

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	Hillview Primary School
Headteacher:	Melanie McGurren
RRSA coordinator:	Lucy Melville
Local authority:	East Renfrewshire
Number of pupils on roll:	210
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, RRSA Coordinator
Number of children and young people spoken with:	11 pupils
Adults spoken with:	8 (5 Teachers, 2 parents, Active Schools Coordinator)
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: 03 March 2017 Bronze achieved: 21 May 2021
Assessor(s):	Steven Kidd
Date of visit:	11 October 2022

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Hillview 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 had a good rights knowledge, happy to share a range of articles and to explain key concepts such as universality and unconditionality. Despite their awareness that all children across the world had rights, they were also conscious that some children faced barriers such as “war”, “poor health” and “poverty” in accessing those rights.
- *“When it started a long time ago it was a standalone thing,” explained one teacher, “but now it comes into everything.”* Colleagues agreed that initiatives such as the regular Article of the Week helped to bring a focus to rights learning, but were clear that they were encouraged to bring a rights dimension across the curriculum, offering examples from IDL and novel studies to back up their assertion: *“From bottom up, from P1, what rights are we linking with that?”*; *“It’s become something we’re doing much more instinctively, but when it comes to the fundamentals we’re all on the same page.”*
- The RRSA lead explained how *“rights underpin everything we do”* and discussed how rights featured regularly at staff meetings and in training. Beyond dissemination of RRSA training, staff have explored rights in the context of the GTCS standards and incorporation into Scots law, investigating *“What does that look like in our school?”*
- Parents were well informed and passionate about the impact of a rights-based approach for their children. They noted how the school regularly shares information with parents via Twitter and newsletters, as well as engagement with the Parent Council. A ‘Rights Day’ further raised awareness within the community.

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

- Continue to widen the range of articles that the whole school community is familiar with, appropriate to age and ability. Ensure the school community have a clear understanding of the concepts of rights holders and duty bearers.
- Look for ways to incorporate an explicit commitment to rights when describing the school, helping the whole school community to understand the important underpinning role the CRC plays in shaping your policy and practice.

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 headteacher spoke of rights driving policy and practice across the school, from simplified Vision, Values and Aims through to approaches to promote positive relationships. *“There’s been a real shift in the ethos,”* she explained, linking the school’s rights journey to inclusion and *“hearing the voice of all pupils”*. Rights are featured in the School Improvement Plan and other strategic documentation.
- *“School’s really reflective... it changes and moves as needs move,”* reported one teacher, expressing a sentiment common across discussions with adults. *“It’s all responsive to the needs of the children,”* added a colleague, *“we’re very thoughtful about what children need and want.”* One staff member spoke of the emphasis on impact: *“My work’s focussed more on individuals, not just big numbers... how can we change lives?”*
- Adults spoke of how rights language had brought a consistency to thinking and to practice, particularly in approaches to behaviour management: *“Children understand what rights mean for them, but also what they mean for others.”*
- Children were clear that school was looking out for their safety, confidently sharing a range of examples from gates and fences to the actions of adults. They were similarly assured in identifying examples of how school helps to keep them healthy, noting *“healthy meals”, “PE”* and *“after school clubs”* amongst their discussion; they were clear that mental health was just as important as physical health, sharing further examples of how school supported their emotional wellbeing, including *“yoga and mindfulness”* and *“safe spaces... you can just go there to calm down for a bit”*.
- *“There’s a drive to create a really strong community feel,”* reported parents, discussing efforts to involve families, *“The school are very open to conversations... there’s an open-door policy.”*

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

- Create opportunities to explore the concepts of fairness, dignity and equity and ensure children and young people can describe how school promotes these concepts.
- 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.

- Pupils were certain that they were listened to at Hillview Primary, pointing to a wide range of examples of where *“school listened to me and other children”*. A range of pupil groups were felt to have contributed effectively to the life of the school, focus group participants sharing how’d they’d been involved in choosing library books and coming together with pupils from other schools to evaluate their maths learning. *“Our focus has been on pupil voice,”* explained the headteacher, *“It helps everyone to work towards a common goal... We feel like it’s had a huge impact.”*
- *“Now we are child led...children come in asking about the war in Ukraine and then we’re doing something about that,”* said one teacher, talking about their response to global events. Parents talked about rights coming up at home in relation to topical events: *“He’s always talking about COP26... it’s all joining up with the bigger picture.”* Children were certainly confident in identifying ways in which they could help, and had helped, to advocate for a range of rights. They spoke of efforts to raise money for children affected by the Ukraine conflict and collecting donations for the local foodbank, confidently linking these to articles 38 and 24 respectively

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

- Continue to empower children, supporting their engagement in school decision-making and in challenging injustice in the wider world. Help them to see the links to Article 12 and to understand the impact of their participation.