

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Portpatrick Primary School
Headteacher:	Mandy Whorlow
RRSA coordinator:	John Morrison
Local authority:	Dumfries & Galloway Council
School context:	A small village school currently with 21 pupils, allowing for 2 classes (P1-4 and P5-7). There is 9.5% pupils eligible for PEF; 19% have an IEP and all children speak English as the first language.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher & RRSA Lead (PT)
Number of children and young people spoken with:	2 house captains on tour; 14 extra across 2 focus groups; and 2 class visits
Adults spoken with:	2 teachers, 1 clerical & learning assistant, 1 parent, 1 grandparent
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: Jan 2020 Silver achieved: Sep 2022
Assessor:	Jenny Price
Date:	30 May 2024

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Portpatrick Primary School has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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:

- 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 strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders and staff tied into the vision and values of the school. Quality training and support for staff has been sustained with passionate staff advocating for children's rights.
- Communication with parents about rights work, including encouraging parents to contribute to the rights home book, open afternoons, assemblies, leaflets, displays and the excellent home-school agreement.
- 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 to ensure that rights are explicitly linked to the curriculum, activities and events throughout the school year, so that pupils and staff learn about rights in greater depth. Consider a 'right of the month' approach which should link to your events, pupil leadership groups and campaigning.
- Continue to work on enabling the pupils and adults use of rights vocabulary such as dignity, equity, duty bearers and rights holders. Encourage everyone to actively use rights language when managing positive relationships in the playground and around school – this language should be reflected in relevant policies and documents.
- Continue the work that has begun on ensuring positive representation of our diverse society throughout the curriculum and continue to develop understanding and celebration of diversity in all its forms.
- Further develop children's understanding of what it means to be a rights respecting global citizen, supporting them to be informed about the world and current affairs so that they are critical thinkers and challenge discrimination and stereotypical attitudes. Use the [World's Largest Lesson resources](#) and to support this.
- Continue to act as ambassadors for rights and the RRSA through your networks in collaboration with the local authority, your partnership school and the local secondary school.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
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.	Children spoke confidently about their rights citing many examples from the CRC and how these link to their learning. Children explained, <i>“Anyone under the age of eighteen has rights... all around the world,”</i> and, <i>“everybody’s rights are equal... you get them from birth, and they can’t be taken away.”</i> Many children also demonstrated an awareness of where and why some children may not be able to access their rights saying, <i>“Children in some parts of Africa don’t have access to clean water,”</i> and, <i>“Some people don’t have access to education,”</i> and, <i>“Some parents don’t have enough money to pay for things like school or clothes.”</i> Rights are taught explicitly through class lessons (such as My Body, Egyptians, Safe Strangers, Literacy, RME), and an extensive assembly programme linking the CRC and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to relevant learning and events. The headteacher shared, <i>“Children see the connection to rights in their learning across the curriculum.”</i> Children also learn about global events through Newsround, with staff saying, <i>“It starts discussions that tie in rights and the rest of the world.”</i> Children proudly shared their ‘starbursts’ with articles in relevant places around the school explaining, <i>“These show that we’re a rights school and which rights link to each area.”</i> They also shared excellent rights related games, activities and resources, designed and created by children, that have been shared with parents at open afternoons. A parent shared that they have a school blog, regular emails, newsletters, a Facebook page and a parent portal for information. The RRSA lead pointed out, <i>“Staff have been kept up-to-date through regular CPD, to upgrade their knowledge of rights.”</i>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Children agreed that they enjoy their rights in school, facilitated by the adults. Many emphasised feeling valued and included. Staff said that children’s, <i>“...rights language and vocabulary is so engrained.”</i> The school’s Home School Agreement shows how staff, parents and children can show respect for rights, outlining the role of adults as duty bearers, helping everyone to contribute to a rights respecting environment. The headteacher emphasised, <i>“If we want to change mindsets it needs to involve all stakeholders in the community, including extended family.”</i> The clerical assistant also pointed out that their role involves, <i>“...respecting their privacy through confidentiality when dealing with parents.”</i>
3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights.	Children spoke with confidence about how positive relationships are encouraged and that, <i>“...there is less or no bullying.”</i> Some referred to their ‘dignitree’ and ‘dignometer’ displays, <i>“This shows how dignity is about kindness and respect,”</i> and others linked dignity with pride and, <i>“...not being embarrassed... talking privately... and talking calmly, no shouting.”</i> Children demonstrated empathy when sharing that the anti-bullying policy is there, <i>“...to help us all understand what’s going on... and to help the bully too,”</i> and, <i>“You never know what someone else is going through until you have walked a mile in their shoes.”</i> Referring to resolving issues, children acknowledged, <i>“Our charters show us how to respect each other’s rights and duty bearers help us see what’s reasonable.”</i>
4. Children and young people are safe and protected and	Children described how school makes them feel safe, mentioning fire drills, emergency lockdown procedures, special gates and fences, Bikeability and road safety. Many explained that they would speak to a trusted adult if they felt unsafe. The Pupil Council said, <i>“We want to make sure that everything is safe in the</i>

know what to do if they need support.	<i>playground.</i> " The school has a close relationship with the Community Safety Officers with children explaining, " <i>They talked to us about road safety, especially because we can't hear new electric cars.</i> " Others also shared, " <i>We learned about water safety through the RNLI visit.</i> "
5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	The school supports children with their health, social and emotional needs making links to the wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI). Children spoke of being encouraged to make healthy lifestyle choices with one saying, " <i>We respect allergies, so children get the food they need... that's fair.</i> " The school uses QR codes and Plicker for emotional check-ins, described by the headteacher as, " <i>...discrete, and anonymous... linked to protecting their privacy and dignity,</i> " with children adding, " <i>They will speak to us in private.</i> " Children also shared, " <i>We can chill out or have a soft start if we need it,</i> " and, " <i>This is fair if they need their own time,</i> " and, " <i>We can ask for brain breaks from learning if we need them.</i> "
6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.	Children feel valued and included as individuals agreeing with one who said, " <i>everyone should be included and respected.</i> " Some referred to their 'proud wall' and 'superstar awards' saying, " <i>It's to value each other's successes.</i> " Children spoke about different world religions and disabilities such as autism and dyslexia, and how this links to everyone's rights saying, " <i>We have developed an understanding of others around the world, so we know how to respect them... regardless of skin colour, accents or disabilities,</i> " and, " <i>We have done an Odd Socks Day to appreciate that everyone is different.</i> "
7. Children and young people value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.	Children spoke positively about their learning, with staff referring to " <i>consistent rights language,</i> " used to create a positive learning environment. Children have a role to play in their learning, with parents explaining that they " <i>share this through snapshot journals every term.</i> " Staff spoke about the " <i>meta-skills</i> " they are teaching, saying, " <i>They have choices in learning skills... they engage in their right to education.</i> " with children pointing out that their, " <i>learning links to employability skills and what we need to be successful in life.</i> "
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	Pupil voice is valued by adults in school, with the headteacher saying, " <i>Everyone has a role in school... They know they can make a difference and that their voice will be heard... they're empowered.</i> " Pupil groups include: Pupil Council (RRSA); Eco Committee (with Eco Cubs for early years); Digital Leaders; and STEM Leaders. Children demonstrated awareness that their opinions have helped to shape school life. House Captains pointed out all the suggestion boxes explaining, " <i>The Pupil Council collects ideas to change things</i> " with the Pupil Council adding, " <i>We try to figure things out and share ideas with the headteacher.</i> " The RRS group explained, " <i>Our purpose is to make sure everyone gets their rights [met] in the way that they need them.</i> " In a bid to improve litter in the playground, some children shared, " <i>We wrote a letter to the council, in persuasive writing, to ask for bird-proof bins,</i> " and, " <i>We have put up litter posters around the community.</i> "
9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.	Children are involved in a range of activities that help to promote children's rights on a local and global scale saying, " <i>We raise money for charities to give money to families that maybe don't have a home,</i> " and, " <i>We set up a shop by the hub to raise money for Children in Need and we brought in lots of food for the foodbank.</i> " Pupil Council said, " <i>We organise days like Pudsey Day, Red Nose Day and Blood Bikes, doing coffee mornings, bake sales, games, soak the teacher.</i> " Others explained, " <i>Blood Bikes carries blood using bikes... to incidents for people to get the treatment they need.</i> " The headteacher was very clear in that " <i>We want children to take positive action for themselves and for others.</i> "