

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	McCready Family Centre
Headteacher:	Donna Jeffries
RRSA coordinator:	Michelle Liddell
Local authority:	East Renfrewshire
School context:	McCready Family Centre provides early years education for children aged up to 3. The current roll is 62, almost 57% of whom meet a measure of deprivation. 8 pupils receive planned support for additional needs, whilst 6 speak English as an additional language.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, RRSA Coordinator
Number of children and young people spoken with:	8-10 children, observed in two small groups
Adults spoken with:	4 child development officers, 7 parents
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: 11 December 2021 Bronze achieved: 18 February 2022 Silver achieved: 25 October 2023
Assessor(s):	Steven Kidd
Date:	03 June 2024

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 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 centre, 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 centre 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 centre and underpin every facet of centre life.

Strengths of the school include:

- Happy, confident children who know that they have rights and see this is reflected in their everyday nursery experience.
- The visibility of rights, in the physical environment, in communications and in strategic documentation.
- A clear commitment from senior leaders to embed a rights-based approach, putting it at the core of the school's ethos.
- A nurturing family atmosphere with strong relationships with parents/carers who also value the centre's rights respecting work.
- Inclusion is strong. All children are valued and receive the support they need to be the best they can be.

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 centre. Ensure that all new initiatives are related back to rights.
- Continue to bring a global dimension to your work, helping children to learn about the world around them.
- As a Gold Rights Respecting establishment develop your ambassadorial role, promoting the CRC and the benefits of children's rights in early learning.

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.	Though they are very young, rights are part of the everyday experience of children at the centre. During a tour, children were observed engaging in typical activities, including a practical exploration of healthy food related to the Very Hungry Caterpillar story; children were supervised in cutting up and tasting a range of fruits, whilst having a conversation linked to their right to nutritious food. Evidence demonstrated many other examples of making rights accessible, including a charming poem about their importance; staff spoke of embracing the challenge - <i>"How can we be creative to make this meaningful?"</i> – and highlighted one especially valuable activity, <i>"We sat down as a team and talked about the sort of language we would use, so that it was consistent and the children would be able to understand... we're extremely proud that the foundations are laid."</i> The language reference sheet they created was spotted around the centre, contributing to the clear visibility of rights in the environment. Staff talked of including rights during planning, aided by continued training and support, one CDO saying, <i>"It's made us better practitioners."</i> Families were seen as a big audience, in recognition of children's age, the challenging circumstances which sometimes lead to children attending the centre and the desire to be the 'first point of contact' on a lifelong rights journey. That journey starts before the children arrive, as pre-visit evidence explains: 'In order to ensure all our new families are familiar with UNCRC from the very beginning and how we are a Rights Respecting School, we now provide families with a Home Learning Bag that includes a copy of the UNCRC articles... [they are] encouraged to complete the tasks and bring to nursery as part of their transition...' Rights are also regularly featured in social media and SeeSaw. Parents agreed that they had learned much about rights alongside their children, <i>"The parents are impacted as well... it's definitely changed how we do things at home, how I parent."</i>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
2. In school children enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Staff spoke of rights being embedded across the centre, <i>"It's everywhere... it's in learning, it's in care plans, every policy, every SeeSaw update."</i> Parents agreed: <i>"You see it in practice every day... it impacts on how your children are treated. That gives you peace of mind. It's not just a tick box."</i> The recent review of vision, values and aims was seen as an important step in reflecting the reality of the McCready Family Centre, as the RRSA Coordinator shared: <i>"That's been the biggest thing... everyone was involved, we took our time. I love our values now... It's not work, you just do it."</i>
3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights.	Interactions with children observed throughout the visit were warm and caring and adults identified this as a key strength of the centre, describing it as 'a family'. <i>"We're all part of the McCready community, they care about you,"</i> said one parent, whilst another praised the 'open door' policy, <i>"They really do go above and beyond for their children and families and the nursery feels like a home from home."</i> Nurture principles are at the centre of practice, aided by a co-created charter which brings rights to the fore.
4. Children and young people are safe and protected and	Safety is one of the core rights explored by children and they are becoming more able to express this. Various activities support their learning, such as the Road Safety Week home learning bag or 'The Hands are not for Hitting' storybook. Much of this learning is extended to parents, who have been made aware of the

know what to do if they need support.	responsibilities of duty bearers during these discussions. The centre has robust child protection policies, and all staff receive regular training to ensure the correct procedures are followed and children are kept safe.
5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	'Our main priority is our children's health and well-being' stated the pre-visit evidence, going on to outline numerous supports for children, both universal and targeted. From Childsmile sessions to encourage oral hygiene to the introduction of Forest Schools, it is clear that the centre is focused on the holistic needs of children. Colour Monsters are used to good effect in helping children to develop their emotional intelligence, something parents credited as having real benefit for their children. Parents spoke about the value of using the in-centre learning and experiences to improve life at home, something they are supported to do. Families benefit, too, with almost every parent having a story to tell about how the centre has helped with their own health and wellbeing, e.g., <i>"At parents' night, I was asked if I was in need of any assistance... My 10 minute appointment ended up being just over half an hour... it was reiterated that if I need any kind of support... I am able to speak with any of the staff."</i>
6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.	<i>"The best thing I've ever done for him was to bring my child here,"</i> shared a parent, voicing a sentiment that was shared by others in the focus group; they spoke at length about the centre's inclusive ethos and desire to see every child achieve their best. <i>"Everyone, from [staff member] in the office, to the janitor, to the amazing CDOs and senior staff, have made [my child] feel welcome, safe and happy. It is very clear all staff truly care and value each child as individuals and go to amazing lengths to ensure that each child feels seen and heard."</i> Evidence backed up the narrative, illustrating the personalised approach taken for every child in attendance.
7. Children value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.	<i>"They're a big part of their learning,"</i> explained a CDO, <i>"They make choices about what they want to play... they're really developing their skills and confidence."</i> Planning is responsive to the children, with staff reacting to continuously to the wishes of the children, but with intentional, structured experiences built in. Beyond immediate choices, children's input informs themes for learning, such as 'planting, growing, harvesting, cooking and tasting' connected to sustainability.
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	<i>"It can be quite easy to just do things for children,"</i> shared a parent, <i>"Talking about rights at such a young age encourages you to listen."</i> Several examples of impact were offered, such as the introduction of 'Bookbug in the Home', but most immediately turned to the children's efforts to transform their outdoor space. Children had discussed ideas for the space and staff sought funding; when that proved unsuccessful, they reached out to local businesses and planned a sponsored obstacle course, inclusive of all. With parents and carers invited along to join the fun, the children toddled their way to a magnificent £2,392 total. Though the transformation has been slightly delayed, there is much excitement that their ideas will soon be implemented.
9. All children have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.	Children have participated in activities such as recycling and litter-picks and have shared ideas with the community at a 'Call to Action' event. With learners aged 3 and under, awareness of rights is limited to more fundamental aspects, but the headteacher spoke of their importance in the wider context: <i>"If we're doing this every day, ultimately we could create a generation of children... who know their own rights but will be advocates for their peers' rights as well."</i> Staff have already been sharing their experience with colleagues in other local settings, to help them move forward with their own rights practice.