

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Brecknock Primary School
Headteacher:	Marianne Porter
RRSA coordinator:	Azhar Naeem
Local authority:	London Borough of Camden
Assessors:	Isobel Mitchell and Frances Bestley
Date:	31 st October 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

The assessors would like to thank all the pupils, staff, governors and parents for such a warm welcome to the school and for the opportunity to meet with and speak to a range of pupils and adults across the whole school community.

This was a re-accreditation visit. Level 2 was achieved previously in 2014. The evidence file was extremely comprehensive and very clearly ordered. It provided a well-documented report of how the school has maintained their gold status. An evaluation of the impact of RRS was also provided prior to the school visit which was helpfully cross-referenced to the evidence file. The headteacher and governors have resolved to maintain the positive impact of putting rights at the centre of their school and hence maintaining their Gold level status is one of the five priorities of the school's improvement plan.

Particular strengths of the school:

- Confident and articulate children who are very knowledgeable about rights
- All relationships in the school are positive and respectful. The whole school community has made effective use of rights based language and an understanding of the Convention to drive and maintain improvements in behaviour.
- The school has a strong reputation locally for its inclusive ethos both in terms of ensuring equal access to education for children with SEND and in creating a welcoming and non-discriminatory environment for children from all cultures and backgrounds.
- Strong leadership and support from staff, parents and governors in being a Rights Respecting School.

Outcomes for Strands A, B and C have all been met.

2. REQUIREMENTS BEFORE ATTAINING GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

None

3. MAINTAINING GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING STATUS

Our experience has shown that there are actions that have proven useful in other RRSA schools and settings in helping them to maintain and build on their practice at Gold level. Here are our recommendations for your school:

- Maintain your inclusive ethos by continuing to embed children’s rights as the foundation for school policy and practice
- Ensure that the website reflects the most up to date school charter and policies
- Develop further opportunities for children to learn about global issues in the curriculum and how these relate to rights
- Continue to develop the class charters in the Early Years to enable the youngest children to understand that whilst they can help to respect the rights of other children, it is the responsibility of adults to protect their rights
- Continue to develop opportunities for pupil-led advocacy and campaigning at a local and global level and ensure that fundraising is linked to learning about the issue the funding is trying to address.

4. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School context	An average sized primary school with 390 pupils on roll, 53% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium and 65% of pupils are EAL learners. The school has some children from two local women’s refuges, 10% of children have open social work cases. A short inspection in Nov 2017 judged the school as Good.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher / RRSA Lead / deputy headteacher / Inclusion Lead
Number of children and young people interviewed	Around 90 children in the focus group, steering group and class visits
Number of adults interviewed	4 teaching staff, 2 support staff, 2 parents 2 governors
Evidence provided	Learning walk, Written evidence, Assembly, Lessons

First registered for RRSA: 17/02/2011

Silver achieved: 06/07/2012

Gold Achieved: 23/06/2014

STRAND A: TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT RIGHTS

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is made known to children, young people and adults, who use this shared understanding to work for improved child wellbeing, school improvement, global justice and sustainable development.

Strand A has been achieved

The children knew a broad range of rights and were aware that they are universal, unconditional, inalienable, indivisible and inherent, even if they didn't use the actual words. They were clear that adults held the responsibility to protect rights as duty bearers. In the words of one of the pupils "*adults and governments have the responsibility to uphold rights and to make sure every child knows their rights.*" Even the youngest children knew some of the rights in the convention as one three year old boy told us without prompting when he approached us in the playground "*I will be safe*". The teachers were very clear about the importance of children knowing their rights. As an Early Years teacher put it "*we've got to empower these children to know what to expect from others.*" The children learn about their rights through assemblies, in class and through specific learning events such as Debate Days and Poetry Days. During the visit we observed a powerful and inspiring assembly encouraging children to have the confidence to believe that they can make a positive change in their own lives and for the lives of others. This was related to Article 12.

Teachers receive specific training on rights at least annually, and links to rights are made during training on other topics such as 'Be the best you can be' training, which was related to Article 29. Knowledge of rights and what it means to be a Rights Respecting School also forms part of the induction training for new staff. Teachers in all classes are required to link rights to their teaching and the question "What rights link to this topic?" is at the forefront on the curriculum planning process. The extent to which teachers have linked rights to their teaching is reviewed a part of their Professional Development Meeting. The teachers described how the process of linking rights to learning is a collaboration with the children who often come up with the links themselves, as one teacher put it "*we used to focus on specific rights of the week but now it has become more organic and bottom up*". Discussion and debate during topic work explicitly links to rights. For example, a topic on Inequality in South Africa and Nelson Mandela related to Article 2 (non-discrimination) and Article 8 (right to an identity). One parent commented about how her child listens to the news at school and at home and is "*able to apply a rights framework to help him to understand global issues*".

STRAND B: TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH RIGHTS – ETHOS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Actions and decisions affecting children are rooted in, reviewed and resolved through rights. Children, young people and adults collaborate to develop and maintain a school community based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation; this includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes wellbeing.

Strand B has been achieved

The rights respecting ethos of the school is very strong. The current headteacher came into the school in 2014 just after their first accreditation at Level 2. In her words *“I couldn't believe the feeling of happiness in the school despite the challenging circumstances of many of the children here”*. She felt that there had been a complete turn - around in the school since 20 years ago and that the RRSA had made a huge difference particularly to relationships within the school. *“Everyone here credits the RRSA as the trigger for this change”*. The children could give examples of how their school facilitates them to enjoy their rights. They talked about how they are protected from harm by teachers in the playground and how they have access to clean water, and healthy food. They also felt that their teachers were very good at helping them if they were struggling with their learning and mentioned how the SENDCO supports children with their learning needs. School policies and the Brecknock values are explicitly linked to rights. The Brecknock values and their connection to rights are prominently displayed around the school and the pupils are aware of their importance and how it helps them to create a positive environment for learning.

A rights based approach to behaviour is having a positive impact on behaviour and relationships in the school. The staff all have lanyards which highlight a selection of Children's Rights and include prompts for rights based language. They use this as a reminder to themselves in relation to speaking to the children respectfully and listening to their views as well as using it to remind the children how they can respect the rights of others. Class charters, the playground charter and the Brecknock way (school charter of values and rights) have been developed collaboratively with the children and are frequently referred to in order to support rights respecting behaviour in the school. Children are rewarded for rights respecting behaviour, through certificates and medals presented every week and their names being highlighted in the 'golden book' which is shared in the newsletters. The children were keen to stress that poor behaviour very rarely happened but that when it did, children were given the chance to reflect on their behaviour and think about how they may have affected the rights of others, *“the rights ambassadors and teachers talk to the children who have dropped to red on the behaviour chart and use rights to help them change their behaviour.”* The children have been involved in developing the behaviour policy and felt it was fair. They had learnt about the importance of being treated with dignity which one child described as meaning *“feeling comfortable with who you are, respecting yourself and others.”* The children also explained how lunch time buddies used rights to resolve conflicts and look after the little ones in the playground because *“no child should feel upset when they are at play”*. The impact of a rights based approach on improving behaviour was also noted by parents, staff and governors. As one governor explained, *“the playground charter provides a fairer framework for behaviour, there is no longer a resentment of authority - the atmosphere is more measured and calm”*.

The children understand how the school helps to keep them safe and know who to go to if they do not feel safe. The children felt that the playground charter, the staff and playground buddies helped keep them safe and reduced any incidences of bullying which they felt were very rare. The Ofsted report from 2017 highlighted the fact that school leaders and governors place a high importance on pupils' safety. 92% of children said that they felt safe at school in the RRSA survey. Whilst conducting the learning tour we observed a Year 1 workshop from the London Fire Brigade on Fire Safety. Some of the pupils are designated as 'digital leaders' and part of their role is to educate the other children about on-line safety.

The Headteacher told us that 10% of the children in the school have open social work cases and therefore they can be very vulnerable. The school buys into the Tavistock Outreach Primary Support programme to support children with difficult home environments. The children were very aware of how the school encourages a healthy lifestyle by encouraging them to eat vegetables and by providing opportunities for sport working with experienced coaches and Arsenal in the Community. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award. In terms of mental health, the children are supported through a school buddy system and resilience and a positive attitude is encouraged through school

initiatives relating to the Olympic Legacy programme “Be the best you can be” and use of the Growth Mind-set. The pupils were very comfortable with the idea of raising any concerns they had with the Assistant Head or using the ‘worry box’.

The children were very enthusiastic about the system in school used to reward their achievements and rights respecting behaviour. The school SENDCO and head of inclusion explained the importance that she places on Article 12 and Article 29 to guide her in her work, *“I am very conscious of pupil voice, and I believe every child we have can reach their potential”*. The pupils were aware of how the school works to ensure that everyone is included no matter what challenges they face. *“Everyone has someone to look after them”*. There are a good range of extra- curricular clubs at the school which are provided at very low cost so as not to exclude families on low incomes. The diversity of the school community is celebrated through events such as community festivals and the family supper.

The children talked about how their class charters helped them to respect the right of all children to learn. The teachers actively involve the children in making decisions about their learning. As one of the TAs commented *“There is much more dialogue in the class. The learning isn’t just one-way”*. At the beginning of a new topic the children are consulted on what they already know and what they would like to know and at the end, the class holds a debate on a key question relating to rights, and the children review what they have learnt. The Growth Mind-set is used extensively to help the children to believe in themselves and get the most from their learning. The matrix system for home learning allows the children to choose what project they would like to undertake.

STRAND C: TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR RIGHTS – PARTICIPATION, EMPOWERMENT AND ACTION

Children are empowered to enjoy and exercise their rights and to promote the rights of others locally and globally. Duty bearers are accountable for ensuring that children experience their rights.

Strand C has been achieved

There are a number of different opportunities for children to take on leadership roles in the school, for example, the school council, the rights ambassadors, eco-committee, school buddies and digital leaders. There are 21 rights ambassadors who meet every week to plan rights based campaigns, plan and deliver assemblies and monitor rights charter and displays. They are proud of their role and take it seriously, they explained how they see themselves as role models for the younger ones to encourage them to show rights respecting behaviour and they also explained how *“we take assemblies – we want to make sure every child at least knows some of their rights.”* The school council conduct a survey to canvas opinion once or twice a year and give feedback to their classes following their meetings. During the recruitment process for the headteacher, the children were consulted on what sort of head they wanted, they interviewed and chose the questions and they asked how the candidate if appointed would maintain the RRSA. More recently, the children were consulted on the behaviour policy and their views led to changes to the traditional ‘red amber green’ traffic light system which now includes silver and super gold for children who have been particularly *“kind and caring”*. The eco-committee are creating a school garden.

The children have engaged in campaigns and fundraising locally and globally to protect children’s rights. For example, the children were concerned about road safety and were successful in persuading the local council to widen the pavement and make the road one-way. The school took part in the Shoe Share donations and they were aware that this related to supporting children around the world with their right to education. They also talked about how they had campaigned for family re-

UNITED KINGDOM

unification for refugees using the Paddington story and the Outright materials and raised money for Water Aid, Soccer Aid and for Syria. They have also taken part in the 'Why?' festival where they created banners about rights. One of the parents commented on how being a Rights Respecting School has *"informed their view of the world"*. The staff felt that through looking at global issues through a rights based lens the children had become more questioning for example asking why they were raising money for Syria. One of the support staff commented that this was helping the children to become more *"confident and more open"*.