

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	St. Joseph's Primary School
Headteacher:	Alexandra Riordan
RRSA coordinator:	Menna Beynon
Local authority:	Cardiff
School context:	St Joseph's Primary School has 229 pupils on roll. 21% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, and 45% speak English as an additional language.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher and RRSA Lead
Number of children and young people spoken with:	16 children from Senedd Groups 9 children in group 2 Multiple whole classes during tour
Adults spoken with:	3 teachers, 1 governor
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: 20 th March 2015 Bronze achieved: 25 th January 2019 Silver achieved: 8 th July 2019
Assessor:	Stuart Whiffin
Date:	14 th June 2023

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

St. Joseph's Primary has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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:

- Very articulate children who demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of rights. They knew a wide range of articles and were confident in the concept of rights.
- Children understand how their rights are connected within school life, to Catholic values, and to their local and global community.
- Consistent messaging about rights and respect underpinning every dimension of the school's work.
- The school has a strong culture of inclusivity and respect which is understood and articulated by children and adults alike.
- Pupil voice is valued highly, and the range of pupil voice groups gives ample opportunities for all young people to put their suggestions forward and for these to be acted upon.

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 the good practice around rights that has become embedded across the school. Ensure that all new initiatives are related back to rights.
- Further develop 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 deepen awareness of global issues through your work on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Use the World's Largest Lesson resources to support this.

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 at St. Joseph’s had a strong knowledge of rights and were able to name articles and link them with lived experiences. Children understood the nature of rights, stating, <i>“You get rights as soon as you are born, until you are 18 years old.”</i> Another said, <i>“Rights cannot be taken away, they are ours no matter what. All children in the world have rights but sometimes not all children get to enjoy them.”</i> They were able to give examples of local and global issues which may deny children their rights. <i>“The war in Ukraine has meant that children can’t get the right to an education or be protected from violence.”</i> Other pupils discussed how poverty or safeguarding issues have a negative effect on children accessing their rights. A rights-based approach is fully embedded which is intertwined with the school’s Catholic ethos and values. Staff discussed how the children lead the learning of rights in many ways. <i>“The School Rights Ambassadors have conducted learning walks in all classrooms to gain an understanding of how familiar the children are with the articles. Some members of the Senedd in Year 3 have also created a song to help other children remember the ABCDE of rights.”</i> Rights can be found across the curriculum in several ways such as through discrete sessions, topic-based work, whole school initiatives and celebration days. Children are leaders of the rights practice. The RRSA lead said, <i>“The Learning Squad action group have created a presentation about how the school incorporates the UNCRC into all aspects of school life. Each group presented at our rights showcase event for governors, parents and the community. We promoted the event on our social media platforms.”</i></p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>Children discussed the many ways in which they are supported to know their rights, such as class charters. One child said, <i>“We have a class charter to remind us of our rights and to help us respect them for everyone in the school.”</i> Staff discussed how, <i>“Rights holders and duty bearers have worked together to decide on the rights that they think are important to them as a class and discussed how everyone has a role to respect the rights.”</i> Children spoke confidently of how duty bearers are, <i>“...adults who have to make sure we get our rights.”</i> Both staff and pupils have explored the concept of equity and were able to explain what it meant for them. Staff discussed how, <i>“After we had explored what equity is, the children created a mind map to show how our school puts this into practice.”</i></p>
<p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights</p>	<p>Staff and pupils reported that relationships are strong in the school. Children acknowledged that when conflicts or disputes happen, <i>“...we try to sort out our problems, but if we need a teacher, everyone gets to have a say so that it is fair.”</i> Children discussed how this happens in a private space because, <i>“...it’s what is best for us and our dignity.”</i> The headteacher discussed how, <i>“...relationships have continued to strengthen as the rights journey has progressed.”</i></p>
<p>4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.</p>	<p>All children spoken with agreed that they could discuss their problems with a trusted adult in the school. Pupils discussed the ways in which their right to be safe is upheld. <i>“We have people who come to talk to us about internet safety, fire safety or staying safe at home, like the police.”</i> Staff discussed how the Digital Leaders have created a guide for parents about the safety and age limits for different apps that the children may use at home. This was linked to rights.</p>

<p>5. Children’s social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.</p>	<p>The Healthy Schools action group have written a section for the school prospectus based on how the school provides information and support for physical, mental, social and emotional needs of pupils. Wellbeing is given great importance at St. Joseph’s, and this was clear from speaking with pupils about the range of both physical and emotional wellbeing activities they complete. <i>“We have special teachers you can go and talk to if you need some help with your mental health.”</i> The school discussed how programmes such as Thrive and ELSA are used as intervention where needed.</p>
<p>6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.</p>	<p>The school holds its Catholic values at the heart of all it does. Children spoke of how they have welcomed children from all religions, and they have, <i>“...learned about how other religions pray or celebrate.”</i> Staff discussed how <i>“Children of different religions are offered the opportunity to pray together in the prayer group. We look at what is similar and different between the religions and ensure that everyone feels accepted and able to practice what they believe in.”</i></p>
<p>7. Children value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.</p>	<p>Teachers use pupil voice displays to inform their planning and practice. Children discussed how, <i>“We get to choose the type of work that we want to do in class. We put all of our ideas on the board so the teacher knows what we are interested in and what we would like to find out.”</i> One staff member said, <i>“I feel that pupil voice is now fully embedded in our school, which has empowered our students. All classrooms have a pupil voice display and topics are pupil led.”</i></p>
<p>STRAND C</p>	<p>Highlights and comments</p>
<p>8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.</p>	<p>Pupil voice in the school is strong, with several pupil action groups available to join which forms the school Senedd. Children spoke enthusiastically of the election process and were very clear that the process was fair. Senedd members are elected through pupil voice groups. The Senedd meet regularly to discuss the actions and time is given for pupils to feed back to the rest of the school. Children discussed the changes they have been able to bring about, <i>“We know that all children have a right to water, so we campaigned for all children to have a water bottle, so now we all have one.”</i> Other examples were given such as changing the school’s PE kit so that it is more affordable for parents, sending letters to parents, installing an assault course in a grassy area of the playground, making fruit available at breakfast club and organising an affordable bookfair so that all children have access to reading materials at home. One pupil said, <i>“We know that we can speak to the teachers about things we want to change, and they will listen to us.”</i></p>
<p>9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.</p>	<p>The school gives a wide range of opportunities for all children to explore rights on a local and global scale. When working on the UNICEF OutRight Campaign, children in Year 5/6 created a brochure for new parents joining the school, and those who are new to Wales. <i>“The brochure contained information about healthcare facilities in the local area which are free to access. We enlisted the help of some current parents who work in health care to gain this information, and this is available in the main reception area.”</i> Staff discussed how the new curriculum lends itself to campaigning through topic enquiries, <i>“Year 5/6 looked at the topic ‘Sustainable Fashion’ and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of this. They created posters persuading people to recycle their clothes. They then organised a second-hand clothes fair to promote this in school.”</i> The school discussed how children are currently campaigning against reduced play facilities in the area which are being changed to provide a sewage system for a new housing development. Children have written to their local MP and hope to have a meeting with her soon.</p>