

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Woodstock Church of England Primary School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Christian McGuinness
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Janine Coaker
<b>Local authority:</b>	Oxfordshire County Council
<b>Assessor(s):</b>	Martin Russell and Kathy Allan
<b>Date:</b>	12 May 2021

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Gold accreditation report is based on a virtual visit. The assessors 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 evidence.

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:

- Children's knowledge of a broad range of rights.
- A commitment to RRSA and children's rights from senior leaders, staff and the whole school community.
- Courage and confidence in using rights to help frame discussions about challenging topics that in the past may not have been approached.

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:

- Continue to develop knowledge and understanding of articles by making explicit reference across the whole curriculum, where relevant. Include an understanding of the Convention’s origins and place within the wider framework of human rights.
- Keep exploring and strengthening understanding of the concepts of rights for adults and children. Specifically explore the ‘[ABCDE of Rights](#)’, the meaning and understanding of dignity and exploring the role of duty bearers within school and the wider community.
- It is clear that children are confident using voice to shape their own learning. Moving forward, explore how children can contribute to the school’s Raising Achievement Plan and engage in wider school improvement. Recognise the role of children in helping adults understand problems and develop achievable solutions.
- Develop a systematic approach to campaigning so that children have the opportunity to engage in activism and challenge injustice locally and globally. As part of this consider utilising children’s enthusiasm for a rights based approach and promoting this with other schools.

## 3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

<b>School context</b>	Woodstock CE Primary has 305 pupils on roll with 8.5% eligible for Pupil Premium and 11.8% receiving support through an EHCP or with a statement. 11.8% of pupils speak English as an additional language.’ A SIAMS inspection in 2019 judged the school to be ‘Excellent’.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher / RRS Lead / Deputy headteacher / Inclusion manager
<b>Number of children and young people interviewed</b>	6 children from the rights committee, 10 children in focus groups
<b>Number of adults interviewed</b>	1 teaching staff, 1 support staff, 3 parents, 2 governors
<b>Evidence provided</b>	Online portfolio, focus groups, written evidence
<b>Registered for RRSA: Nov 2018</b>	<b>Silver achieved: Nov 2019</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 at Woodstock are confident talking about a wide range of articles from the Convention and were able to link these to their own experience and to the lives of others. As one child explained *“Article 12 is the right to an opinion and for adults to take us seriously like in school”*, with another adding, *“refugees have the right to protection and all of their rights when they leave their homes.”* All children spoken with have a great understanding of their rights and were confident to discuss these, stating the article numbers and explaining them in detail.

The concepts of rights are also clearly understood with children describing how *“rights are something you are born with, they are something someone can’t take away from you.”*; *“All the rights are equal.”* and *“you do not have to earn them, they are for everyone in the world.”* The terminology of duty bearers has been introduced across the school and children were clear that staff in school and the Government were the ones with responsibility for ensuring that children can access all their rights.

Rights are discussed and explored through lessons, particularly PSHE and weekly Our World sessions. One pupil explained that *“in our classrooms we have a big poster of Article 28. In our class we often talk about our rights and we made posters to help others learn.”* The Respecting Rights Committee support learning within their own classes as well as across the school explaining, *“We focus on one right per week.”* In early years there are rights respecting displays, copies of the Convention and the Global Goals. Children are also engaged with the whole school Our World topics and receive UNICEF UK’s Paddington’s Postcards. KS1 children involved in the focus group were vocal and confident in discussing their right to be safe and how they keep healthy. A parent described how books were sought to support learning about rights and a permanent display highlights important texts to children. When talking about rights being denied, issues of war, poverty, Government corruption and inequality were raised, examples included Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King who challenged discrimination, poverty, preventing access to the internet, health and food. A child explained that *“Some people might not have a good home life and their rights might not be respected. At school they can learn about their rights and feel respected.”* The UN Global Goals are routinely taught across the school linking rights and action, as a member of staff explained *“Children are increasingly aware of how issues such as war, poverty and the climate impact on rights.”*

Staff and Governors have received support from the RRSA Coordinator who has delivered formal CPD and is a champion of rights around the school. The headteacher who recently joined the school described rights as *“Permeating all aspects of school life, it is not a bolt on. It is very much a thread of the school’s work and reaches all aspects of school life.”* It was explained that *“Children are now being taught subjects they may not have explored before. Rights provide a context and safe space for respectful discussion.”* Parents spoken to referred to their children talking passionately about rights and sharing their understanding with the family. One parent shared how the Beatles’ song ‘Blackbird’ was explored as part of music lessons and discussion led to exploring inequality and civil rights. Another explained how *“Rights are completely embedded through conversations, children build a confidence to have conversations about what affects them and gives a context of the world.”*

## **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 agreed that they are able to enjoy all of their rights in school and understood that duty bearers have the responsibility to ensure that all of their rights are being met. A member of staff described how rights are *“Very much part of their language and vocab and life now.”* Pupils confidently explained the concepts of fairness and equity saying, *“It is a right to be treated the same as everyone else.”* adding *“Children can be treated differently if they need to be.”* and *“You should all be treated equally but if someone had a disability then you shouldn’t get everyone a wheelchair you only get one for the person who needs one.”* They understood that if they had any concerns, they would speak with a duty bearer saying, *“You should tell an adult or a teacher if something is worrying you.”*

Staff and children reported that relationships across the school are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights. *“Children now understand how their behaviour impacts on the rights of others. It helps children to think about others and develop a sense of self,”* explained a member of staff. A child explained how *“If someone does something against the rights you can tell them and they can improve, it helps we all know our rights.”* showing the confidence in their relationships. Another member of staff added that rights have *“Enhanced the way children communicate with each other and they drive things forward bringing ideas and are interested. It is creating a positive empathy towards others.”* School systems are perceived as fair and respectful with children reporting their ability to resolve small issues themselves, *“If there are little fall outs then they are fixed quite quickly, sometimes with the help of adults.”*

Children spoken with reported that they felt safe in school and are aware of the different avenues available to get help if they need it; family, staff in school, other trusted adults and Childline. As one child explained *“Bullying is not good and I wish it didn’t happen. It shouldn’t happen as we have a right to be protected from words or actions that harm us. Always tell an adult if you see someone bullying.”* Links were made between keeping safe on the internet and Articles 16, 17 and 19 with a child citing that, *“We have the right to reliable information. If you see something bad you tell an adult, should keep information private and have a right to privacy.”* Other examples given included teachers preventing you from doing things that might hurt you, locked gates, fire drills and privacy in the toilets. Another child explained *“We are not allowed to sing in the class due to Covid. We need to keep safe.”*

The school places children’s social and emotional wellbeing high on their agenda. They are supported to develop healthy lifestyles with KS1 children talking about the need to eat fruit and vegetables, make healthy choices, drinking lots of water and exercise. Additionally, cleaning teeth, getting lots of sleep and first aid training were mentioned as examples of keeping healthy. Mental health was also highlighted with a child saying, *“Your mind has to stay healthy, say you are on a screen all day you need fresh air and you get very tired or you won’t get to do your best.”* The curriculum supports children to explore their feelings and to learn meditation and mindfulness skills. Pupils recognise the importance of talking about their feelings, *“You can get very sad and upset if you don’t share your feelings, it can rub off on other people”* A parent explained how they felt that learning about their rights and wellbeing has supported children to be *“...more resilient and this has helped them cope over the last year.”*



Children identified themselves as feeling valued and included in the life of the school. One girl was keen to explain, *“If this school wasn’t a rights respecting school then I might not have been here. I have dwarfism and if a school didn’t have the rights then I might not have been there or might have been treated differently to others.”* Staff described the strong priority that is given to listening to all children: *“...to create an inclusive classroom every child needs to be heard. We address misconceptions and encourage contributions from children, exploring and listening without judgement.”* Children are confident and secure in sharing their own stories using a framework of rights. A member of staff reported that when using the recent Article of the Week pack about Foster Care Fortnight, they addressed many misconceptions in class and a child voluntarily spoke about their personal experience. Children were very respectful and it was an empowering and enlightening experience for all involved. At Woodstock all children’s strengths are recognised and celebrated; during the recent lockdown children were able to share their interests and skills with peers such as music, making films and art.

Children spoken with agreed that they were supported to have a say and they play an active role in their own learning through discussion and choosing ways to learn or present information such as drawing or painting in art. Children also describe how they get to choose their level of challenge and the activities they engage in. Increased engagement in their own education and learning was identified by staff as developing as *“Children now know ‘why’ we are doing things and learning things. They now know they are rights holders and can say how they feel and what they think.”* Governors have undertaken work with children to explore their experiences of remote learning and working in bubbles, ensuring that children can shape provision and that it is meeting their needs. A governor described how *“Being able to distinguish between wants, needs and rights helps children shape their learning and supports understanding of other’s experiences. Children can apply learning to sense of self and to others.”*

### 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 spoken with felt confident that they had a voice in school, and that their views are taken seriously. They are able to join a wide range of pupil voice groups such as the Children’s Council, Respecting Rights Committee, Global Gang, Eco and Sports groups. *“Children have a confidence, and not an arrogance, that they have rights. They know they are listened to. They know they can change things,”* explained a governor. Children described how they are voted onto the Committees and that this is a fair process. At the suggestion of the Respecting Rights Committee, children’s rights are now an agenda item at every Children’s Council meeting. A review is also underway to develop a model with the Committee as an umbrella with the other pupil groups feeding in.

There is a sense of confidence in the structure of the pupil groups, *“You tell the Children’s Council and they will share with the headteacher.”* explained one child. Some of the changes recently implemented as a result of children ideas include a big clock for the playground, *“We can now see what time it is and when we need to go to meetings or how long we have left to play.”* Another recent change is that, due to zoning the outdoor space, Yr3/4 had no access to the field to play. After raising this issue in relation to Article 31 their timetable has been adapted to allow outdoor play on the field without impacting on safety. *“It’s more equal now.”* explained a child who had been involved.

The Respecting Rights Committee are passionate about sharing their knowledge and understanding.



*“We have talked about how rights can help us and how if children in other schools don’t know about rights we can share our knowledge and help their schools be like us, by sharing understanding of rights we can make the world a better place.”*

Children have been engaged in a number of campaigns and events to promote not only their rights, but the rights of all children globally. Examples include OutRight, completing the Daily Dash, and raising awareness of plastic pollution. The school’s Eco Committee have been taking action to protect the environment by picking up litter locally, reducing electricity use and exploring renewable sources of power. Awareness of the Global Goals has led to learning about the impact of plastic pollution on animals and posters have been created to highlight how the destruction of habitats impact on the land, on animals and on children’s rights. During lockdown the Respecting Rights Committee created a wonderful video to highlight the benefits of buying Fairtrade products. This was shared as an assembly with the whole school. A member of the committee shared how: *“Fairtrade gives the farmers enough money to pay for children’s education and uniform.”* Another added, *“It helps children get clean drinking water, it costs more but they need money more than we do, it is more fair and equitable.”*