or identified in any record of the focus group, in any feedback discussion with the school or in the inspection report.

How will the information from the focus group be used?

During the focus group the inspector will make some general notes of the discussion. At the end of the focus group meeting, the inspector will summarise the main points from the discussion that will be shared with the school. The inspector writes an inspection report following the subject inspection. In the report, the inspector will identify areas of good work in the subject, and any areas where the work could be improved. The report will be published on the Department of Education website: <https://www.gov.ie/en/school-reports/>

Assent Form (to be completed by the student) - Information about you

Your name :	Your year group:
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Please read the points and, if you agree, sign below:

- I am volunteering to take part in a focus group discussion with an inspector from the Department of Education and I understand why I am taking part.
- I understand that if more than ten students volunteer to take part the inspector will select from those who volunteered and that I may not be selected
- I know that I do not have to answer any questions during the focus group that I do not want to answer and that it is ok to just listen if I do not want to talk.
- I know that it is ok to leave the focus group meeting if I wish to do so and that I do not have to say why I feel like leaving. This is not a test or an exam.
- I know that I am going to talk about my learning experiences from my point of view.

Signed.....

Date.....



Consent Form to be signed by parent/guardian in the case of children/young people under 18 years of age who wish to participate in a focus group

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education inspects schools throughout the country in order to assess the quality of education being provided. A subject inspection is one way in which this is done. Your child's school has been notified that a subject inspection will be taking place in Physical Education.

About subject inspection

During a subject inspection, the inspector will examine the work happening in the school in regard to the subject with a view to encouraging good practice and, where appropriate, making recommendations for improvement in provision of the subject. As part of a subject inspection, the inspector evaluates and reports on different aspects under the following areas:

- Learning, teaching and assessment in the subject
- Provision and whole-school support for the subject
- Planning and preparation for the subject

Many activities will occur during a subject inspection including:

- Meetings with the principal and the subject teacher(s)
- A review of planning documentation along with relevant whole-school policies
- Evaluation of learning and teaching in classrooms, including talking to students and looking at their work in the subject
- A focus group with students

About focus groups with students

During the inspection, the inspector will meet a group of students to hear from them about their experience of learning in the subject. This is called a focus group. We invite your child to volunteer to participate in a focus group.

Why do inspectors have a focus group with students?

The Department considers dialogue between children/young people and inspectors to be a very important dimension of meaningful student participation. Inspectors want to hear about the students' experience of learning in the subject from their point of view. You will find further information about inspections at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d3832-guide-to-inspection>

What is involved for your child (time, location, etc.)?

Your child, along with other students, is invited to volunteer to take part in a focus group meeting with an inspector. The focus group meeting will take place during the normal school day and will last for one class period. A focus group will have up to ten students. If more than ten students volunteer, then the inspector will select a number from amongst those who have volunteered.

Right to withdraw

Your child is invited to take part in the focus group in a voluntary capacity. Therefore, they are free to withdraw from the focus group at any time without giving a reason and without consequence.

How will the information from the focus group be used?

During the focus group the inspector will record general notes from the discussion. At the end of the focus group meeting, the inspector will summarise the main points from the discussion that will be shared with the school. The inspector will write an inspection report following the subject inspection. The report will be published on the Department of Education website: <https://www.gov.ie/en/school-reports/>

How will confidentiality be maintained?

All relevant data protection and child protection requirements will be followed. The children/young people who take part in the focus group will not be named or identified in any record of the focus group or in the inspection report.

You are asked to complete the details below for your child if they wish to volunteer and you are happy for them to do so:

Details of child/young person

Name of child/young person :	Age:
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Parent/guardian

Name of parent or guardian:

Please read the points and if you give permission, sign below:

- ☐ I give permission for the child/young person named above to take part in a focus group.
- ☐ I understand that if more than ten students volunteer to take part the inspector will select a number of students from those who volunteered and that my child may not be selected.
- ☐ I understand that there will be suitable supervision during the focus group.
- ☐ I know that my child's participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the focus group at any stage without giving any reason.
- ☐ I am aware that my child will not be named/identified in any record of the focus group, in any discussion with the school or in the inspection report.

Signed..... (Parent/Guardian)

Date.....