

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	St Paul's Junior School
Headteacher:	Caroline Owen
RRSA coordinator:	Karen Francis
Local authority:	Somerset
Number of pupils on roll:	319
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Caroline Owen & Karen Francis
Number of children and young people spoken with:	6 children
Adults spoken with:	Headteacher, Teachers, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Mental Health
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: 14 th July 2022 Bronze achieved: 27 th July 2023
Assessor(s):	Stuart Whiffin, Robin Bonar-Law, Charlotte Bowden
Date of visit:	Wednesday 19 th June 2024

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

St Paul's Junior School has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver: Rights Aware.

EVIDENCE FROM THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

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 living.

- Many children and young people are familiar with several articles of the CRC and can talk about the rights they enjoy. They can explain the ABCDE of rights and know that rights are universal and unconditional, *“All children should have rights. You are born with rights and legally entitled to them”*. Children discussed how they recognise situations where children are not able to enjoy all their rights. *“If they don’t have money, they might not be able to buy food or afford a home to live in.”* This understanding demonstrates a strong foundation in the school's teaching about rights.
- Staff discussed how the rights respecting work is visible throughout the whole school and is planned for across the curriculum. Staff discussed how the teachers link to articles where appropriate in Geography, PSHE, and English. For example: *“In Geography, Year 6 have designed their own field study and enquiry for each class, which led to letters to the house of common, responses, and a strong ongoing connection with the local council. They feel like they are initiating change and being listened to!”*
- The headteacher spoke of the impact being part of RRSA has had, *“I think from the children’s point of view they understand what their rights are and fight for them, they are more confident and proud to present what they are working on and how they lead the way for their fellow pupils.”*
- The headteacher described the school as a community school *“Parents are an integral part of our events and we talk to parents about the work of the rights rangers through class dojo and newsletters.”* The senior mental health lead added *“It’s encouraging parents to cross-the threshold”*

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to develop knowledge and understanding of the CRC, its origins, values and principles and, for older pupils, its place within the wider framework of Human Rights.
- Ensure the school community have a clear understanding of the concepts of rights holders and duty bearers. Find creative ways of making articles/rights displays even more visible and high profile around the school and on the website. Some primary schools have a rights mascot to support this.
- Continue developing the school’s strategic documentation to link to and reflect the values and articles of the CRC. You might find [Articles in Action](#) a helpful resource. When reviewing your home school agreement next, ensure accuracy of language around rights.
- Support parents/governors/families/the wider community to learn about and understand the CRC and engage with the school’s rights respecting journey. This could include support and information on the website/school newsletter and home school learning activities.

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.

- Children gave several examples of how they can enjoy their rights at school. *“The rights rangers do an assembly every term, where we talk about important rights.”*, another said, *“We had a meeting and together we upgraded our school values by them by linking these to rights. They’re on a display in the corridor now”*.
- Children spoke of the ways in which the school ensures that they are kept safe. *“On the playground teachers wear high vis so we know where they are if we hurt ourselves, they control who can get in too”* Another added, *“The teachers with purple lanyards are who we can speak to if we don’t feel safe”* All children agreed that they felt safe in school and that they could identify members of the safeguarding team by their lanyards and posters around the school.
- Health & wellbeing is a priority at the school. Alongside staff training in areas of behaviour support and restorative justice the school has a mental health lead and mental health champions from each class. *“Letting children design and lead school health campaigns has been empowering and had a big impact. Wellbeing champions chose to run a poster competition to encourage and promote healthy snacks and cleaning water bottles – linking it to their right to be healthy and have clean water.”* Children spoke of identifying wellbeing leads by their green lanyards.
- The school’s family wellbeing coach spoke of how the RRSA has fostered positive relationships, *“Our pupil/adult relationships have evolved through open communications about rights, they understand their rights and our responsibilities as adults – they see us as partners.”*

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to embed the UNICEF RRSA Charter Guidance and focus on the language of ‘respect for rights’ so that relationships are seen as mutually respectful. When charters are next reviewed, include actions for duty bearers as well as for children.
- Create opportunities to explore the concepts of fairness and equity and ensure children and young people can describe how school promotes these concepts.
- Explore with staff, children, and young people the concept of dignity - what it means and how it underpins policies, actions and interactions between everyone at school.
- Ensure that children and young people are clear about how adults, as duty bearers in school, should uphold their rights and help facilitate their access to rights.
- Continue to provide opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity in a range of ways.

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.

- Children have opportunity to join several pupil voice groups. One pupil discussed the group they are in and how they were elected, “...there’s one ranger per each class, to become a rights ranger we had to do a speech and then people would vote”. Children discussed how they can suggest ideas, “If you have an idea you can speak to your teachers, or the pupil voice team and they will listen to you.” Children reported that they feel listened to and can bring ideas to staff that will be acted upon “I like being a school counsellor because it lets us have a voice and have a say in the decisions we make as a school”.
- Children are given opportunities to support the rights of others locally and globally through campaigns and fundraising. They have worked with local planners and the town council on the inclusive design of a new park, advocating for the right to play in media interviews, “We were involved with the whole park design process, which was quite fun, we made sure the equipment was good. It was a really special feeling!”. Additionally, Year 6 students recently wrote to the council about graffiti concerns in their geography fieldwork. Receiving responses from the House of Commons, they learned the power of engaging with local decision-makers to initiate change.
- The school is also committed to environmental advocacy, with the Global Goals prominently displayed in classrooms. The Rights Rangers have signed up for the Outright Climate Action campaign, integrating climate change education into the curriculum.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to provide opportunities for children and young people to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school. This could include explicit involvement in school improvement planning, policy review processes, the evaluation of learning and teaching etc.
- Support children and young people to engage in a range of advocacy, campaigning and fundraising activities that promote children's rights locally and globally perhaps linking with UNICEF UK's Outright Campaign and using UNICEF's Youth Advocacy Toolkit.
- Continue to develop processes for children to suggest ideas to pupil voice groups and then closing the feedback loop, perhaps using the ‘You said, we did board’ approach.