

UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL TWO

School:	St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Yetminster
Headteacher:	Jane Prelogauskas
RRSA coordinator:	Mel Lane
Local authority:	Dorset
Assessors:	Jilly Hillier and Ayse Dervish
Date:	16 th November 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

We would like to thank the leadership team, governors, parents, staff and children for their warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with adults and pupils during the assessment and for the evidence detailing the work towards being a Level 2 rights-respecting school. You provided a very comprehensive Progress and Evaluation form and an Impact Evaluation form. It was clear to the assessors during the visit that everyone places a real importance on developing and embedding a rights-respecting ethos.

It was particularly evident that children felt being a right-respecting school was fundamental to the school. Children showed a mature understanding of a wide range of rights and as a result, they showed a great awareness of what it means to be inclusive and to respect diversity. Listening to children's opinion is an integral part of all aspects of teaching and learning and of day-to-day decision making.

Standards A, B, C and D have all met the necessary criteria.

2. REQUIREMENTS BEFORE ATTAINING LEVEL 2

None required.

3. MAINTAINING LEVEL 2

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 Level 2. Here are our recommendations for your school:

Build on the clearly evident strong, effective culture of participation and consider how to involve children more at a strategic level - perhaps developing a child friendly version of the School Development Plan and involving children in the review of more policies.

Continue to act as ambassadors for the UNCRC in your school and local community, sharing your fantastic rights work and supporting other schools on their RRSA journey.

Consider developing a training and advocacy role for children e.g. raising awareness of RRSA to new members of staff, governors and children; leading a campaign on a rights issue following on from Millie's gender stereotyping in books concern.

Build on your work with the Sustainable Development Goals and explore ways of involving children in local and global campaigns about social and global justice e.g. Unicef OutRight campaign.

4. THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

4.1. The school context

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Yetminster is a smaller than average primary school with 157 pupils on roll. Most families are from White British backgrounds and the percentage of children who have English as an additional language is below average. The percentage of children who have special educational needs is higher than average. There is a smaller than average number of pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium. The current Headteacher was appointed in April 2015 following the tragic death of the Headteacher in a car accident.

The last Ofsted inspection was in February 2016 and the school was rated as Requiring Improvement; personal development, behaviour and welfare was good.

The school achieved RRSA Level 1 in July 2013.

4.2. Assessment information

Self-evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher, RRSA Lead
Number of children and young people interviewed	34
Number of adults interviewed	4 teaching staff 1 TA/ ELSA support 1 parent 1 governor School Reverend
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence All classes visited

Standard A:

Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

Standard A has been achieved.

A rights-respecting approach is embedded at St Andrew's. Leaders are committed to placing the values and principles of the UNCRC at the heart of policies and daily life in school.

The headteacher and RRSA Lead enthusiastically described how the vision and practice of St Andrew's Primary School are underpinned and driven by the values and principles of the UNCRC and are captured by the mission tagline, "Hearts and Minds Working as One." The RRSA lead commented, "*It feels like we are training future citizens who feel they can change the world.*" It was clear that RRSA is having a big impact on the culture of the school alongside the school's Christian ethos. The school vicar, who is also a governor, reported that RRSA was "*the single most influential*" thing she had experienced in any school and that it had impacted on her own practice.

Since being a rights-respecting school, attendance has improved as well as parents' understanding of children's right to education. The SIAMS report states: "*The school's focus on attendance has reduced absence and raised parental awareness of the negative impact of school absence*" (May 2016). The headteacher is actively addressing areas for development identified by Ofsted and the most recent RI monitoring visit reported that the school has "*made rapid improvements in the outcomes for pupils*" (October 2016) with standards now above the national average. The SLT feel RRSA has played a significant role in this. There is a strong emphasis on children's wellbeing with trained ELSA staff and there

have been no exclusions. The headteacher also explained how being a rights-respecting school had helped them as a community get through the very difficult period after the tragic death of the previous headteacher.

The School Development Plan is explicitly underpinned by the UNCRC and RRSA is referred to as part of Priority 2: Personal Development. The headteacher made it clear that the UNCRC was fundamental to all aspects of school life and “*embedding RRS across the school*” is stated as a clear objective. The RRSA lead keeps detailed termly plans about the focus of rights respecting work and works closely with the headteacher, a governor and a parent responsible for RRSA, to ensure a sustained and embedded approach. The school is exceptional in the way it is working with the local reverend to dovetail collective worship and the UNCRC. Key policies such as PSHE and Citizenship are underpinned by key articles and, importantly, also refer to the role and actions of children as Rights Respecters, “*We ensure that children experience the process of democracy by frequently asking their opinions and listening to what they say*” (Article 12). A report to the governors linked to Article 12 outlines what the Right Respecters have been involved with and how they feel about it.

An inclusive and participatory approach is built into the way the school operates. It was evident when talking with children that this is lived on a daily basis and linked to an understanding that all children are entitled to all rights on the Convention. In practice, this means children are routinely consulted on school matters, are empowered to be respectful of diversity and confident to challenge stereotypical and sexist attitudes (one child objected to a Boy’s Annual in the library that featured football and rugby - activities she enjoyed and so with the teacher relabelled the book the Kid’s Annual). Another child explained how they were aware of the needs of children with autism and so acted in a sensitive way to support them. Children have learnt to use sign language for the school prayer and the SIAMS report commented that the school showed “*Positive attitudes towards inclusiveness*. TAs are trained to provide ELSA support to children and evidence was provided to show the impact this was having on children e.g. by enabling a child with anxiety issues about schools trips to gain confidence and take part.

The school acts as ambassadors for the UNCRC in school and within the wider community. The Rights Respecters see their role as about helping others know about their rights. They meet weekly, explore rights issues in school, gather ideas and opinions of their classes, lead assemblies and work on larger activities such as attending an anti-bullying conference with other schools. The RRSA lead has supported another local school working on RRSA, children have worked with a special school to explore rights, St Andrew’s has hosted RRSA training, contributed to the Wriggle Valley newsletter and has worked closely with the local church so that the reverend now integrates rights into her teaching. She commented that she is learning from the children. The school is soon to become part of a Multi Academy Trust and the headteacher is positive about the potential this has for the school to further develop their ambassadorial role.

Helping children to understand the world around them from a rights perspective is clearly an important priority for the headteacher and RRSA lead and planning and practice reflects this. Children are given frequent opportunities to reflect on current events using rights language e.g. when learning about the Syrian crisis; the USA presidential election; and supporting local and global charities. The school has embraced learning about the Sustainable Development Goals in a meaningful way focusing on Goal 12, Responsible Consumption, exploring what this means in school. Different members of staff also see their



role as developing specific areas of the rights agenda e.g. Eco Club, Gardening Club and Disability Sports. National and International calendar events are also supported e.g. Children in Need and Send My Friend to School.

Standard B:

The whole school community learns about the CRC

Standard B has been achieved

Teaching and learning about the Convention is embedded in the school life.

Children spoke knowledgeably and confidently about rights and were able to list many of the articles within the Convention. They were also able to describe situations in which children might be denied their rights e.g. refugee children from Syria or children suffering abuse or bullying in England. The children gave numerous examples of how teachers and support staff helped them to learn about rights e.g. in lessons, assemblies, whole-school events and pupil voice activities as well as day-to-day interactions between staff and children. Staff felt confident to teach about rights because they had regular access to training, meetings, assemblies and support material. Furthermore, the school had framed training in terms of teaching ‘about’, ‘through’ and ‘for’ rights and both staff and children valued the importance of putting rights into practice and making a positive difference to their school and wider communities.

The school works closely with parents to make sure they know about the rights respecting approach. A parent explained how the school was part of a “*close community*” and how everyone was “*on a journey*” of learning about rights. As well as holding parent liaison sessions, the school provides an Information Board, an information leaflet and has parent representation at the weekly Rights Respecting Group meetings. In addition, the Home School Agreement drawn up in consultation with the Rights Respecters refers to the rights respecting agenda and to the importance of partnership between parents and the school to help children to be the best they can be (Article 29). In the Harvest Festival programme, which is shared with parents and other members of the community, links are made to children’s right to clean water and nutritious food as well as their right to practice their own religion.

Teachers have been consistently planning for teaching about rights for a number of years across a range of subjects, years and age groups. One member of staff explained how RRSA had “*made her think more deeply about her teaching.*” The PSHE Policy specifically states that “*PSHE is very closely linked to our work in school on children’s rights and the UNCRC.*” Teachers talked about the natural fit between many curriculum topics and rights e.g. Roald Dahl’s ‘Matilda’ in English. One teacher stated that having a rights-based approach had “*made everything more collaborative.*” In Year 4/5 History, the study of WWII is linked to Articles 6 and 34 by asking children to consider the impact on civilians. In Y2 Science, a topic exploring the basic needs of animals including humans is linked to rights. In Y6, RE links are made to Article 14 when talking about different religions and issues relating to poverty. The whole school assembly plan is clearly linked to key articles from the Convention and includes assemblies carried out with the Rights Respecters e.g. in Anti Bullying Week. Children are aware of how each Article of the Week links to the school’s Christian Values and the local Reverend explained that the children “*are aware of connections between rights and the Christian ethos.*”

Developing an understanding of global citizenship and sustainable development is a high priority for the school and children demonstrate cultural and global awareness and participation as a result. The children watch Newsround every day and according to the headteacher “being *rights respecting provides a framework to follow*” when discussing difficult national and international issues e.g. the Paris bombings. The RRS lead explained that children are encouraged to think globally about day-to-day issues and are regularly asked “*How does this affect people in other parts of the world?*”

Standard C:
The school has a rights-respecting ethos

Standard C has been achieved.

Mutual respect underpinned by a rights-respecting ethos underpins learning and action at ST Andrew’s.

Class charters based on the Convention and showing the actions of children and adults were in each classroom and children were clear about how they were involved in creating them and what their purpose was. One child explained, “*It helps us to know what our rights are.*” There is also a playtime charter and a lunchtime charter that children are modifying so that it more effectively relates to their concern about reducing food waste. The RRSA lead described how the charters help children understand how their actions impact on others. The SIAMS report also commented on the impact of RRSA on relationships: “*The strong focus of the school as a Rights Respecting School is enabling children to interact successfully with each other*” (May 2016).

Rights-respecting language and attitudes are central to the ethos of the school and the RRSA lead actively monitors and supports staff and children to continue to develop this. She said, “*It now feels deeply rooted and has made a fundamental difference.*” The ELSA Lead explained how she provides a safe environment that enables children to speak confidently about their concerns and that she always “*uses the language of rights.*” Responses to questionnaires show that children and staff feel that everyone treats each other with respect. This has been particularly effective as the UNCRC is used as a common framework for all aspects of school life including Christian values and British Values.

Children interviewed explained how they showed respect for each other’s right to learn and how adults showed they respected their rights and encouraged them to take ownership of their learning. This included self and peer assessment, a revised marking policy “*with signs that help us know how to improve,*” children making choices about their level of challenge, a “*We love Mistakes!*” wall and work on Growth Mindset to develop positive attitudes to learning. The local vicar commented, “*This school is outstanding. Children are taught how to think and be articulate on a range of issues.*” She praised their “*rights activism*” and talked about them “*breaking new ground*” so that she now asks the children to plan and lead worship linked to rights. The assessors saw evidence covering a long period of time of discussions with children that inform curriculum planning. Ofsted commented that “*pupils have a good attitude to learning and want to do well.*” (Feb 2016). Children are also involved in decisions about their wellbeing for example they attended an anti-bullying conference and were involved in defining what it is and how to address it.

Children reported feeling safe in school and gave a variety of examples about how the school kept them safe and empowered them to be safe. This included trying to avoid

physical contact, seeing an adult before you leave at the end of the day, safety procedures in PE and taking part in an internet safety programme. Children were aware that dangerous things can happen and the school deals sensitively with this. Health and wellbeing are explored in a number of ways from a rights perspective including using materials from Stonewall to look positively at diversity and how to counter homophobic language. The SMSC curriculum is linked to the UNCRC.

Staff and children are supported to resolve conflicts in a rights respecting way. Staff have been trained in Restorative Justice and this has been linked to a rights approach. The RRSA lead gave the example of a playground incident resolved after a *“long conversation about how they could both have their rights met ...working together, rather than end up in conflict.”* Learning about fairness and democracy in school and the wider community is made real e.g. the whole school took part in a celebration of the anniversary of the Magna Carta and visited Salisbury to see an original copy and learn about the origins of rights; children have lobbied their local MP and have taken part in mock general elections. Listening to children’s voice is fundamental to the school’s approach.

Providing opportunities for children to develop their language as rights-respecting global citizens is a natural part of the ethos of the school. The RRSA lead is informed about global issues and passionate about empowering children to be aware of and form opinions about the world around them. All children watch the news everyday as a springboard for discussing national and international issues such as the EU referendum, the USA election and the refugee crisis. This means children support initiatives like School in a Bag, Fairtrade and Send My Friend to School from a rights perspective and using rights language.

Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

Standard D has been achieved.

The school has a culture in which children’s opinions are consistently sought, listened to and valued. Children are empowered to be active local and global citizens.

Children have a strong voice in decisions affecting their lives in school. The School Development Plan states that *“Rights Respectors are to work on priorities linked to whole school development, behaviour and learning (including assemblies) and to report to stakeholders.”* Regular surveys are undertaken to monitor opinions and feelings, providing opportunities for children to talk about changes they would like to see e.g. relating to learning, resources and systems. Minutes of the Rights Respectors’ meetings show a range of issues that they influence e.g. activities to reduce food waste; reusing and recycling paper; the introduction of a buddy bench (made from recycled materials); educational trips and selecting charities to support. All children interviewed were clear about how these activities were connected to their role as a rights respecting school. The Playground and Equipment Buddies were keen to show the assessors the buddy bench and the play equipment that they supervised saying *“it goes towards children enjoying their rights.”* Children in Reception are taught about the importance of being healthy and staying safe and they take turns to carry out a Health and Safety check of their classroom and play area every day.

Children know they have a right to information and to have their opinions listened to and this is communicated to parents. A letter to parents, carers and governors highlighted Article 12 and asked a series of questions for them to consider with their children about e.g. which charity to support and which clubs should be run. Furthermore, children are encouraged and empowered to be active participants in their learning. In mathematics the 'Growth Mindset' approach is used to encourage children to consider how they have approached and got along with their learning. Children's evaluations included comments such as *"I asked for help and didn't worry about what people thought"* and *"I was resilient and kept going even though it was hard."* The school has successfully engendered an ethos in which children feel safe to ask questions; rise to challenges and see mistakes as a natural part of learning rather than a personal failing. The 'Growth Mindset' approach is also applied to teaching and learning about kindness, mutual support and teamwork. In Year 6, children reflected on how to make the best of their learning when working in groups and were asked to consider and discuss words and actions that helped and hindered good team work.

The assessors saw much evidence that showed the school consistently facilitates opportunities for children to learn about being active local and global citizens. When asked how they might be making a difference to their local community or as global citizens, children said they did this, firstly, by making sure their school and their actions are rights-respecting e.g. by keeping things fair, making sure no one is left out, helping others when they are sad and by resolving conflicts in a rights respecting way. They went on to talk about how they raised funds for local charities, how they wrote letters to raise issues to their MP and showed support to a local Big Issue seller. Going forward, children are going to be taking part in the Village Community Plan. The SIAMS Report states that *"Children positively interact with others through local and global charity work such as fundraising for Myanmar and School in a Bag. The children are active participants when choosing which charities to support."* Ofsted reported that *"Pupils are well aware of the role they can play in supporting those children ... who are less fortunate than themselves."*