

RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Kentish Town CofE Primary School
Headteacher:	James Humphries
RRSA coordinator:	Marcia Freixeiro
Local authority:	Camden
Assessor(s):	Frances Bestley
Date:	8 th July 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.

This is a reaccreditation visit. It was evident that children’s rights continue to be embedded across the school and underpin every facet of school life.

Particular strengths of the school include:

- Very confident and articulate children with a deep understanding of rights.
- Children who are empowered to take action.
- Exceptional inclusive practice so all children feel they can challenge for and access their rights.

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:

- Maintain the excellent practice described in the report.
- Continue to develop the language and principles of the Convention into everyday use; all children understood the principles of inalienable, indivisible etc; it would be good to have the language more specific.
- Build on the strong practice around sustainable development to develop a greater sense of critical enquiry and social justice, informed by the CRC when looking at the world and the UK.

3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School context	Kentish Town CofE Primary School is a small urban school in central London with 236 children on roll. 35.7% of children are eligible for Pupil Premium, 35.7% are EAL learners. The school has additional resource bases for the inclusion of 6 children with physical disabilities and 15 children with autism and has 11.9%, a much higher proportion of children than average, with EHC plans. Ofsted judged the school as Outstanding in December 2017.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher / RRSA coordinator / deputy headteacher / assistant headteacher and teacher in charge of the Autism resource Base.
Number of children and young people interviewed	31 children in focus groups, 4 children on the learning walk, interview with a child from the resource base and 28 children in class visits
Number of adults interviewed	5 teaching staff, 3 support staff, 5 parents (2 of whom are governors)
Evidence provided	Learning walk, focus groups, written evidence, class visits, children's work
Registered for RRSA: July 2012	Gold first achieved: July 2016

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 had a very good understanding of rights. They cited a wide range of them including the right not to be separated from their parents, the rights of children with disabilities, to be protected from inhumane treatment and the right to juvenile justice, to not join the armed forces under the age of 15 and that the government should support people to recover from wars, as well as the right to relax and play, education, clean water and healthcare. They understood all the concepts of rights explaining, *“Everyone in the world under the age of 18 has rights...You’re born with access to them...They are all equally important.”* It was evident from the discussion in the focus groups that children didn’t just know the articles, they also applied them to their day to day experiences and conversations.

Kentish Town CofE Primary School has a very strong focus on global learning and sustainable development. This work was strongly underpinned by the Convention. Children had a deep understanding of why some children may not be able to access their rights, particularly globally. They described living in war affected countries as impacting on children’s rights to be protected from harm, to live with their parents, access to health care, clean water and nutritious food. They were concerned that *“girls sometimes don’t have an education.”* A boy explained that in Sierra Leone it was difficult for children to access education because the teachers might not have accessed education themselves and so might not be able to provide a good quality education. Another child explained that, *“Sometimes children don’t get listened to.”* They were aware of homelessness impacting on children’s access to the right to be safe and education in the UK and globally.

All adults spoken with showed a great commitment to the Convention. The headteacher explained that understanding rights is *“particularly pertinent in our school context for vulnerable children with complex needs.”* The deputy explained that it’s *“the moral heartbeat of the school.”* The coordinator is new to the role since the Level 2 assessment, and the senior leadership team were all clear that this had helped sustain the work by looking at RRSA with a new perspective. She recognised that as coordinator, *“I’ve understood more deeply about how teachers and support staff work so hard to implement rights.”* Staff provided further evidence of continued impact, *“It’s almost like a second language... it’s got deeper...it’s very visible, almost the first thing you see...it’s embedded in our paperwork.”* The headteacher described how the school had worked with other schools to develop rights lanyards including text and symbols and that this had supported staff, particularly in the playground. The school website homepage states that: ‘Kentish Town CofE Primary School is proud to be a Gold Rights Respecting School’. The school improvement plan refers to articles; policies are linked to appropriate articles; planning across all year groups refer to articles and this was also evident in children’s work. New staff explained how they received information about the Convention as part of their induction to the school.

Parents were equally committed to the CRC. *“I think it was the first thing I heard about.... children come home and talk about it a lot...every newsletter and piece of homework is linked to an article and my son explains that’s the most important bit of information.”* One parent described how the Convention *“inspires conversation.”* Other parents explained how their children have *“an empowered understanding of their rights”* and *“a really strong sense of what the world should be.”* Governors reflected that *“they had seen it put into practice”* and were well informed receiving regular updates. The impact of learning about rights is evidenced in the recent school review.

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

Children gave numerous examples of how the school enabled them to enjoy their rights including: Article 24 because *“we have water fountains and school lunches where we can choose what we want to eat;”* Article 23 *“there’s a lift, ramps and the sandpit is raised so we can use it;”* Article 27 *“there’s a canopy to protect us from the rain;”* Article 12 *“we have lots of debates and arguments.”* *“Teachers do everything within their power to help us access our rights”* explained another. The children were very confident that the school would act on any concerns about their rights not being accessed. One boy explained: *“we have duty bearers, teachers and the TA and the government.”* Another child explained the system for addressing concerns, *“We would go and talk to a teacher, talk to the headteacher about it and have a school vote, the governors would be told, and we’d check with Camden.”*

There was evidence of respectful and positive behaviours throughout the visit. Children and staff treated each other with dignity making space for children in wheelchairs and additional TAs. They listened carefully to each other’s responses and supported one another. One child was unwell during the focus group; it was swiftly dealt with and no fuss from any of the other children. Class charters are created each September where children and staff agree the *“most important rights, they’re written up and signed and it reminds us.”* During the learning walk, the children pointed out the playground charter and explained, *“it’s old but it’s exactly what we should do.”* Children agreed that the charters meant that they all thought about how they treated one another and that this meant systems were fair. They were very confident that children were treated with dignity if someone went wrong: *“Someone would ask why they were behaving badly; they would be treated with respect.”*

All children spoken with agreed that they felt safe at school. They described fire exits, entry buttons, high visibility vests used when on school visits and staff are trained first aiders. Classrooms had worry boxes. All children agreed that there was someone they could go to if they felt unsafe and pointed out the posters for Childline. Children explained that *“depending on how bad something is we can sort it out or we go to an adult....at circle time you can share anything that is worrying you.”* A child stated, *“Now I know lots about rights I feel a lot safer and confident.”*

Children’s social and emotional wellbeing is taken very seriously. Kentish Town CofE is a healthy school; it is also a pilot school for DfE work on developing a whole-school approach to mental health. It has held health and wellbeing mornings for parents; a link worker from CAMHS holds a drop-in session to encourage more parents to access the service. Year 6 have weekly mindfulness sessions, and these were identified as particularly impactful before the exams in May. A girls’ group was established to look at relationships and the impact of their behaviour on others. A specialist PE coach promotes the benefits of having a healthy lifestyle; female athletes have visited the school to encourage the uptake of girls in sport.

The headteacher stated simply, *“Inclusion is at the heart of RRSA.”* The website states ‘the curriculum is planned to ensure that learning can be accessed by all, regardless of gender, race, language,

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culture, ethnicity and faith.’ The Ofsted report stated, ‘Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptional.’ All children from the Autism base have their own passport setting out their needs; older children cocreate their passports. *“It’s up to them to help us”* explained the coordinator. A child from the Physical Disability resource base explained very powerfully that *“my knowledge of rights gives me the confidence to tell people what I need. I won’t let people make assumptions about me and tell me what I can do. Everyone listens to my opinions and concerns and adapts things so I can be included. I feel really involved.”* This was also corroborated by parents. *“Rights allows children to see each other as peers and equals”* said another.

Children were very enthusiastic about their right to education and clearly appreciated the opportunities that they had. They explained how Growth Mindset was about *“not giving up and trying your hardest and was to do with Articles 28 and 29.”* Children explained how they chose the level of challenge in mathematics and they voted on which projects they would do for Go Givers and chose their Friday afternoon activities. The SLT explained that they are *“teaching them to think differently for the rest of their lives.”* Much of their global advocacy work focused on improving education opportunities.

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

It was evident throughout the visit that children’s views are taken seriously. *“Pupil voice runs through everything”* stated the headteacher. *“All the teachers listen to us and take us seriously”* said a child in the focus group. There are a range of opportunities provided for children to participate in decision making including: children are voted onto the Rights Respecting school council; there are house captains; playground buddies and librarians. The school council explained that their role is *“to do the stuff that the adults do...assemblies to make people understand rights and make sure that the school is doing rights properly.”* Children have contributed to the anti-bullying policy and are working on developing a child friendly version with pictures so that everyone can understand. They have been involved in curriculum review through the school vision survey and requested more art and DT which has been acted on. They are involved in looking at curriculum topics to ensure that it is more representative in terms of gender. *“Children are a lot more confident and involved and speak up”* agreed a parent.

Children have been engaged in many activities to campaign for the rights of children locally and globally. They have supported the local food bank and worn Green for Grenfell. The school has taken part in Take Over day where children took over adult roles for the morning. Visitors to the school from Educaid and DfID have talked about education in Sierra Leone and the ‘Leave no girl behind’ campaign. The school council organised a sponsored silence and a run for your rights event to raise funds for both organisations. Children in the focus group could explain eloquently some of the issues that were faced by children in Sierra Leone and girls and how important it was for everyone to access their right to an education. Staff identified that children *“have a really strong sense of values”* and will say *“that isn’t right....we’d like to do something to support.”*

Children have been involved in a STEAM project looking at plastic around the world and wrote to the Prime Minister. Every year all classes take part in Go Givers *“to raise awareness and get people to*

help.” Children’s books showed evidence of work on climate change, animal extinction, plastic and palm oil. This was always very clearly related to rights; one boy explained “cutting down the rainforest isn’t going to provide enough oxygen which means that life will be affected and in the future children won’t know about a clean and safe environment.” Other children said, “We need to do more about climate change...we’ve been making leaflets to make people aware...we’ve sent one to our MP... we’ve written to Greenpeace.” Two Year 1 girls made sure that I looked at their work on litter outside the school, telling me: “We’ve asked the council for a bin outside school.” A child summed up for the group saying, “you know you can make a difference and you can help others access their rights.” Staff also corroborated children’s agency, “they know they don’t have to wait until adulthood to have their opinions heard; they can change and do things now.”

Kentish Town have played an important role in advocating for RRSA. They have supported schools in Kent, Haringey and Tower Hamlets on their rights respecting journeys. The coordinator and the school council are working with their local secondary school to encourage them to become rights respecting. The school hosted the visit by David Beckham when the school council talked to him about rights. The headteacher represented RRSA for a Unicef UK back-to-school focus on radio 5. “We want to persuade other schools to be rights respecting” stated a child from the school council.