

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

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| School: | St. Mary's C.E. Primary school |
| Headteacher: | Alison Daniel |
| RRSA coordinator: | Sarah Hodgkinson |
| Local authority: | Trafford |
| School context: | The school has 197 pupils on roll. 14% of pupils are supported through Pupil Premium, and 6% of the school population have an EHCP. 11% of the children speak English as an additional language. |
| Attendees at SLT meeting: | Headteacher and RRSA Coordinator |
| Number of children and young people spoken with: | 5 RRSA Ambassadors and a mixed group of 12 children. 2 classes were spoken with during the tour of the school. |
| Adults spoken with: | 1 teacher, 1 member of support staff who is also a parent and the Chair of Governors. Other staff were spoken with during the tour of the school. |
| Key RRSA accreditations: | Registered for RRSA: August 2018 Bronze achieved: February 2019 Silver achieved: November 2020 |
| Assessor: | Martin Russell |
| Date: | 29 th June 2023 |

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

St. Mary's C.E. Primary School has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessor would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, and staff for their warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with adults and children during the assessment and for the detailed evidence provided to support the process. Prior to the accreditation visit, the school completed a comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form and provided a good collection of digital evidence.

It was evident that children's rights are embedded across the school and underpin every facet of school life.

Strengths of the school include:

- Very articulate children who demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding of their rights; they discussed a wide range of articles and were confident in articulating the various concepts underpinning rights.
- Highly effective leadership of the rights related work at all levels, including from the children.
- The caring and deeply inclusive ethos of the school, where the values of fairness, equity and respect are lived and valued by children and staff.
- The use of rights language and a clear emphasis on the dignity of each person, are impacting relationships in a positive way.
- Pupils are listened to, involved in decision making and their voice is having an impact.

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:

- Create further opportunities for pupils and staff to learn about the history of children's rights and their place in the wider context of human rights.
- Find ways to broaden and systematise children's access to reliable news and information about current affairs.
- Explore ways to make your strong and embedded pupil voice mechanisms throughout the school even more ambitious, so that the children know that their voice can influence every aspect of school life.
- Continue to develop strategies to empower children to challenge injustice and create further opportunities for all year groups to be involved in campaigning and advocacy work on children's rights. Consider using the UNICEF UK [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#) to tackle a rights issue which impacts on the children locally.
- Seek to develop an ambassadorial role, sharing your strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA within your networks, and particularly with local secondary schools.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

| STRAND A | Highlights and comments |
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| <p>1. Children, young people and the wider school community know about and understand the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and can describe how it impacts on their lives and on the lives of children everywhere</p> | <p>Children and adults across the school have a very good knowledge and understanding of children’s rights and use the language of rights and respect extensively. The pupils demonstrated their understanding of the core principles underpinning rights, asserting that, <i>“Because rights are universal, every child should know their rights,”</i> and <i>“Adults should know about them, as the rights are how every child deserves to be treated.”</i> Pupils explained that many children around the world struggle to access all their rights, giving examples including the impact of the current war in Ukraine and the effect of natural disasters such as the earthquakes affecting Türkiye and Syria.</p> <p>Teachers of all classes, including EYFS, link children’s rights throughout the curriculum; one said, <i>“In the world today, our children are helped by the rights to navigate their lives and everything going on...We want them to have a strong view of their place in the world, to be global citizens.”</i> Extensive curriculum planning and examples of pupils’ work were shared, demonstrating that this is established practice. The children made clear that rights are a recurring theme in their learning, <i>“In Geography, for example, you can include the rights to compare life in different countries.”</i></p> <p>There is an explicit commitment to children’s rights by the leadership and by all staff, and RRSA and the CRC are referenced in policies and strategic documentation. The headteacher stated, <i>“RRSA is threaded through everything we do. Respect for all and treating everyone with dignity is exactly who we are as a school.”</i> Parents’ awareness of rights is helped by strong communication and approaches such as the CRC being regularly mentioned on Class Dojo and the school website; the children led a parent workshop in the Summer Term to share their RRS work. Parents value the school’s work on rights, with one saying, <i>“Knowing their rights helps them to be more confident and vocal. It’s good to hear them quoting their rights at home.”</i> RRSA is regularly discussed with governors and the Chair stated, <i>“The rights complement the ethos and values of our school; dignity, fairness, equity and inclusion go hand in hand with the CRC. RRSA gives the children a wider world perspective. We don’t want them to be too insular, this helps them to be outward looking.”</i></p> |
| STRAND B | Highlights and comments |
| <p>2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p> | <p>Children’s rights are highlighted through all aspects of school life and are a frequent feature of the weekly ‘Learning Circles’, pupil led, cross-age meetings which involve every child. Pupils of all ages expressed a deep awareness that the adults in their school are responsible for ensuring that all can access their rights and they enjoy nominating adults as ‘Duty Bearer of the Week’, a recent innovation by the Rights Ambassadors. Children described different mechanisms for referring any concerns such as worry monsters and talking to their ELSA Manager. The children spoke about life in school being fair but emphasised the importance of <i>“Everyone getting what they need, which is equity.”</i></p> |
| <p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a</p> | <p>A focus on dignity and mutual respect was evident in all relationships observed during the visit. Children talked about the importance of being aware of and respecting the rights of others. They pointed out that when there are fall-outs that they can’t resolve among themselves, <i>“Adults will always listen to both sides. Our teachers work on trust.”</i> Others spoke of adults being calm with people and</p> |

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| mutual respect for rights | not shouting, even when something has gone wrong. Staff observed how children, "...have become more vocal and empowered with behavioural things... better at understanding that other people's opinions are valid too." |
| 4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support. | There is regular reinforcement about all aspects of safety through assemblies, 'talk homework' and curriculum content. The latter includes work with external services related to safety and being protected such as Trafford Teams Together and First Response. The children spoke about the various ways in which they can raise a concern and seek support whether an issue has arisen at school or at home. The school's evaluation referred to the use of 'CPOMs to ensure there is a clear picture for every child and all pieces of the jigsaw are put together.' |
| 5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles. | The school prioritises all aspects of the children's emotional and physical wellbeing, and increasingly refers to support in these areas as a right. When the Mental Health Champions attended a recent training event, they commented to staff that it was 'all about our rights!' The children described the breadth of provision and support including the Rainbow Room, courses to support with anxiety and having brain breaks, "We can ask for one and get a card to go outside. It gives us dignity and respect." |
| 6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals. | "People need to believe they can be themselves...being different is a good thing." This perspective, shared by a child, captures the school's promotion of inclusive practice. Other pupils spoke of the empowerment that came following a child-led assembly about neurodiversity; a video made celebrating the numerous languages spoken in the school and how, "Y4 led our family worship all about Sikhism...it doesn't matter what religion you are." |
| 7. Children value education and are involved in making decisions about their education. | The children are fully engaged in their right to learn and described various ways in which they have ownership of their learning; one explained, "Having your voice heard and asking questions adds more to your learning." They described strategies such as choosing their own level of challenge for certain tasks and 'Fabulous Finishes' whereby, at the end of some topics, children deliver a presentation to their peers with parents and carers invited in too. Y5 and 6 pupils attend 'Parents' Evenings' and share evidence of their progress and learning. |
| STRAND C | Highlights and comments |
| 8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously. | Pupil leadership and voice is valued across the school. The Rights Ambassadors spoke proudly about the event they ran for parents, "To explain the rights to them...and we asked them what they thought about dignity." Adults act upon children's ideas with examples including greater access to fidget toys and ear defenders, litter picking introduced by the Eco Ambassadors, a design competition for the RRSA mascot and a request for access to the Rainbow Room at lunchtime for children finding the playground too noisy. There are chances to influence life in the classroom too, for example, in infant classes the children hold 'book votes' to choose the story they want to hear at the end of the day. |
| 9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally. | Engagement with the 'Walk with Amal' [a giant refugee puppet] project inspired the children to support Care for Calais, and they described their fund raising for other charities such as the local food bank and Centre Point, a venue for homeless people. The latter inspired one class to write to Mayor Andy Burnham. The children were most animated when describing their campaigning such as the 'No Idling' mission to reduce air pollution outside school and the most recent UNICEF UK OutRight campaign about healthcare. A teacher explained, "Our children have always wanted to do things for others, but RRSA has taken this to a new level. They see the rights in context and are empowered to go beyond fundraising." |