

RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Kirkcaldy High School
Headteacher:	Chris Mackay
RRSA coordinator:	Jaqueline Young
Local authority:	Fife Council
School context:	With 1413 pupils, there are 15% entitled to free school meals; 50% have additional support needs; and there are 4% who speak English as an additional language. 30% of children live within SIMD 1 & 2.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, RRSA lead, depute headteacher, PT (Pastoral)
Number of children and young people spoken with:	2 on tour; 19 in pupil group; 8 in RRSA group; 2 classes (S1 & S5/6)
Adults spoken with:	15 adults: 1 depute headteacher; 11 teachers, 1 pupil support officer; 1 YMCA staff; 1 In-Sync mentor
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: Mar 2014 Silver achieved: Mar 2018 Gold achieved: Nov 2019
Assessor:	Jenny Price
Date:	17 April 2024

REACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Kirkcaldy High School continues to meet 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 range 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:

- Passionate and confident pupils who are clear on the importance of rights and are empowered to drive change within the school.
- A strategic approach of senior leaders and the RRSA lead to embed a rights-based approach, putting it at the core of the school's ethos, with staff who are passionate about the positive impact of RRSA work.
- An ethos that places positive relationships based on mutual respect and trust at the heart of school life.
- The school has a strong culture of inclusivity and respect which is understood and articulated by children and adults alike.
- 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:

- Create further opportunities for pupils and staff to learn about rights in greater depth. Consider a "right of the month" (ROM) approach that could link to your current SDG agenda, events, assemblies, pupil voice 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. Consider faculty charters to make rights more visible and to encourage the use rights language when dealing with any issues in school or related to global issues.
- Continue to develop strategies to empower young people to challenge injustice and create further opportunities for all year groups to be involved in campaigning and advocacy work on children's rights (perhaps linked to ROM). Consider participation in UNICEF UK's annual [OutRight campaign](#) and the UNICEF UK [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#) to support this.
- Continue to explore with the school community the links between improved outcomes for children and the implementation of a rights-respecting approach across the school, ensuring children are clear on how school enacts this.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>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.</p>	<p>Pupils shared their knowledge of rights, citing many examples of articles from the CRC. Pupils expressed views and knowledge about rights being affected saying, <i>"In ... countries, like Afghanistan, female education is affected... in Palestine and Israel and Ukraine and Russia, people are having to leave their country, they are not getting food, water, or an education and sometimes children are being separated from their families. Children are not being protected from war."</i> Another added, <i>"Wars are causing culture erasure. Historical records, practices, archives, and libraries are being eradicated."</i></p> <p>The school facilitates blocks of learning linked to rights in different faculties, with pupils sharing, <i>"It's in Higher Politics. Rights are intertwined into many different topics"</i> and, <i>"It's in our social education related to safety, like drugs, smoking and road safety"</i> and, <i>"It's incorporated into helping us with plans into life after school, like our higher education."</i> A pupil explained, <i>"All teachers have lessons tied to rights,"</i> and others talked about rights posters and displays, the bulletin in tutor group time, as well as 'Blookets' with rights information and quizzes to help them learn. Staff added, <i>"We try to make links with what is happening in the world."</i></p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have a strategic approach to embed a rights respecting approach: articles are referred to in policies and procedures; the CRC has influenced the SIP; a series of rights themed assemblies; and, the development of the Pupil Leadership Team (PLT) were all identified.</p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>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</p>	<p>The school has continued to strengthen all areas, but with particular attention to inclusion. Staff acknowledged, <i>"As duty bearers, we have an important role in relation to rights."</i> Pupils explained that they enjoy their rights in school, saying, <i>"If we didn't know we have rights, then we could be mistreated... we know we can ask for help if our rights are not being respected and we know they will help us fix it,"</i> and, <i>"Rights reassure us of what we are entitled to."</i></p> <p>All adults spoken with shared a common view that positive relationships have resulted from their continued RRSA journey. Pupils referred to, <i>"Good relationships within the school,"</i> linked to a sense of belonging and wellbeing. Pupils shared, <i>"We are taken seriously, and it gives us peace of mind."</i> Some talked about the Mentors in Violence Protection (MVP) programme, explaining, <i>"This is a great way to educate on bullying."</i> Others added, <i>"We have been involved in creating the anti-bullying policy."</i> One of the pupil mentors explained, <i>"The MVP programme started with addressing gender-based violence and educating on homophobia... we wanted to understand the root cause to tackle the problem... and then we showcased what we learned with staff."</i> Pupils also referred to dignity in the context of privacy, saying, <i>"Issues are kept private,"</i> and, <i>"Dignity is embedded in our school motto: respect for self, for others and for learning."</i> Others explained, <i>"Period poverty is dealt with discretely."</i> Staff also referred to restorative approaches to support conflict management and shared, <i>"A calm group, focussing on social relationships and skills has led to creating a 'calm box' with resources (e.g. fidget toys, sand timers, sensory items), information and strategies to support self-regulation, which is now being trialled in some faculties."</i></p>

	<p>Pupils and staff spoke positively about the Inclusion Hub and how the school supports everyone to be involved in a range of different opportunities. Some staff shared, <i>"We create packages to fit the children to address barriers; we personalise and work with a lot of different pathways."</i> One pupil with dyslexia described the hub as having, <i>"Supportive learning staff who encouraged me and helped with exam stress, through exam counselling... it's a calm environment, and they really made me feel comfortable."</i></p> <p>Pupils are very aware that provisions are made across their school to support others and talked about this being <i>"fair"</i> and <i>"necessary."</i> Discussions were themed around LGBT+, free school meals, funding for trips, soup for all, uniforms, a prayer room, gender neutral toilets and global issues that pupils were passionate about. Pupils explained, <i>"It's important to keep everyone on an equal,"</i> and <i>"It's fair..., it's about equity. We're not all starting at the same level,"</i> and, <i>"Some people need extra help to get to that level and might need individual support rather than collective support."</i> Staff acknowledged that, <i>"Rights gives us grounding in why we are doing what we do in the LGBT+ group. It gives us justification and empowers our children who have felt marginalised."</i> One pupil described the prayer room created for Ramadan, saying <i>"I found this to be very thoughtful of the school, going out of their way to respect our right to have our own religion and faith."</i> Other pupils talked about how they had set up the Equalities Group in response to work that the Rights Group and LGBT+ group had been doing.</p>
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
<p>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 children experience their rights.</p>	<p>Staff clearly value pupil voice, which is an area that the headteacher and other staff highlighted as having improved significantly over recent years with <i>"empowerment"</i> being acknowledged in several discussions. Pupils shared the list of groups to influence change: LGBT+; MVP; Equalities Group; STEM Leaders and the PLT. One pupil explained, <i>"The purpose of all the groups is about challenging stereotypes and how to switch things up a bit."</i> The headteacher explained, <i>"Re-establishing the mechanisms for pupil voice to scaffold and support pupils so they are heard has been a big focus. The school reflects the voices of our young people."</i> Pupils from the Rights Group explained, <i>"I wanted to be part of the group to build on my knowledge of rights and to make a difference in the school,"</i> and, <i>"Our aim is to educate so that everyone knows about rights... Global Goals are within that through citizenship courses."</i> Pupils also discussed impact and change with examples shared: new mental health ambassadors; new course choices; supporting the Inclusion Hub; and subject ambassadors. <i>"We feel more empowered thanks to the ambassadors. They never let the passion of rights die down, continually enforcing rights."</i> The PLT explained, <i>"We discuss issues around the school from the pupil body"</i> and, <i>"We have a very prevalent voice and a big impact."</i> Staff referred to the Ukraine appeal explaining, <i>"Children wanted to do something to help. They know they have the power and ability to make a difference."</i> Staff and pupils were enthusiastic to share a recent initiative to acquire a plastic recycling machine, situated within the design and technology faculty for sustainability related projects. The D&T teacher explained, <i>"We have reduced new materials that we buy and now have zero plastic waste – being able to show this in context to the pupils so they can see it has been really positive."</i></p>