

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

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| <b>School:</b>  | Auchterhouse Primary School  |
| <b>Headteacher:</b>                                     | Laura Cowper   |
| <b>RRSA coordinator:</b>                                | Laura Cowper   |
| <b>Local authority:</b>                                 | Angus Council  |
| <b>School context:</b>                                  | A small school with 28 children P1-7 and 12 children in the nursery. None of the children are eligible for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF); 11% have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and all children have English as their home language. |
| <b>Attendees at SLT meeting:</b>                        | Headteacher and class teacher  |
| <b>Number of children and young people spoken with:</b> | 16   |
| <b>Adults spoken with:</b>                              | 1 teacher, 2 support assistants, 2 parents, 2 nursery staff  |
| <b>Key RRSA accreditations:</b>                         | Registered for RRSA: September 2019<br>Bronze achieved: January 2020<br>Silver achieved: November 2020   |
| <b>Assessor:</b>  | Jenny Price  |
| <b>Date:</b>  | 19 May 2022  |

## ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Auchterhouse Primary School has met 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 accreditation 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 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:

- The extent to which rights and rights respecting language are embedded in day to day life of the school.
- Staff who are passionate advocates for ensuring children access their rights.
- An ethos that places positive relationships based on mutual respect and trust at the heart of school life.
- A strong focus on health and wellbeing; children were very clear that the school keeps them safe and supports them to be healthy.
- 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 to ensure that rights are explicitly linked to the curriculum, activities, and events throughout the school year, creating opportunities to deepen their knowledge of rights
- Continue to explore with children and staff the meaning of key concepts underpinning a child rights-based approach, for example dignity, equity, duty bearers and social justice.
- Continue to develop opportunities for children 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 support children to develop and lead campaigns from a rights perspective.
- Consider participation in UNICEF UK's annual OutRight campaign and using Youth Advocacy Toolkit will also help.

## 2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

| STRAND A  | Highlights and comments  |
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| <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>The children shared a good knowledge of rights and an understanding of the nature of rights, saying, <i>“We know the ABCDE of rights... they are for all, from birth, they cannot be taken away, do not have to be earned and are all equal.”</i> Children explained, <i>“All children should have their rights met all over the world... but it doesn’t always happen.”</i> Children understand that war, poverty and natural disasters affect children’s rights locally and globally. Children learn about rights through ‘right of the term’ using Article of the Week resources, assemblies, and cross curricular lessons such as Commonwealth Games/Paralympics, Religious &amp; Moral Education (RME), India (Connecting Classrooms) and Climate Change. A teacher explained, <i>“All my planning is through the lens of rights.”</i> Staff referred to <i>“...natural conversations about rights”</i> that come up when watching Newsround and/or Picture News or when reading story books or novels. The headteacher explained, <i>“children’s rights are embedded in the school now, its threaded through everything.”</i> The headteacher is invested in staff professional development relating to rights, including for nursery staff, and visiting specialists and speakers are encouraged to make links between rights and Global Goals. Rights are also explicit in strategic documentation such as SIP and some policies. Parents and the wider community are informed about the school’s RRSa journey and children’s rights through the school blog, termly school newsletters, village newsletter, social media, the Pocket Book of Rights and a rights song performed by children.</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 know they can enjoy their rights in school and shared a clear understanding of the role of adults saying, <i>“Duty bearers are adults that make sure our rights are being met... teachers and parents.”</i> Children talked about fairness in how conflict may be resolved, with a child explaining, <i>“If we fall out, we always get the chance to say our side of the story, people’s opinions are listened to.”</i> Children agreed that they feel confident that adults will protect them should they need it. Parents reflected on the positive impact of children knowing about their rights, saying, <i>“They are able to apply what they know to what is going on in the world... it’s important to them.”</i></p>  |
| <p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights</p>   | <p>Staff talked about mutually respectful relationships having strengthened over recent years. Children talked about the Kitbag strategy, <i>“...to resolve what has happened and allow us to cool off.”</i> Children also referred to dignity as <i>“...respecting other people, helping each other... we can talk in private, and the teachers don’t shout at us.”</i> The school’s relationship policy explicitly references articles from the CRC and is aligned to the school’s vision, values and aims as well as the restorative approaches used by staff. Class charters and playground charters, support continued discussions around rights.</p>   |
| <p>4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.</p>  | <p>Children agreed they feel safe and protected in school, understanding that this is one of their fundamental rights. Many children were able to relate how children’s rights to safety can be compromised explaining, <i>“All children should have the right to be safe, but some can’t always access this because of the area they are in, like the war in Ukraine...they don’t have a safe home or area to live in. They have no fresh clean water so need to be careful with what they eat and drink.”</i> Children also talked about feeling safe in school because of fire drills for emergency evacuations and learning about keeping safe online.</p>   |

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| 5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.                     | As a nurturing school, the wellbeing of children is clearly a priority. Children talked about using their wellbeing wheel, saying, <i>"If we have a low score, the teacher talks to us."</i> They also mentioned mindfulness activities such as listening to music and using their Kitbag resource to help them to <i>"calm down"</i> . Each class has morning and afternoon emotional check-ins and check-outs. A child explained, <i>"During our AAA sessions, we can talk about our anxieties... our mental health impacts what we do."</i> Early years use NSPCC 'PANTS' resource for health and personal safety.   |
| 6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.  | Children feel valued as individuals in their school. The school ensures a broad range of cultural festivals are celebrated, such as Diwali, Holi and Chinese New Year. A Connecting Classrooms project with a school in India, has deepened learning about Indian traditions and cultures, with children speaking about writing letters to the children of a school they are paired with. Children also acknowledged differences within school, with one explaining, <i>"Equity is treating people with what they need – it may not seem fair sometimes, but it's what they need to feel included."</i> Children with Individual Education Plans are involved in setting their own goals.   |
| 7. Children and young people value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.                  | Children have personalisation and choice in their learning. They clearly enjoy school; they value their education and understand this to be a key right. Children from the Learning Council described the 'learning pit' in detail making the connection to 'growth mindset' for learning. Children explained, <i>"We could be learning about anything, and the teachers sometimes stop us and ask what rights are linked. It's become part of every day."</i> Children's learning includes reference to knowledge of the CRC and is shared with parents via Class Dojo and progress reports.   |
| <b>STRAND C</b>   | <b>Highlights and comments</b>  |
| 8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.   | Children said, <i>"We get to share our thoughts freely."</i> Children have their say through a range of leadership groups which include all children (P1-7): Learning Council; Eco Council; and Community Champions. A 'You Said We Did' display board shares progress made across the school and children are involved in termly school evaluations using 'wee HGIOS'. The headteacher shares clear guidance with the leadership groups, <i>"The only restrictions of taking forward their ideas is related to being too expensive or too dangerous."</i> The Rights Group described their role, saying, <i>"We need to make sure everyone's rights are being taken care of."</i> With others listing how they promote rights through videos, posters, games, and quizzes. |
| 9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally. | The headteacher stated, <i>"Children use their rights to talk about inequality and fairness and what they can do about it."</i> Some of the Eco Group explained how they address litter in their local area, putting up signs and writing to the council for more bins. Others talked about writing to the First Minister on different issues such the relative wages of doctors and footballers, saying, <i>"People who work hard for the country should be paid more."</i> Children also shared fundraising for their Toilet Twinning project; Bake sales for cancer research; a nursery fun run for Children in Need which they understood all links to rights to a safe environment and health care.  |