

RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	The Sherwood School
Headteacher:	Andriana Samouel
RRSA coordinator:	Kamaldeep Matharu, Lucinda Varchione
Local authority:	Merton
School context:	The Sherwood School has 378 pupils on roll. 30% of children are eligible for pupil premium funding, 2% have an EHCP and 41% speak English as an additional language.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher and 2 RRSA coordinators
Number of children spoken with:	11 children
Adults spoken with:	3 teachers (one is a governor), 2 support assistants, one is also a parent, business manager who is also a parent
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: April 2014 Silver achieved: June 2017 Gold achieved: Gold 2019
Assessor(s):	Frances Bestley
Date:	1 July 2022

REACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

The Sherwood School continues to meet 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 reaccreditation 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 range 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:

- There is an excellent knowledge of rights across the school community and children use the language around rights in a mature and reflective way.
- A strategic approach of senior leaders and the RRSA lead to embed a rights-based approach, putting it at the core of the school's ethos.
- The school has a strong culture of inclusivity and respect which is understood and articulated by children and adults alike.
- A common language of rights which is used across the school and supports children to explore and discuss a range of issues.
- A strong focus on the health and wellbeing of students within the context of rights so that young people feel supported and protected.
- 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:

- Continue the good practice around rights that has become embedded across the school. Ensure that all new initiatives are related back to rights.
- Continue to develop an ethos of inclusion and non-discrimination, providing opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity in all its forms including race, gender, belief and different kinds of families, so that all people feel valued and included.
- 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 using the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development as a framework for this and the UNICEF UK [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#).

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>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.</p>	<p>Children spoken with had an extremely good knowledge of rights and their underpinning concepts. They volunteered, <i>“Governments made the Convention on the Rights of the Child so children can be protected ... every child has rights, no matter where they are or who they are ... rights are a list of things that children should have ... every single one is equally important.”</i> Children cited a wide range of articles and spoke maturely about how they impacted on their own and other children’s lives. They talked about circumstances such as poverty and war and how these impact on children’s access to their rights. A child explained that he thought A38 was really important, <i>“...because we have a student from Ukraine and can understand the impact of war.”</i></p> <p>The headteacher and coordinators were strongly committed to rights and there was considerable evidence provided and observed throughout the visit of their focus on maintaining their Gold rights respecting work. The headteacher explained <i>“We’re very proud that we’re a rights respecting school. We don’t want something to slip back and have used the feedback from the previous visit to develop. We continue to promote articles – they are the backbone of our school. They are in every policy, our SDP, our SEF. It’s in our daily language.”</i> Teachers from Reception to Y6 agreed that <i>“...rights are entrenched ... discussions about rights come up every day.”</i> The school takes an effective approach to teaching about articles. A right is introduced by the headteacher at the Monday assembly, it is developed in more depth during the Tuesday assembly and then discussed in classes later in the week. The SMSC calendar and assembly planner, medium and weekly planning and displays link rights and UN Global Goals to topics and significant dates and events. Theme days and whole school texts provide further opportunities to promote and embed children’s rights.</p> <p>The headteacher explained that knowing about rights had contributed to academic outcomes, <i>“Our children are achieving the best they can; our attendance is above average.”</i> <i>“Rights are used to identify concerns – it’s powerful for children.”</i> added the RRSA coordinator who is also the DSL. <i>“It’s a great opportunity for my children.”</i> agreed a parent.</p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>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-</p>	<p>Children talked about how they enjoyed their rights in school. <i>“We respect our rights and make sure that all children’s rights are respected so every child can be safe ... the teachers listen to us ... our education helps us grow”</i> were some of the examples given. The concept of duty bearers has been strengthened and the headteacher explained that children now refer to duty bearers in their everyday language. School values have been updated after consultation with the School Council and parents to ‘Ready, Respectful, Safe’ and charters have been updated to link with these.</p> <p>The Sherwood School is a Mental Health trailblazer school and is supported by the NHS and other agencies to promote positive mental health. Children talked about the Mental Health week where they had learnt about relaxing</p>

<p>discrimination and participation; this includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes wellbeing</p>	<p>activities. They understood that <i>“some need more attention given”</i> and explained that there are anxiety workshops and a school counsellor who help. They appreciated that every classroom had a stress corner. There is a strong focus on inclusion. <i>“It’s important we treat all people fairly”</i> explained a child. The reception teacher explained children learn about diversity through listening to different stories. Arts week was linked to Black History Month. In science all children learn about diverse scientists. Children are taught about sexism and misogyny in PSHE. From September the school will be a pilot for the Global Boyhood Initiative. A teacher explained that children <i>“...are talking about things we wouldn’t normally talk about and are taking it home.”</i></p> <p>The headteacher acknowledged that the right to an education is a strong focus. Expressive arts encourage emotional wellbeing; all children learn a musical instrument and Philosophy for Children encourages debates about rights, linked by the children to articles 12 and 13. Google Classroom has been used to teach about sustainability. Children agreed that they enjoyed school and the extra curricular offers such as gardening and Lego clubs.</p>
<p>STRAND C</p>	<p>Highlights and comments</p>
<p>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 children experience their rights.</p>	<p>Children knew that their views were taken seriously. <i>“I really like to have my voice heard”</i> stated a child. Children explained the roles of different groups <i>“Art Ambassadors help with art in the school, they look at displays and see how they link to rights;”</i> <i>“As RRSA Ambassadors, we write weekly newsletters;”</i> <i>“The School Council improves the school.”</i> Children understood that if they wanted to change something they would <i>“...probably just go to the School Council”</i> and the change requested would be written in the councillor’s book and acted on. Children in the focus group were very eager to share their Pupil School Development Plan for next year. Priorities had been identified from the School Development Plan and focused on not wasting food, OutRight, monitoring learning and improving social and emotional wellbeing. They had identified actions, such as serving their own food and learning walks. For each priority there were costings and the lead for each activity was named. The RRSA Ambassadors and the School Council updated the antibullying policy and created a child friendly version and changed lunchtime so packed lunches and school dinner children could sit together.</p> <p>Fundraising for charities such as Red Nose Day, Children in Need, Jeans for Genes Day and for Ukraine were linked clearly to supporting children’s rights. The headteacher described how RRSA Ambassadors, <i>“outraged about car parking”</i>, implemented a focus on improving air pollution around the school which was followed up by the School Council who met the Mayor of Merton. The school now uses a travel tracker and large numbers of children walk to school. The reception class learned about activists and took part in their own march for change around the playground on Environment Day. <i>“It’s never too young to start empowering a child”</i> stated an adult. The RRSA coordinator and RRSA Ambassadors have also supported other schools in Merton to become rights respecting.</p>