

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Killermont Primary School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Elsbeth Smith
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Elaine Graham
<b>Local authority:</b>	East Dunbartonshire
<b>Assessor(s):</b>	Steven Kidd, with Jenny Daigle
<b>Date:</b>	25 March 2019

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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 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:

- Excellent rights knowledge and understanding amongst pupils.
- Staff who are passionate about the principles of equality, dignity and respect and actively engaged in considering how these can be best reflected in practice.
- Learning about rights is linked to almost all areas of the curriculum and stretches from early years to P7.
- Very clear understanding of how rights underpins all aspects of school life and a clear commitment to use that to deliver improved outcomes for children.

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:

- From the strong foundation you've built, challenge learners to take their rights knowledge and understanding even further; encourage all children, from the very youngest, to use the language of rights in their day to day lives.
- Continue to question how equality, dignity and respect can inform systems to encourage positive relationships.
- Continue to undertake an ambassadorial role, promoting children's rights to schools and other organisations by sharing good practice.

## 3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

<b>School context</b>	Killermont Primary School is a co-educational non-denominational state school, situated on the east side of Bearsden, within a residential, suburban community. The school has a roll of 386 pupils, with an attached early learning centre. Just 3.4% of P4-P7s are registered for Free School Meals, considerably lower than the national average.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher / 3 x DHT (including RRSA coordinator)
<b>Number of children and young people interviewed</b>	35 children in focus/steering groups, 3 children on the learning walk and 60 children in class visits
<b>Number of adults interviewed</b>	4 teaching staff, 1 early years worker, 1 support for learning worker, 3 parents
<b>Evidence provided</b>	Learning walk, focus groups, portfolio of evidence, class visits.
<b>Registered for RRSA: 01 September 2014</b>	<b>Silver achieved: 01 March 2017</b>

**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**

Children in the focus group were able to share a fantastic selection of articles, from the right to education and to play, through to protection from drugs and exploitative work. They were equally strong on the nature of rights, especially in relation to their universal nature, even though they had obviously explored situations in which children had faced barriers to access; one focus group participant naturally continued on from discussion of universality to talk about poverty as a barrier. It was readily apparent that the pupils had a mature understanding of key rights concepts and of the potential barriers to full access. When asked where they had developed this impressive knowledge, the children simply replied “*everywhere*”, which appeared to be borne out by the comprehensive evidence provided. When pressed for specific examples, the pupils spoke of learning in assemblies, in class, through charters and even mentioned the displays which featured across the school. Novel studies seem to have been a particularly rich source of rights learning, from ‘Room on the Broom’ for younger children, through ‘Harry Potter’ to ‘Wonder’ in P7. One parent picked up on the visibility of rights across the curriculum: “*It’s impressive to see how it’s woven in to what they’re being taught.*”

Rights could be seen throughout the school, in a range of eye-catching displays, including an especially impressive frieze which featured 190+ country flags created by pupils alongside examples of rights in action in the school’s work; such was the amount of content, the display had taken over a supplementary section of wall opposite, too. Rights were particularly prominent in the school’s assembly hall, with Ambassadors linking almost every poster back to rights; as well as the school charter, there were display boards covering each of the eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) and boards giving updates on the work of the many pupil voice committees. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development have been a focus for learning over recent years, with evidence demonstrating how children have benefitted from a global perspective to their rights work, making clear the connections between them and to their ability to make a difference to their community, local to global. Evidence also showed how rights learning had been incorporated into early years, by using characters related to the wellbeing indicators e.g. SAFE Sophie and NURTURED Nicky. Teachers had been upskilled, too, with staff participating in several Unicef UK training courses and subsequently leading CPD with colleagues back in school; rights are a regular part of staff in-service events, which include both teaching and non-teaching staff, and colleagues were full of praise for the RRSA lead: “*There’s always support there and great resources, too. We’re always coming back to the action plan.*” Parents had been engaged, too, through the traditional newsletters and PTA, but also through the full website and active social media channels, even through family homework exercises and teacher/parent evenings.

The Senior Leadership Team demonstrated an obvious commitment to children’s rights and, critically, were adept at identifying their potential to improve outcomes for children across the board: “*We’ve always been a high attaining school, but it’s not all about attainment, it’s about shaping global citizens.*” Discussing RRSA’s own Theory of Change, the Headteacher stressed the importance of rights in many aspects of school life, particularly in the holistic development of children: “*The children are the impact. That’s what keeps us going, coming into work every day.*” With the SLT explaining an impressive range of activity on the journey to date, it was refreshing to then hear the Headteacher note, “*We’re never at an end point, we’ve always got something we’re working on.*” It left the assessor in no doubt as to the value placed on children’s rights at Killermont Primary and confident in continued development of practice.

**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**

Pupils believed that adults in the school facilitated their access to rights and spoke of numerous examples of how this worked in practice, from nutritious choices available in the school cafeteria (Article 24) to the opportunity to play afforded by the playground (Art 31), indeed in both of the noted examples, these areas were referred to by their number i.e. ‘Zone 24’ and ‘Zone 31’. They were clear that teachers would address any concerns they had, and they found them approachable and keen to help. Throughout the visit, the children spoke of the importance of fairness but understood that this was not always about everything being exactly the same for all children. The school’s values were refreshed in 2017 and they now specifically reference ‘Fairness’, alongside ‘Respect, Honesty and Kindness’. One teacher noted that children would *“pick up right away if rights aren’t being accessed and they’re confident in challenging this.”*

Rights-based charters were visible in every classroom and children confidently explained that these had been co-operatively created by children and teachers, and that they all contributed ideas to this process. They were identified by children and pupils alike as a live part of classroom life, helping to govern relationships and shape the school environment. The school manages relationships using a restorative approach, but the system is currently being reviewed; teachers had an impressive discussion about their thinking on how it could be improved, referencing a desire to move towards a more intrinsic rather than extrinsic encouragement of positive behaviour: *“We thought the previous system was great until we really considered the principles.”* Consultation with children has already taken place, with more planned. Mutual respect and developing positive relationships are clearly a priority for staff, recognising the positive impact on ethos and environment. Throughout the visit, relationships appeared friendly and respectful between pupils and staff, with one teacher even demonstrating the personalised handshakes she’d developed for each of her pupils. Evidence showed how the school was incorporating the latest research to best effect, building in restorative practice, nurture principles and emotion coaching, and working from the starting point that ‘all behaviour is communication.’ Staff talked of how rights had helped the children develop that mutual respect: *“It’s the language used in the playground. They look out for things more. It was about ‘my rights’ at first, but now it’s expanded beyond that, they’re thinking about other people.”*

Children spoke of their right to be safe and pointed out features of the school, such as secure entry and first aid provision, which demonstrated how the school facilitated their safety, and were definite in believing they could speak to adults about any concerns. Evidence showed the range of ways in which pupils were able to raise concerns and the systems in place to monitor wellbeing, including issues of safety. There was a part to play for children, too: in early years, children had been involved in risk-assessing their own play, whilst older pupils took on the role of buddies for younger children, especially around key transition times. The school’s Digital Leaders Group had also ensured that online safety was considered, leading learning with classes connected to Safer Internet Day.

*“Wellbeing is a real strong focus for us”*, stated the Headteacher and a huge volume of evidence backed up that assertion, demonstrating the clear priority given to the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of pupils. Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) was an integral part of school

life, with children completing questionnaires to reflect on their wellbeing, and thus advising of any need for intervention. Staff had received training in ACES, nurture principles and emotion coaching amongst other subjects, and the school has targeted support available for those who require it e.g. art therapy or Seasons for Growth counselling. Some classes have begun to use the 'PATHS' emotional literacy programme to manage emotions, whilst whole school activities such as autism and dyslexia awareness ensure the school is catering to all. Pupils explained that they have regular access to physical education and can join in with a wide range of sports, symbolised by the school's sportsotland Gold award. An impressive range of extra-curricular activities are available, too, ranging from cooking to ballroom dancing, with targeted signposting to ensure the widest possible take-up.

As a result of this holistic approach to children's lives, inclusion is an area of strength for the school. Pupils understand and value difference and realise that everyone is unique, as one member of support staff noted: *"The playground is the happiest I've ever seen it... there's an acceptance of each other's difference."* During the learning walk, children talked of celebrating achievements at assembly, birthdays, too, all contributing to the sense of individual worth. Evidence showed how pupils' achievement and attainment is tracked, monitored and reviewed by SLT and class teachers on a regular basis and support is put into place to ensure all pupils are valued and their needs are met. It was clear that children were adopting an inclusive approach, supported by a committed SLT and staff team, the Headteacher summing it up neatly: *"We're striving to help everyone develop as individuals."*

Pupils were positive about their learning with 'the right to an education' the most commonly mentioned article throughout the visit. In line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence, evidence showed how children are involved in target setting and evaluation, as well as informing future learning activity through methods such as collaborative group work, learning journeys and play to learn. Parents specifically mentioned the value of SeeSaw in helping them maintain an active connection to their child's work. The school also makes use of Growth Mindset strategies to encourage greater learner engagement.

**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**

Children could not have been more definite in their belief that they were listened to, one focus group participant stating simply that *"whenever there is something big we have a vote"*. They also mentioned the Compliments, Concerns, Complaints card system, which was then further explained by Ambassadors during the learning walk: in essence it gives pupils a simple way to feed in ideas or concerns directly. There are several pupil committees running in the school and evidence showed how they were this year using 'How Good Is OUR School' to shape school improvement, as one committee member put it: *"We've got a new thing called HGIOS to involve everyone."* The Rights Around the World (RAW) committee, which is the name children have chosen for the RRS Steering Group, explained that they and the various other committees have an important role to play in *"making the school a better place"*; examples were given of leading charitable activities, involvement in the redesign of the library provision and the work of JRSOs to encourage 'Walk to School Wednesdays' and 'Fast Feet Fridays'. Evidence also showed how children had been heavily involved in deciding

the new school motto: 'Never give up, never given in'. Overall, there was a clear sense that pupils are active participants in decision-making within the school and that their views are valued.

Advocacy and fundraising are similarly strengths for the school, with pupils engaged in a wide range of activity to claim their own rights and act for the rights of other children, at home and abroad. Members of the RAW Committee have made a connection with and visited another Silver school in central Glasgow to share practice, one which has a very different catchment; pupils had clearly gained a lot from the experience: *"We were all focussed on the same rights, but there were lots of differences."* For the last two years, pupils from the group had also presented a lecture based on the school's journey to teaching students at the University of Glasgow, something of which the girls involved this year were justifiably proud. This ambassadorial activity is not limited to the RAW Committee, with plans afoot for the P3 class to visit a nearby mother and toddler group to share their rights story, as well as designing posters to be placed in the local community. Charity work has also been a feature, often determined and led by the children themselves; causes local (e.g. Glasgow City Mission) and global (e.g. Save the Children and Unicef's ShoeShare) have benefitted, whilst the pupils have enhanced their own understanding of the worth of such action, demonstrating an impressive understanding of how charitable giving helps others overcome barriers. Evidence was also provided of learning with a specific global focus, through the Global Goals and World's Largest Lesson, with each class having an identified Global Goal which they are connecting to learning – examples include P3's work on Fairtrade, linked to their exploration of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' (GG 1) and P6/7 involvement in Outright (GG 3, and 13). Adults had noticed the impact – *"it's making children very aware of their surroundings, the world around them"* – but commented, too, on it being far from abstract – *"...and it's nice to see how it translates from global to how to make it about local actions."*