

# Controversial Issues

## Framing Questions - a Structural Perspective

It is important to look at Issues from a *structural (public) perspective* rather than from a *personal perspective*.

Here are **four structural perspectives** to work with:

- |                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1) Human Rights          | 2) Legal    |
| 3) Social Responsibility | 4) Equality |

How this works:

- 1) **Human Rights:** Can provide a universally agreed foundation for examining issues, based on UDHR and UNCRC, for examining issues - e.g. What rights do people have? How can we balance conflicting rights?
- 2) **Legal:** Can provide an important context for discussions - e.g. What does Irish law say about ....?
- 3) **Social Responsibility:** Can encourage looking at individual, society or the state as actors with responsibility - e.g. What could a school or an individual or a community do in this situation?
- 4) **Equality:** Can provide a variety of lenses to view/discuss an issue - e.g. What is the impact on a person's ability to participate, be respected, or have a sense of belonging?

**Worked Example:** *What would you do if some told a homophobic joke?*

- 1) **Human Rights:** How do homophobic jokes affect the dignity of the person?
- 2) **Legal:** Does the law in Ireland go far enough to protect people from homophobia?
- 3) **Social Responsibility:** Should schools make a greater effort to tackle homophobia, including the telling of homophobic jokes? What could an individual do in the face of homophobia?
- 4) **Equality:** Can homophobic jokes impact on a person's right to be treated equally?