



RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School	Whitehouse Primary School
Local Authority	Education Authority – North Eastern Region
Number of pupils on roll	464
Headteacher	Mr F Bailie
RRSA Coordinator	Miss J Campbell
RRSA Assessor	Niki McQuillan
Date of visit	7 June 2018
School Evaluation received	Silver form received
Attendees at SLT meeting	Principal, Vice-Principal, Head of Key Stages 1 and 2
Number of pupils interviewed	25
Number of staff interviewed	RRSA Coordinator, 3 teachers, 1 support staff, governor and parent
Evidence provided	Written, assembly, learning walk, pupil presentation, lesson
First registered for RRSA	January 2016
Bronze achieved	January 2018

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

Whitehouse Primary School has met the standard for Unicef UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver: Rights Aware.



EVIDENCE FROM THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

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 living.

- Both children and adults are very familiar with a wide range of articles and how they apply to their own situation. Pupils interviewed across the age range from 5 to 11 years old spoke articulately and enthusiastically about their rights respecting journey so far. Each month the school community focuses on an individual right during 'Right of the Month'. Parents/carers are regularly updated about this and all RRSA work through regular newsletters, emails, and through the very dynamic school website. Everyone fully appreciates that rights are unconditional and both children and adults are clear about the concept of Duty Bearers.
- Teacher planners clearly link lessons to specific articles of the UNCRC in a broad range of curriculum contexts across the year groups. This work is ongoing and has had a noticeably positive impact on learning and concentration across the school.
- Children explained they learned about their rights through assemblies (which they often lead), their lessons, the steering group, the school council and during their collaborative activities with their Shared Learning partners. This understanding is highlighted in the numerous, imaginative displays both around the school and in classrooms, which celebrates and showcases their learning and promotes children's rights. All aspects of their learning is clearly linked to articles
- Pupils understand that some children around the world do not have their rights respected because of a variety of difficult circumstances. They ably demonstrated this knowledge during a pupil led assembly about how some children don't feel safe going to school. The "Send My Friend to School" campaign was the topic of a P6 literacy lesson on rights.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to support pupils in further developing the programme of raising awareness about the CRC through their collaboration with local schools through the various initiatives in which the school participates.
- Continue to review school policies to ensure that most are explicitly cross-referenced to appropriate rights from the convention.



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.

- The senior leadership team stated how the core values of the school are closely linked with the CRC and underpin all aspects of the school's work. The principal explained. "There has always been a strong child-centred ethos, with the children at the heart of our work at school." The school's mission statement reflects these core values and engaging with RRSA in collaboration with their Shared Education partners has helped to provide a strong framework to build on this.
- A recurrent theme during various discussions was the very positive impact the use of rights respecting language has had on school life in general. Staff all agreed that with the whole school engaging with rights it encourages the use of a shared, universal language which, in turn, has developed a very strong sense of empathy in both adults and children and has helped to raise self-esteem. Pupils now have more confidence to try to resolve differences using rights language both in the classroom and the playground.
- Another positive impact has been noticed in the classrooms around the right to a voice. Both teachers and pupils commented on how learning about rights and making their classroom charters has improved levels of concentration during lessons. Children commented on how much they enjoy the process of creating their classroom charters at the start of each year as they feel it helps them to settle in to a new year and provides them with a focus for learning. This has been observed throughout the school. One teacher has observed that by giving her young pupils more of a voice in their learning choices it has had a positive impact on literacy and numeracy standards. "I can't believe how articulate and aware 5 year old children can be about their own learning styles." She went on to comment that "children are more prepared to explore and to take risks with their learning, which in turn is raising their confidence and self-esteem."
- The school has a strong learning culture and celebrates success through various reward systems, such as the 'Pupil of the Month' certificates. Attitudes to school life are very positive, with high attendance and excellent questionnaire feedback reported. One parent commented on how her son's self-esteem has significantly grown since learning about rights and becoming involved in the student council. This was a view highlighted by both teachers and children during the visit.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Sustain the excellent practice noted above and continue to ensure that all aspects of life in school are explicitly underpinned by the values of the CRC.
- Build upon the work already begun to promote the UNCRC within the curriculum, particularly with reference to global citizenship, and continue the practice of ensuring teacher planners refer to appropriate Articles of the Convention.



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.

- The right of children to have a say in all matters that affect them is an important feature of the school. Pupil democracy is embedded through participation in elections for the school council which have led to pupils influencing decisions about aspects of school life, for example, in establishing an outdoor learning zone and an ongoing campaign to create a new playground beside the school. There are opportunities for the children to show leadership through other roles such as the Eco Council.
- The Buddies system and ICT mentors enables older pupils to collaborate with and support their younger peers in a range of learning activities and are timetabled throughout the year.
- Teachers commented on the quality of classroom discussion they have observed as a result of learning about rights. “It’s opened up their thinking and made classroom management much easier.” Staff have also noticed a change in children with regard to their capacity to empathise with others both locally and globally.
- Pupils have engaged in a number of activities to help other children to access their rights and are involved with several international charities through their links with other schools through the Comenius programme. The school recently hosted a very successful cultural evening, which celebrated diversity and inclusiveness within their school community. Over the years strong links have developed with a school in Cambodia where pupils have raised funds for education. Activities during ‘Fitness Day’ was held to help schools in Kenya.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to develop work and engage in local networks with other Rights Respecting Schools through Shared Education and other collaborative partnerships.
- Aim to participate in local RRSA training to support your journey to Gold.
- Seek to build upon fundraising activity by further developing a rights based approach and seeking more opportunity for pupil led advocacy and campaigning on local, national and global issues