

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Lydgate Junior School
Headteacher:	Rachel Hurdling
RRSA coordinator:	Steph Holden
Local authority:	Sheffield City Council
School context:	480 children on roll, 12% are entitled to additional support through the Pupil Premium and 22% speak English as an additional language. Of the 14% identified as requiring additional help with their learning, 9 children have an Education Health and Care Plan.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher and RRSA Coordinator
Number of children and young people spoken with:	34 children in four small groups, including the Eco Committee and the Y6 Rights Champions.
Adults spoken with:	Deputy headteacher, 3 teachers including the SENDCO, 3 support staff, 2 of whom are also parents of children at the school, and one is a governor, and a parent governor.
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: May 2014 Bronze achieved: December 2014 Silver achieved: December 2015 Reaccredited: June 2021
Assessor:	Martin Russell
Date:	6 th March 2024

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Lydgate Junior 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:

- Confident and articulate children who demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of rights. They knew a wide range of articles and were able to explain the concepts underpinning them.
- A strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders at all levels, tied into the vision and values of the school. Quality training and support for staff has been sustained.
- A school with inclusion at its heart, where pupils feel safe and secure and are articulate about the importance of knowing about children's rights, the difference this makes to their lives and their desire and determination to help realise these rights for others.
- Strong pupil participation. There are several different mechanisms for children to feed into decision making and leadership in different areas of school life. Children felt listened to, that their views matter and that they could make a positive difference.

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:

- Create further opportunities for pupils and staff to revisit and deepen understanding of the origins of the CRC and the wider context of human rights.
- Continue to create opportunities for children and young people 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 strategies to empower children to challenge injustice and create further opportunities for all year groups to be involved in campaigning and advocacy work on children's rights. Consider revisiting UNICEF UK's annual [OutRight campaign](#) and explore possible use of UNICEF UK's [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#).
- As a Gold Rights Respecting School, develop your ambassadorial role, promoting the CRC and the benefits of a child rights approach.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
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.	The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child influences and informs all aspects of life in school. The children are extremely well informed about their rights and spoke confidently about a wide range of articles. They have a strong grasp of the concepts underlying human rights, such as them being inherent and unconditional; <i>"They are yours from when you are born...nobody can take them away."</i> Their knowledge about this is reinforced by a song (3 'I's and 2 'U's) written by a staff member and regularly sang at assemblies; a short rendition of this was shared by one of the pupil groups! <i>"We have regular lessons about rights and there are posters about them everywhere."</i> It was evident that children understood that not all children can access their rights, they spoke of some children who are separated from their family and how war <i>"...can force you to leave your home; you might lose lots of your rights if you have to become a refugee."</i> Articles from the Convention are visible around the school and are prominent in school communications, including the website. The curriculum is rich with references to relevant rights and both children and staff readily shared examples such as, Y5 learning about Article 24 through the novel <i>A Long Walk to Water</i>. An adult mentioned how frequently children refer to rights, unprompted, <i>"We were talking about Victorian workhouses, and it was suddenly a discussion about rights!"</i> The implementation of the RRSA framework is extremely well led and the leadership team, governors and colleagues across the school are clearly committed to a well informed and consistent child rights approach. The headteacher explained, <i>"I wanted RRSA to be the centre of everything we do. My job is to ensure that duty bearers are enabled to do the best job they can."</i>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
2. In school children enjoy the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.	The children spoken with were in no doubt that their rights are realised in their school. They explained the role of duty bearers and were confident in describing ways in which any concerns or issues regarding their rights, in or out of school, could be raised with <i>"...trusted adults."</i> One child said, <i>"It's safe to tell them your thoughts and feelings."</i> Children of all ages felt strongly that their school treated everyone fairly; exploring this in more depth showed that they understood equity and how this applied to school life, <i>"Some people need more support than others."</i> The school developed an RRS 'Progression of Language' document, to support everyone in embedding RRS terminology according to age and stage.
3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights.	Interactions during the virtual visit revealed a warm and positive culture with mutual respect at its heart. Discussion about how children felt they are treated in school elicited responses about kindness and respect and led to references to dignity such as, <i>"Dignity is something you are born with."</i> All adults, including parents, spoke enthusiastically about supportive and affirming relationships; one explained, <i>"When a rare incident of less good behaviour occurs, using rights language helps make it more tangible for everyone in finding a resolution."</i>
4. Children are safe and protected and know what to do	Children spoke assuredly about feeling safe in school, explaining that they learn about their rights to be protected from harm and are empowered to claim this right in the numerous ways made available to them by the school. There is a 'Voice Box' in every class for children to voice their opinion or share their concerns

if they need support.	with the teacher or school council representative. Members of staff said, <i>"All children need to know their rights and that everybody else has rights too."</i>
5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	All aspects of wellbeing are a key focus, twice daily checks are part of the school structure, and all duty bearers look out for all children. The school uses the 'Thrive' framework and children spoke with enthusiasm about the importance of understanding all aspects of their health, especially emotional wellbeing, <i>"We have Zones of Regulation...it is important to have the freedom to express your feelings."</i> The Pastoral Lead tailors' provision: running groups around friendship, emotional regulation, bereavement and social skills including Lego Therapy.
6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.	The school prioritises inclusive attitudes and practice; the children spoke very positively about how they valued the way in which their school, <i>"...is very respectful. You can always really say your own opinions."</i> , another added, <i>"You can be yourself in our school."</i> One of the adults pointed out, <i>"Many of your children have lots of different positive experiences and opportunities in their lives. Knowing about rights from a global sense gives them a new perspective."</i>
7. Children value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.	Staff stated that rights respecting adds value to teaching and learning, <i>"It gives a framework for reflection on your practice and on your relationship with the class."</i> Teachers and pupils spoke of ways that can be found to be flexible and innovative with the curriculum; one child explained, <i>"I wanted to talk about my religion in RE, so I asked the teacher, and she arranged it next lesson."</i> Children said that the way teachers teach, <i>"...makes learning fun...we get lots of choices."</i>
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	Y6 Rights Champions, a new initiative for 2023/4 and additional to the representative Rights Respecting School Council, is one of many pupil leadership initiatives. Members are trained to engage with all other children, supporting them in many ways including play and wellbeing, <i>"Some children prefer to speak to somebody their own age."</i> They were very clear about the need to refer concerns to an adult and pointed out, <i>"We are still rights holders, doing this doesn't make us duty bearers!"</i> The members of the Rights Respecting Council said that the views of all children are heard in various ways, <i>"We definitely get a voice and have it listened to."</i> The headteacher explained that she regularly receives letters and proposals from the children, not just stating their concern or objection but offering solutions. Children have been consulted on the Homework and Positive Behaviour policies, initiating various lunchtime clubs including a popular litter picking club; members of the Rights Respecting Council wrote the schools simple Code of Conduct, 'Be safe; Be kind; Be respectful', and they brought about school menu improvements and changes to the use of the playground. An adult pointed out, <i>"The children unpacked why it wasn't working and their ideas led to the successful changes."</i>
9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.	Children cited many ways in which the school takes action for the rights of others including fundraising for the local children's hospital; collecting crisp packets to be folded and woven into blankets for homeless people and bake sales for various causes. Children understood the importance of campaigning, <i>"People need to stand up for one another."</i> They spoke about the work of their Eco Committee and a successful campaign to reduce the use of plastic in school which has had a sustained impact on practices such as laminating. It was explained that when children fundraise for local, national or global causes, they also learn about the different projects they are supporting and look at them from a children's rights perspective.