



RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School	Euston Street Primary School
Local Authority	Education Authority – Belfast Region
Number of pupils on roll	372 (including 52 pupils in the Nursery Unit)
Headteacher	Mr J Armstrong
RRSA Coordinator	Mrs L Rainey
RRSA Assessor	Niki McQuillan
Date of visit	16 January 2020
Attendees at SLT meeting	Principal, RRSA Lead
Number of pupils interviewed	15
Number of adults interviewed	7
Evidence provided	Written, interviews, learning walk, classroom visits
Date registered for RRSA	23 November 2017
Bronze achieved	1 October 2018

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

Euston Street Primary 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.

- Children and adults are familiar with a wide range of rights and how they apply to their own situation. Pupils spoke passionately about their school and their rights respecting journey so far. The principal highlighted how working for the award has been a natural development for the school and has provided a framework to nurture the existing ethos and culture. Pupils in each class have been involved in producing an age-appropriate charter with their teachers. Each classroom displays three key articles the children have identified as representing the school community. There are playground and dinner hall charters. The nursery unit are also participating in the award with the youngest children also learning about their rights.
- Children explained how they learned about their rights through regular assemblies, lessons and pupil led updates. The RRSA lead highlighted how learning about rights has become an integral part of school life now and how this has naturally developed through PDMU topics and how it has “empowered children”
- The principal commented on the inclusive ethos in school and emphasised how the RRSA has had a very positive impact on the growing population of newcomer children and their families. “Currently 33% of our children are newcomers and 13 different languages are spoken in school.” He added that “a big thing here for us is about providing children with choice and balance. It’s not just about academic success but more about developing character. Our school promotes diversity and respect for all cultures.” He also praised the dedication of staff who “work tirelessly as a team”.
- Pupils understand not all children around the world enjoy their rights and showed empathy towards children who do not have their rights respected because of a variety of challenging circumstances. They are fortunate to be able to draw on the experiences and contributions of the refugee families in school.
- Teachers link articles into their lesson planners across most curriculum areas. Parents and carers are included and kept well informed about the school’s RRSA journey so far. Throughout the school, colourful displays celebrate all aspects of school life and are linked to articles. The whole school community focuses on an article of the month, has a very dynamic website which has a dedicated RRSA section and highlights the RR class of the week at both at Key Stage 1 and 2.
- All members of the school community are well informed and regularly updated about the RR work. Governors endeavour to incorporate the language of rights into all aspects of school business. The newly formed PTA run information sessions for other parents. There is a dedicated information area in the foyer with a series of leaflets. produced by staff, explaining various aspects of school life.



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

- Continue to support teachers to make explicit reference to relevant articles when planning the learning across most aspects of the curriculum, including the SDP and any subsequent policy reviews. Consider linking the school motto, information leaflet, the pupil Numeracy Passports and the child friendly version of the SDP to the UNCRC.
- Continue to incorporate an explicit commitment to education for global citizenship and sustainable development into the heart of the school's mission and purpose, drawing upon the school context and environment.
- Further build upon the very positive impact of the “voice” of the children and the excellent relationships between the children and adults in school.

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.

- The school gives high priority to the development of the children's physical, mental health and well-being. In addition to the planned curricular programmes there is a wide range of after-school activities run by staff. A dedicated councillor from St Barnardo's holds a weekly clinic in school to support pupils with concerns.
- The school development planning process nurtures a rights respecting environment with recently updated policy documentation making explicit reference to articles. Steering Group pupils have worked with the principal to produce a child friendly version of the SDP. The Steering Group meet regularly with pupils taking an active role in running the meetings and taking minutes. Members are both knowledgeable about the CRC and instrumental in disseminating information throughout school.
- Relationships between children and adults are very positive throughout the school community. Pupil voice is monitored through an anonymous survey carried out on a termly basis and throughout school children of all ages are encouraged to take on leadership roles. In addition to the various school council groups, there is a house system. Key Stage 1 classes have playground and classroom helpers and in Key Stage 2 roles include, Playground Buddies, Digital Leaders (with a focus on helping all children stay safe online) and Language Champions, who help pupils and families with translations, where English is not a first language.
- The introduction of the RRSA and these pupil leader roles has had a significantly positive impact in school. The RRSA Lead highlighted that teachers report they are spending less time in resolving disputes during class, which has provided more quality teaching and learning time. This impact has been reflected in the increase of English and Mathematics scores for pupils in standardised tests (GL PTM/PTE) over the last 2 years and it is hoped this trend will continue. Pupils take an active role in setting individual learning targets (including IEPs and PIPs).
- A specific newcomer teacher/coordinator has been appointed and there is a dedicated classroom to facilitate newcomer children and their families.



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'. When charters are next reviewed, endeavour to include actions for duty bearers as well as for children.
- Continue to develop the good work in school to promote an ethos of inclusion, where all feel supported and valued. Find ways to relate this explicitly to non-discrimination.
- Continue the good work to highlight and make explicit the correlation between improved outcomes for children and the implementation of a rights-based approach across the school.
- Develop the ongoing work to explore the extent to which children are confident that they are listened to if their rights can't be accessed.

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.

- In addition to the wide variety of fund-raising initiatives in school, pupils have engaged in a range of activities to help other children to access their rights. The entire school participated in a Rights Respecting Day dedicated to learning about the UNCRC and a Blue Day which celebrated children's rights. The NICCY (Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People) visited the school and spoke with the children about their rights. Other activities have included taking part in World Children' Day and Clark's Shoe Share campaign and supporting the NSPCC and Belfast Homeless Services.
- Pupils have experienced their voices being heard and acted upon. Some pupil led suggestions which have been implemented include the introduction of extra-curricular music lessons, re-organisation of the playground into 5 distinct zones and the introduction of the Daily Mile. Pupils from the School Council visited the local parliament at Stormont. Staff, classroom assistants and parents commented on the positive impact learning about rights has had on children with regard to their capacity to empathise with others both locally and globally. The ECO council worked hard to have their ECO award recently re-validated.

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

- In addition to your well established and successful charity fund raising, facilitate more opportunities for the children to initiate powerful advocacy and campaigning work, particularly with regard to children's rights.
- Further enhance ambassadorial activity by enabling children and staff to promote the Rights Respecting Schools Award and knowledge of the CRC with other schools and in the wider community.
- Aim to participate in RRSA training to support your journey to Gold.