

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Ryders Hayes Primary School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Sally Miner
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Cheryl Heaton
<b>Local authority:</b>	Walsall
<b>Assessor(s):</b>	Hilary Alcock
<b>Date:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> May 2019

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The assessor would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, staff and governors 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 assessment visit, the school completed a comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form.

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

Particular strengths of the school include:

- Clear commitment and passion from the headteacher, SLT, governors with evident support from the whole school staff and parents, for ensuring that the school’s ethos, values and strategic development are underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is a school where *“Children’s rights are lived every day”*.
- Children have a strong knowledge of articles and were able to speak about these within the context of curriculum learning and charitable activities.
- Very positive relationships at all levels within the school with adults and children emphasising how a rights-respecting ethos has increased children’s ability to be more reflective and resolve any difficulties more respectfully and independently.

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

## 2. 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:

- Continue to deepen and widen the knowledge and understanding of articles across the whole school community to increase understanding and articulation – appropriate to age and ability- that rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional. As part of this, especially within the Early Years, explore ways to promote the relevance of articles within the outdoor and indoor learning environments.
- Advocate for RRSA with other schools e.g. those that Y6 children transition to, and the wider community. Consider how your new school website can support this.
- Continue to explore ways for pupils to advocate for children’s’ rights within school improvement initiatives as well as in wider local, national and global issues. Consider how younger children can be part of the Steering Group.

## 3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

<b>School context</b>	516 pupils on roll, 19% FSM/ Pupil Premium, 2% EAL, 0.8% SEND Most recent Ofsted inspection May 2016 – Good.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher, head of school, assistant headteacher/RRSA lead, assistant headteacher, Pastoral Lead, EYFS lead
<b>Number of children and young people interviewed</b>	8 children in Steering Group and learning walk, 28 children in focus groups, 50 children in class visits
<b>Number of adults interviewed</b>	7 teaching staff, 2 support staff, 2 parents, 3 governors,
<b>Evidence provided</b>	Learning walk, focus groups, written evidence, class visits
<b>Registered for RRSA: July 2017</b>	<b>Silver achieved:</b> April 2018

**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 headteacher considers that teaching and learning about the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is now, *“More embedded within the culture of the school; it’s more explicit and children talk about rights more openly within a wider range of contexts...there is an automatic inclusion of rights for new staff, parents, governors and within policies... it’s more natural now... it’s part of who we are as a school”*. Children in the Steering Group, focus groups and within classes know a wide range of articles from the Convention and spoke readily and reflectively about these within the context of their curriculum subject learning. For example, within History Y5 and Y6 pupils had met and interviewed a Holocaust survivor and as a result were able to explain the importance of numerous related articles. As part of their English curriculum children studied the story ‘Kick’ which led to them exploring, in an age appropriate way, issues relating to child labour within the production of football boots in Indonesia. Assemblies and focus days are also used in a planned way to provide opportunities for the school community to learn about local, national and global needs and issues e.g. in relation to access to food, shelter and education, equalities, and a clean and safe environment. The Steering Group take their role as rights promoters seriously, explaining how all children within Ryders Hayes school, *“Know their rights because of all the signs and boards around the school”*. Children, appropriate to their age and understanding, spoke about rights being universal, unconditional, inherent, indivisible and inalienable. They know that they are the rights holders and that adults have the responsibility as duty bearers to enable them to learn about and access their rights.

Children explained that they speak about the CRC at home and how they are involving their families within projects e.g. in relation to recycling and Article 24 and the emphasis on non- discrimination through Article 2. *“Our children are educating parents”*, commented one member of the SLT. Parents are encouraged to increase their knowledge of the CRC through regular family challenges e.g. a treasure hunt of rights with prizes sent home via the weekly newsletter. Information about how children are learning about the CRC is also shared through curriculum overviews. Gauging to what extent parents are developing knowledge about the CRC is now being asked through a regular questionnaire. Most recently there were 94 returned out of a possible 154 and within those 17 different articles were identified. One parent governor stated that she considers that because of the school’s RRSA approach children are, *“More socially aware, they know what’s going on in the world... they see others who are deprived and being denied their rights. Learning about rights is now part of the language and culture that runs through the school...governors get reports about what’s happening and see that it’s just part of what the school does...it flows and happens through the curriculum”*. The local Reverend is a very regular visitor to the school and actively involved with the RRSA steering group and as such helps to create links with the local community. She regularly leads school assemblies and makes links to the CRC and RRSA within the themes she speaks about. School strategic documentation and policies identify the school’s ongoing commitment to RRSA and how it is viewed and used as a tool to support school improvement as well as day to day practise. The headteacher referred to RRSA as, *“A golden thread”* that permeates all aspects of school life.

**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**

A commitment to teaching, learning and a school ethos and culture all underpinned by the CRC can clearly be seen within the environment of the school. A range of displays connected to curriculum topics make reference to how children are learning about articles within different contexts. Each class chooses five articles to focus on within their class charter. These are engaging, have a prominent place within each class and children explained how they are referred to during each day. Children and adults are both clear about the responsibility of adults for ensuring that children access their rights. Staff consider that through embedding a rights respecting ethos children are now more skilled at listening to different viewpoints and able to challenge these in a respectful way. One teacher commented that, *“They (the children) are more articulate without any prompting in identifying when children’s rights might not be being met and they need protecting.”*

Children and adults spoke very positively about how a rights respecting ethos has increased children’s ability to be more reflective and resolve any difficulties more respectfully and independently. Training for lunchtime staff and the use of playground charters, staff employed to support activities at playtimes plus children playground buddies have all had a positive impact. Staff identify that there are less disputes on the playground now and that children are more able to compromise when difficulties do arise. Regular pupil voice surveys also support this view. Parents spoken with during the visit also consider that their children are increasingly using these skills within the home context too.

Children say that they feel safe and know that they can talk to adults if they need support. They understand about keeping safe online. The school environment also provides visual support and guidance about safeguarding issues including safety and antibullying. School staff are now more confident to advocate for children’s rights within multi agency contexts e.g. safeguarding and CAMHS and spoke about the successes they have had in bringing about improved resolutions for children and their families as a result of referring to rights.

The headteacher considers that children and adults are now more knowledgeable about Articles 24 – health and wellbeing services and Article 27 – adequate standard of living, and as part of the school’s promotion of these, *“We have normalised the conversation around mental health”*. The school has a range of strategies in place to support children who may need help with developing independence with their learning or in the playground. They take supporting children with any anxiety issues seriously and sensitively. Mindfulness activities have been introduced across the school and there are schemes in place to promote safe travel to school and encouraging increased physical activity, including during some school holiday times. Children also learn about how to eat healthily as part of the school’s commitment to educating for the development of all -round healthy lifestyles.

The school is highly inclusive. Children spoke enthusiastically about the range of extra- curricular activities that are available to them. The school is positive about the increasing diversity amongst its traditionally predominantly white British population. There is a designated LGBT display board and the curriculum programme No Outsiders is used across the school. Children identified the importance of Article 2, non -discrimination, as well as Articles 13 – freedom of expression, Article 15 – freedom of association and Article 17 – the right to reliable information from the media. One of the parents

considers that because of the school’s focus on equalities through a rights respecting approach her children use respectful language at home; *“We have more in depth conversations now...there is more of an acceptance about the needs of others and about the importance and strength of collective support”*. Children spoke consistently about Article 28- the right to education- for themselves and children everywhere. This includes developing an appreciation of this for children who join the school as part of a managed move process.

Children clearly enjoy and value what the school provides for them. They spoke enthusiastically about their learning and how their teachers help them to know how to get better at things. Staff spoke about regular strategies that are used to ascertain children’s prior knowledge and encourage them to identify what else they would like to find out about. The Early Years lead teacher explained how using a rights respecting approach not only influences the language adults now used with the children but that adults are now more aware of how their body language can impact upon children’s behaviour and responses. *“We stand back more now... we are more conscious about giving children a voice ... there is less of a hierarchy between adults and children ...they are more empowered through increased self- confidence and self- awareness...they follow their own interests more and as adults we don’t cap their ideas”*.

**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**

The children know that not only are their views and opinions listened to and valued but that they are trusted to take a lead role in promoting, influencing developments and celebrating their school. Children explained about ways that they have influenced school improvements e.g. researching and developing the new KS1 playground, choosing new chairs and researching which clubs children wanted. Children in the Steering Group/ Pupil Leadership Team (PLT) liaise with School Council members and produce a termly report for the Governing Body. The headteacher considers that as a rights respecting ethos has become embedded with the school children have become, *“More empowered to speak up as learners themselves and as advocates for children’s rights...they used to be passive but not now...rights respecting has been at the core of this change and has made relationships between staff and children feel more equal”*. The children know that their views are listened to by the school leadership team. The headteacher always responds respectfully, usually in writing, to requests for changes that children suggest, e.g. when a request was made for the school to install solar panels the headteacher explained why this project was cost prohibitive (at the present time) but that she could support the other sustainability projects and suggestions that were made. The children accepted and appreciated this response. ‘Votes for Schools’ is used as a way to encourage children to increase understanding differing perspectives and their reflective and debating skills was cited by both children and staff as having a positive impact. Children now take responsibility for showing visitors around the school, present prizes and give speeches at prize giving events and take part in interviews for new staff.

As well as the importance of taking action to make improvements within their own school, the children are also committed to action as part of the wider Walsall community and globally too. One pupil member of the Steering Group spoke emphasised how they are, *“Really passionate that we should have our rights and others around the world should too”*. Another stated confidently that, *“We can*

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*make a change for the future*” and spoke about the importance of the sustainability project Walsall Against Single use Plastic (WASP) that they are actively involved with. As part of this project children successfully campaigned to have single use plastic cups, previously used in the dining hall, replaced with reusable plastic bottles and influenced the school’s decision to now supply school uniform ties that are made from recycled plastic bottles. They have also written letters to the company that supplies the school’s cartons of milk to request and explain why they would like the company to provide a more environmentally friendly alternative to plastic straws that are currently supplied with the cartons. The school has taken part in Unicef’s Clean Air OutRight campaign and the children explained who the Secretary of State for the Environment is and why they have written to him. Other campaigning has focussed on litter, Fairtrade and child labour linked to their study of ‘Kick’ in English. Children see their campaigning work as part of their role to be responsible global citizens that fits in with the school’s mantra, ‘do the right thing to be the best that you can be’. Children see themselves as part of a community where, *“We can all help”*. In addition to campaigning they collect for the local foodbank and make choices about which other charities to support; these include Macmillan, Red Nose Day and a charity that supports homeless people. All these efforts are linked to the relevant articles and the children are very focused on how, as global citizens, they want to, *“Do as much as we can to make other people see what we are doing”*.