

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	McCready Family Centre
Headteacher:	Donna Jeffries
RRSA coordinator:	Michelle Liddell
Local authority:	East Renfrewshire
Number of pupils on roll:	47
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, RRSA Coordinator
Number of children and young people spoken with:	5 children (due to children's age, this took the format of an observed interaction with only a few questions from the assessor)
Adults spoken with:	3 staff members, 4 family members
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: 11 October 2021 Bronze achieved: 18 February 2022
Assessor(s):	Steven Kidd
Date of visit:	25 October 2023

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

McCready Family Centre 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.

- Working exclusively with children aged 3 and under, and typically only for an academic year, there is a recognition amongst adults at McCready Family Centre that they face considerable challenges in developing awareness of rights amongst their learners, but they are undaunted by the magnitude of the task. The head of centre explained: *"At the beginning, we thought, 'How will we do this with such young children?'... On paper, it does look onerous, but when you break it down you get into a rhythm, and we've embraced that."*
- The session with children involved them identifying the different needs of a baby represented by a doll, an activity typical of the creative approach taken in the nursery. The children took to the task enthusiastically, sharing examples such as food, clothing and access to medical care, respectfully taking turns in the process. Staff prompted further exploration of themes such as safety, rest and even the right to a name. *"Rights come into everything,"* shared a staff member, *"We're really proud of what we do. We set them up to send them out into the world. We're setting them up for a positive future."*
- The intention to embark on a rights journey had been introduced at in-service days, with agreement that this would be a standing item at future meetings. Training and support were provided and information was shared with families through the school's communications, home learning packs and at a Parent Information evening. *"It's clear to see in the playrooms, there are lots of visuals,"* noted a parent, also referencing their appearance on the SeeSaw updates they receive: *"I think it's great that they're starting so early. They need to know what their rights are, so the younger they start, the better."*

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

- Appropriate to age and ability, continue to build children's knowledge of a selection of rights (e.g. to play, to be safe, to learn, to choose) and the nature of rights, perhaps adapting the [ABCDE of Rights](#) resource.
- Support adults to develop their knowledge and understanding of rights. Consider whether the new [Spotlight](#) resources may be helpful.
- Consider how your commitment to rights comes through in how you describe yourself as an establishment and is reflected in strategic documentation and policies.

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.

- *"We want them to get the absolute best start in life. We want to empower our children, to go on and be passionate,"* shared the headteacher, reflecting on the importance of children's rights to that ambition. *"We've always been passionate about children's rights,"* added the RRSA coordinator, *"It's just made such a massive impact."*
- The warm and welcoming environment was viewed as a real strength, underpinning all interactions, child and adult, one parent describing the centre as *"a family"*. Nurture principles and approaches are at the centre, the evidence explaining, 'Positive relationships have been able to begin with immediate effect from the home visit. Families feel less anxious about leaving their child as they are confident that staff facilitate what children need and understand them.' A parent echoed exactly that point: *"My wee one's only a year and a half. Hearing so much about respect and dignity has made me a lot more confident in leaving them."*
- Health and wellbeing is a clear priority at McCreedy Family Centre, with evidence providing an extensive list of support for physical and mental health, much of it linked to family activities, too. As an example, the Colour Monster story and puppets are used to explore feelings in the nursery, so a learning bag had been sent home for families to understand and engage in the process as well.
- Many of the children who attend the centre face additional challenges and the setting provides a wide range of support to address these barriers. They are also able to support families in accessing assistance beyond the nursery's walls: *"They're really helped my wee boy... we're also now getting external professional support."* Other parents shared similar stories in a conversation that was a glowing endorsement of the centre's focus on ensuring the best for every child, mirroring the results of a recent feedback survey on children's experiences.

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

- Help children, families and staff to understand how rights principles underpin policy and practice.
- Provide opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity in a range of ways.

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.

- Adults discussed the importance of children being able to make choices across their whole nursery experience and this was evident even in the short, observed session, where children were influencing the direction of the learning. Evidence outlined this child-led approach as the default, demonstrating how children are involved in shaping their environment, too, including through engagement in initiatives such as Learning for Sustainability and Eco Schools. Parents reflected on witnessing children being given *“the space and time to choose”*, seeing this as typical: *“All of the staff really take the time to engage with them (and us!) It comes through that they really care about the kids.”*
- The themes of voice and empowerment came through consistently in conversations, despite the age of learners; expectations of the maturity of conversations and engagement were perhaps altered from a setting for older children, but the commitment to listening was unchanged. The head of centre had lofty ambitions: *“We want to empower them and make sure they know they have a place in the world. We want to help them assert themselves and take responsibility.”*
- Learners have been involved in many fundraising and charitable activities, including a charity cycle in memory of a parent who passed away. Other causes such as Children in Need and Save the Children include an international dimension. Alongside these charitable efforts, children have been working to clean up their community, raising awareness through posters and taking direct action in their own litter pick. Children have also become Sustainable Living Champions and are now more knowledgeable on the importance of growing your own produce, linked to reducing hunger.

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

- Continue to provide opportunities for children choices and opinions to influence and shape the life and work of the centre. Think creatively about how you can involve them in the big decisions, including strategic planning.
- Support children to be involved in activities designed to make a difference. From fundraising to litter-picking, support learners to develop empathy and discover how they can help support their own rights and those of others.