

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Langtoft Primary School
Headteacher:	James McCullough
RRSA coordinator:	Penny Wells
Local authority:	Lincolnshire County Council
Assessor(s):	Martin Russell
Date:	21 st June 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The assessor would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, staff and parents 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.

It was evident that children’s rights are embedded across the school and underpin all key aspects of school life.

Particular strengths of the school include:

- A very positive and inclusive ethos founded on trusting and mutually respectful relationships.
- Strong pupil participation underpinned by their voice being genuinely listened to and valued.
- Clear and prominent displays linking the CRC to learning and all aspects of school life.

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

2. MAINTAINING GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING STATUS

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 develop everyone’s knowledge of the CRC in the wider context of human rights.
- Build on the success of ambassadorial activity by seeking further opportunities for the children to promote understanding of the CRC and, with other schools, their engagement with rights respecting.
- Continue to be creative with parent/carer engagement, perhaps through child led assemblies and/or workshops delivered by children
- Create more opportunities for pupil led campaigning especially on global issues, making use of Unicef UK’s [Outright](#) materials.

3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School context	Langtoft Primary School has 210 pupils on roll. Around 2% have an EHCP with approximately 5% identified by the school as having additional support needs and only around 2% speak English as an additional language. 7% are entitled to support through the Pupil Premium.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher and RRSA Lead.
Number of children and young people interviewed	18 children in focus group, 30 children spoken with in class visits.
Number of adults interviewed	3 teaching staff including the deputy headteacher, 3 Support staff (1 parents of children at the school) 4 governors (1 the Chair) all of whom are parents.
Evidence provided	Learning walk, focus groups, written evidence, class visits.
Registered for RRSA: November 2015	Silver achieved: May 2017

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 development.

Strand A has been achieved

Most children and adults were knowledgeable about a range of rights and understood the importance of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children explained that duty bearers, including staff at school and the Government are responsible for ensuring that they can enjoy their rights. The children demonstrated their knowledge of the Convention, stating that there are 42 articles, what CRC stands for, and that *“All children under 18 have these rights”*. It was clear that children and adults spoken with understand the nature of rights being unconditional, universal, inherent, inalienable and indivisible. The school had made impressive use of Unicef’s ‘ABCDE of Rights, with prominent displays in classrooms. An older child said, *“Everyone has rights including adults”*. Another explained that knowing your rights *“Makes you more aware about how you should expect to be treated.”*

The children showed a well-developed understanding of how, despite rights being universal, some children in the world may not be able to access their rights. Examples explored included the impact of child labour preventing access to education, safety, the right to play and have a proper childhood. The conversation also included comments such as, *“Some children aren’t safe from harm when there is a war and no shelter, water or food”*. They also spoke of the impact of natural disasters and climate change and, in a UK context, the effect on some children of poverty and *“bad treatment by adults.”*

Learning about rights has happened though assemblies linked to events and rights, the RRS group promoting children’s rights through “special days”, prominent displays throughout the school linked to articles, class charters as well as planned learning linked to the Convention. One member of staff recalled a recent discussion about the Tudors which involved a debate about gender equality related to relevant articles and the Global Goals. Related to the discussion about learning, one member of staff commented that *“We could easily steer children away from more challenging or worrying topics or areas of questioning; but this [RRSA] encourages you to tackle them.”*

The Headteacher, governors and SLT are clearly committed to embedding a rights-based approach, making links to rights through the school’s values, the improvement plan, priorities and policies. The Headteacher observed, *“The more you do, the more you realise that the rights are underpinning everything we are about.”* In the wider discussion with adults there was a reference to the Convention having become the ‘lifeblood’ of the school and a newer member of staff commented, *“I had learnt about children’s rights as part of my degree but when I came to work here I saw them brought to life day by day.”* Parents have developed a good understanding of children’s rights and in the regular newsletters from school they are addressed, ‘Dear Duty Bearers.’ Regular home learning is linked to different articles, for example, in Y4, one task invited discussion about why Article 31 matters so much to children. Parents reflected on the benefits of their children’s growing awareness of the wider world, *“It’s good to see them understanding the bigger picture, they think much more about other children.”*

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.

Strand B has been achieved

The children spoke at length about how their duty bearers in school enabled them to enjoy their rights including education, developing talents and abilities and privacy. It was pointed out by adults that they now appear to be genuinely empowered to claim their rights, a teacher said, *“The children will now speak up if one of their peers are preventing them from accessing their rights.”* The children were unanimous in their view that action will be taken by duty bearers if anyone reports a situation of their rights not being met. They offered many effective definitions of ‘trusted adults’ including, *“It’s somebody you know is going to protect you and listen and take in what you say. They care about you.”* It was clear that children believed that fairness was an important part of how they are treated in school and they were able to articulate the subtleties around the difference between fairness and equity.

Positive relationships based on mutual respect between staff, between children and between children and staff were observed during the visit. The children described how well everyone gets on, *“There is always respect for other people.”* They went on to describe the roll of the Y6 class as Peer Mediators who are trained to intervene and support when disagreements or fall outs occur. They also explained the importance of seeking adult intervention, if necessary and were of the view that this always worked, *“Because you have to listen to both sides.”* Parents, governors and staff echoed the pupil’s enthusiasm about positive relationships in school by saying, *“We notice a difference with all children. They’re more empathetic, supportive and helpful.”* When discussing the positive impact of RRSA, the Headteacher said, *“All aspects of relationships and behaviours is now linked to the rights.”* The children understood the concept of dignity with comments about giving everyone a chance and respecting different opinions and one child pointed out, *“If somebody said something horrible to someone, they would be told why it was wrong.”*

Children all agreed that their right to feel safe and protected was upheld in their school and they cited a wide range of actions and systems that ensure this. Informal discussion about e-safety during the tour brought out their awareness of the wide range of articles related to internet use. The children explained that *“For the NSPCC online safety training, the children wrote personal invitations to their parents to attend.”* The pupils had an accurate understanding of bullying and their assertion that incidents are rare but properly handled if they do occur was corroborated by school data. Adults commented that on issues like safety, *“The rights give a context so that the children understand why we insist on certain things.”* The recent Y6 Bikeability workshops, for example, were understood by the children in this way.

All aspects of physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing are a clear priority at Langtoft and are evidently seen in relation to the CRC. Children of all ages were confident in describing a wide range of ways in which school supports their health, *“You are supposed to bring in healthy snacks.”* ... *“We have lots of different sports clubs as well as PE twice a week.”* ... *“We learn about a balanced diet.”* ... *“We drink lots of water.”* The school makes effective use of a range of external agencies to promote health and wellbeing, including NSPCC workshops on issues appropriate to the ages of the children. The children were particularly fluent when speaking about mental health and their emotional

literacy is impressive. As part of a range of strategies developed by the school to support this, is a resource called The Feelings Artbook which is used by all classes to encourage reflection and prompt dialogue about an extensive range of emotions. A Y5 pupil explained, *“It’s about emotions such as embarrassment.”* Another child said, *“It matters to talk about how you feel, it’s your self-esteem.”*

Becoming a Rights Respecting school has built upon the schools long established and strong culture of inclusivity and valuing each person as an individual. The children spoke about the importance of understanding that everyone is different, *“...and that’s a good thing.”* The way the children spoke of various children with additional needs made it clear that were positive about difference and diversity. The demographic of the school is very limited in terms of ethnic and cultural diversity, but the staff are acutely aware of this and make every effort to counter it by the way the curriculum is planned and by taking every opportunity to celebrate a range of cultures, faiths and traditions. One teacher explained, *“Our RE is completely linked to many rights and we teach about a wide range of religions equally.”*

The children spoken with enjoy their learning and were enthusiastic to describe how they respect their right to an education and that of their peers. One aspect of their assessment strategy is the interactive ‘purple pen’ approach to marking, which involves the children responding to written comments from their teachers. They value having success criteria, *“It makes it easier to see if you have made mistakes.”* They are encouraged, when learning is a particular challenge, to use their ‘Four Bs’ – Brain...Buddy...Board...Boss(teacher). The children pointed out their ‘KWL’ board in each class which frames their involvement in topic planning with their teachers. Children also spoke about how their interactions in class are support by their class charters, *“It reminds us about the rights we should be respecting in our classrooms.”*

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.

Strand C has been achieved

Children all agreed that they feel listened to and their views are taken seriously by the school. They described the different ways in which they are involved in improving their school including a range of different leadership opportunities such as the Rights Champs, Mini Police, Eco Team and School Council. In addition to the latter, an innovative approach has been developed called Free Speech Fridays, this provides a weekly forum for all children to share opinions and suggestions about school life which are then taken to the full School Council and SLT by their elected representatives. This forum explores a wide range of issues from behaviours in school and homework to the environment and reward systems. Many actions taken by the school as a result of this process were recalled by the children, these included new locks on the toilet doors and the installation of a climbing wall on the playground. Another change, agreed by the children and now implemented, began with a letter to the headteacher from a child who pointed out that having one boy and one girl elected to the Council from each class may mean that the some of the best people for the role couldn’t be elected! The School Council and Steering Group are involved in consultations when school policies are renewed, or new ones developed.

The school has developed an effective ambassadorial role, taking the Convention beyond their own community presentations about Rights Respecting to other primary schools in the locality. The commitment of the children to advocate for the rights of others is becoming embedded. Their focus has been primarily on environmental issues with events such as No Paper Day and No Electricity

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Day. The children raised awareness of all the related issues on each occasion and helped the community to reflect upon the implications of life without such resources and the related global issues; one of the pupils pointed out that, *“This has helped us cut down on some of the things we don’t need.”* The children also recognise how fundraising can make a difference to the lives of children and they take a lead on charity work in the school, having organised a range of projects for both local and worldwide causes; these have included Children In Need, WaterAid, Red Nose Day and support for the local foodbank. An explanation about their fundraising for Farm Africa developed into a detailed and well-informed discussion about the importance of sustainability in the ways in which lower income countries are supported. One of the adults commented that that *“Our children want to make a difference. All of this gives them a heightened awareness.”*