

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	The Oaks Primary School
Headteacher:	Janine Dodds
RRSA coordinator:	Kayley Reeves
Local authority:	Birmingham
School context:	The Oaks Primary School has 373 pupils on roll. 78% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium, 32.2% of pupils have SEN needs and 32% of children speak English as an additional language. The school has a high number of child protection cases and families who receive support from the family social worker.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, deputy headteacher and RRSA lead
Number of children and young people spoken with:	36 children from Y1 to Y6, some of whom are part of the School Rights Respecting Council.
Adults spoken with:	5 adults, including 2 teachers, a governor, LSAs and parents
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: 21 st September 2015 Bronze achieved: 9 th May 2016 Silver achieved: 14 th November 2018
Assessor:	Helen Trivers
Date:	12 th July 2022

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

The Oaks Primary School has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is based on a virtual accreditation visit. 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:

- Happy, confident children who clearly know that they have rights and are committed to helping to realise these for other children.
- A strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders at all levels tied into the vision and values of the school. Children are given the support they need to be the best they can be, to fulfil their potential, and this is a driver for decision-making across the school.
- An ethos that places positive relationships based on mutual respect and trust at the heart of school life.
- A strong focus on the safety, health and wellbeing of students within the context of rights so that young people feel supported and protected.

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 widen the range of articles that the whole school community are familiar with, appropriate to children and young people's age and ability and continue to ensure that rights are explicitly linked to the curriculum, activities and events throughout the school year.
- Continue the good practice around rights that has become embedded across the school. Ensure that all new initiatives are related back to rights.
- Continue to create opportunities for children to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school, recognising the role of children in helping adults understand problems and develop achievable solutions.
- Continue to develop children and young people's understanding of what it means to be a rights respecting global citizen. Support them to be informed about the world and current affairs so that they are critical thinkers and challenge discrimination and stereotypical attitudes.
- As a Gold Rights Respecting School, develop your ambassadorial role, promoting the CRC and the benefits of a child rights-based approach.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<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 talked about a range of rights and linked these rights with their lives at school. They confidently explained, <i>“Adults are duty bearers, and they keep us safe,”</i> and could explain rights principles, <i>“Rights are for everyone all around the world,”</i> <i>“They are all equal because you need all of your rights,”</i> having learned about the ABCDE of rights. Children explore a different CRC article each week through assemblies and rights are threaded through the curriculum, <i>“The teachers help you to learn about rights; we read books about rights.”</i> Children discuss global news stories and were aware of issues such as homelessness and the plight of refugees, <i>“Refugees have to leave their country, they don’t have shelter,”</i> and they also enjoy their annual Sustainability Week where they focus all of their learning on the UN Global Goals and each class makes a pledge linked to a goal.</p> <p>Members of the SLT explained that the school is in an area with high levels of deprivation, and they have worked hard to create an ethos underpinned by rights, the headteacher explained, <i>“Now it’s embedded. The children are more empowered...it’s a golden thread that goes through the school.”</i> The school’s rights work has spread to the local community, and the headteacher felt that this had supported children to think beyond their local area and be more globally focused and aspirational, <i>“They know they have opportunities - now children say they want to be an astronaut, a pupil came back and said he got A’s and it’s because you gave me belief.”</i> Parents spoken with felt that the school respected their children’s rights and gave them a range of opportunities and experiences. They receive information on rights through the weekly newsletter which children help to write. Parents are introduced to rights in EYFS through The Everywhere Bear and the school’s focus on rights is made clear through the Home-School agreement.</p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>2. In school children enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>Class charters are developed each year and children felt that their rights, such as their rights to play, to practise their religion and to be listened to are respected at school, one child saying, <i>“The school is a community, people talk to each other with respect.”</i> Teachers said the language is used daily, <i>“For example, they know they have the right to water and so they fill up their bottles.”</i> Children have explored the concepts of equality and equity, <i>“Equity is when someone needs it, and they get it provided for them. Like when someone has a disability so they can learn in a different way.”</i></p>
<p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights</p>	<p>There were challenges after Covid, but people felt that relationships were improving again. One teacher said, <i>“We don’t have a no rewards or consequence behaviour policy, instead restorative conversations are held with children – this is very much in our culture now.”</i> Children are supported to resolve issues themselves first. Children are involved in writing child friendly versions of the Behaviour and Relationships policy and Anti-bullying policy.</p>
<p>4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do</p>	<p>There is a high level of child protection need in the school community and so keeping children safe is a priority. The school helps families to access support, the headteacher saying, <i>“Parents know they can come in and it’s not judgemental. Children know they have a right to learn no matter what their background is.”</i> Children are surveyed regularly to check they feel safe and</p>

if they need support.	know what to do if they have worries saying, <i>"You can tell a trusted adult, there are lots of trusted adults in school,"</i> and are supported by outside agencies when needed.
5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	The wellbeing of everyone in the school community was the number one priority post lockdown and a Wellbeing Steering group is leading this work. The RRSA lead said, <i>"We have counsellors in school, children take part in yoga and meditation and there is a wellbeing garden and sensory room."</i> The school is a trauma informed school, the headteacher saying, <i>"Sometimes our children have so much going on, they can't learn,"</i> and the focus is on supporting children, for example through use of Zones of Regulation and by training children to become Mental Health Warriors. Children said, <i>"We learn to be healthy – we do the daily mile we have healthy food, and the school provides us with breakfast,"</i> the headteacher explaining, <i>"Some children don't have food at home, our breakfast club is free for all so there is no stigma."</i>
6. Children are included and are valued as individuals.	The Oaks is a School of Sanctuary and prides itself on an inclusive and welcoming ethos. Children visit different places of worship and stories are shared showing the importance of inclusion. The RRSA lead said, <i>"We make sure that the books are representative, for example showing different families."</i>
7. Children value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.	Children discuss what they want to learn at the beginning of topics, and this helps to shape their learning. SLT meet with children regularly to review the curriculum and children now express their own views about their learning in end of year reports. Parents valued the wide range of opportunities available to children, <i>"They go on school trips, have free clubs, residential at a cheap cost - lots of opportunities they might not have experienced otherwise."</i>
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	The School Council and Rights Respecting Council were merged this year in recognition that rights link to most areas of school improvement and have been involved in choosing playground equipment, charity events, suggesting ways to increase attendance and reviewing extra-curricular provision. There is a suggestion box which the School Council look at each half term and children spoken with said, <i>"We can go and speak to the council if we have ideas, and this is talked about and fed to the headteacher."</i> Children have been involved in discussions about regeneration in their local community, <i>"We've been drawing pictures of things we want to see in our area,"</i> <i>"We met with the regeneration architect and talked about making the place safer for children and how we can combat pollution."</i>
9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.	Children see themselves as advocates of rights, <i>"We can share good practice with other schools because rights are for children everywhere!"</i> and were aware of a range of ways to take action, <i>"Instead of bringing in money, we help the community in different ways, like litter picking,"</i> a teacher adding, <i>"The ShoeShare event was successful as it allowed the children to help without giving money."</i> Y2 children developed a gardening project linked to their Sustainability Week pledge which won the Gardeners' World Wheelbarrow Competition and children are involved with a petition to stop a development on local woodland, a teacher saying, <i>"They are passionate about this because we have been learning about habitats. They want to have their voice heard and they know they can make a difference."</i> Children also take part in UNICEF UK's annual OutRight campaign and the World's Largest Lesson to encourage children to take responsibility for their own actions and the planet.