

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	St Cuthbert's CofE Primary
Headteacher:	Nicola Thornber
RRSA coordinator:	Nicola Wilkinson
Local authority:	North Yorkshire
Number of pupils on roll:	61
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher and RRSA Lead
Number of children and young people spoken with:	10
Adults spoken with:	2 teachers and a family support worker/HLTA
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: March 2019 Bronze achieved: January 2020
Assessor:	Wendy Watts
Date of visit:	3 rd July 2024

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

St Cuthbert's CofE Primary 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.

- Children knew a range of rights and that they were universal, unconditional, and inherent. A pupil outlined it was *“Important to learn about rights so everyone has knowledge of them.”* They demonstrated knowledge of, and used language such as, ‘duty bearers’ and ‘rights’ to communicate their understanding of how these fitted into accessing rights. When asked why some children may not access their rights a pupil explained *“For certain countries that are low on water, children may have to stay home and work, so they have no right to rest or play.”*
- Through effective strategic planning, the whole school community has learned about rights; leaders have effectively used the language of rights to positively engage pupils in appreciating how they benefit from adopting this approach. The school has a reduced curriculum and rights are linked to British Values, children explained, *“We learn about rights through PSHE lessons.”*
- RRS progress is included in the governor’s board meetings; they are involved at an operational level and a governor is on the rights respecting team. Teachers and support staff receive input through weekly professional development meetings and have also learned about their partner school which has achieved the Gold: Rights Respecting award.
- The headteacher highlighted *“Staff now understand the benefits of this. There has been a lightbulb moment for them, as a result of staff learning about what it is to be a Rights Respecting School.”* Parents are informed about rights through meetings held after assemblies; children proudly showed off the big book they have created to share with parents to help them learn about rights. The RRS lead added *“The RRS team have put together content about what they have done and this goes into the newsletter, which is sent out to the whole school community.”*

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

- Continue to develop knowledge and understanding of the CRC, its origins, values and principles and, for older pupils, its place within the wider framework of Human Rights.
- Ensure staff and young people have an understanding that rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional, using language appropriate to children’s age and ability. Consider using the RRSA resource [ABCDE of Rights](#).
- Continue to widen the range of articles that the whole school community are familiar with, appropriate to children and young people’s age and ability.
- Support children and young people to explore a range of local and global issues from a perspective of rights. This might include regular discussion of news events so that they develop a heightened sense of justice and equity for all children.

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.

- When children were asked how their school helped them to enjoy rights, a child responded, *“I have a calm space when I get angry.”* Another pupil explained how *“Children wanted their own drawers, [to store their belongings] and that happened.”* It was quite striking to hear a pupil point out, *“If a right is not respected, there’s two things you can do; go to a duty bearer and explain the situation, or you can try to empathise to see the reason why they are not using a respectful approach,”* demonstrating an invaluable insight into how considered their approach was.
- The headteacher explained, *“We use school values, our positive behaviour policy, restorative discussions, and we work through everything together,”* to encourage positive relationships. *“No punitive punishment is used;”* the RRS lead added, going on to explain the approach to help find resolution is through questions such as, ‘How can we support you?’
- Pupils knew a range of strategies and what to do if they need support to be safe. A child quickly shared the example, *“If it was mum and dad, go to the police station, call Childline,”* then all the children spontaneously sang the phone number whilst using their fingers to show the digits, clearly illustrating the link between safety and Childline.
- Children described how the school supports them with their mental health, and social and emotional needs, *“Tell any trusted adult or best friend if you feel nervous go to an adult and explain.”* Another child added, *“It depends on what you like to do, you could have quiet time by yourself,”* demonstrating that they have a choice in how they want to self-regulate.
- It was evident that children were respectful of each other in conversations, allowing each other to speak and listen when talking about how they are included and valued. A pupil explained, *“We all have issues, dyslexia, a bit of ADHD we struggle with that, but we chat with Miss Wilkinson or Ms Saunders and have our own folders to deal with it.”* Showing an understanding that they were aware of the difference between them and being respectful of this.

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

- Explore with the school community the links between improved outcomes for children and the implementation of a rights-based approach across the school.
- Create opportunities to explore the concepts of fairness and equity and ensure children and young people can describe how school promotes these concepts.
- Consider how children and young people are involved in developing systems and policies to ensure they feel safe in school.
- Provide opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity in a range of ways.

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 headteacher explained, *“Every single child gets to democratically vote, they create the action plans and adults facilitate this.”* All children responded with their thumbs up, showing total agreement that teachers act on their suggestions. There are a range of pupil leadership groups which includes online leaders, sports leaders, reading ambassadors and house captains run assemblies and some clubs. A child explained, *“Pupil leadership teams give pupil voice”* The RRS lead explained, *“Children asked for a morning and lunchtime check-in and toast for breakfast.”*
- The headteacher highlighted, *“Children have now started to think about being a part of the bigger picture, they have got a voice, and they put it to good use.”* Children explained how the RRS team have been involved in activities to promote children’s rights this includes keeping Glasshouses’ children safe through a road safety campaign. A pupil advised, *“Keep on going it’s really important,”* showing that he knew they should continue to campaign for rights, despite not getting a response from their local MP at the start.

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

- Continue to provide opportunities for children and young people to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school. This could include explicit involvement in school improvement planning, policy review processes, the evaluation of learning and teaching etc.
- Ensure children have regular access to local and global news (appropriate to their age and ability) and time for sensitive reflection and discussion within the context of rights. This may provide stimulus for child led campaigning or other action.
- Develop campaigning and fundraising activities from the perspective of rights, justice and equity so all children are seen as rights holders rather than just recipients of charity.