



RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School	Sir John Colfox Academy
Local Authority	Dorset
Number of pupils on roll	750
Headteacher	David Herbert
RRSA Coordinator	Rebecca Hatch
RRSA Assessor	Jilly Hillier and Peter Radford
Date of visit	28th June 2018
Attendees at SLT meeting	Deputy Head, Assistant Head, RRSA Lead (telephone conversation with Headteacher previous day)
Number of pupils interviewed	50
Number of adults interviewed	12 (including Inclusion Manager, Heads of English, Head of Art, 6th Form and House Coordinators)
Evidence provided	Learning walk, written information from governor, focus groups, inclusion room discussions, evidence file
Date registered for RRSA	2008
Bronze achieved	Bronze Jan 2010 Silver June 2010

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

Sir John Colfox Academy 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.

- Many young people interviewed demonstrated a good understanding of the CRC, naming a range of articles and describing the Convention as "a set of guidelines to keep us safe and protected." They understood how rights impact on their own lives and others. Discussions with many young people demonstrated the positive impact that knowing about their rights has had on their learning and wellbeing.
- The CRC has been a part of the school's ongoing development, influencing decision making, increasing student participant and underpinning language and relationships between members of the school community and a renewed commitment to the development of RRSA in 2017 has resulted in the appointment of a new RRSA Lead who has established a knowledgeable, committed and inclusive Rights Respecting group of ambassadors. This group has been actively involved in promoting the CRC in school and in the wider community working with a key governor and the town council to help Bridport gain Rights Respecting Town status.
- Students explained that they learnt about rights particularly in assemblies, PSHE, RE, History and tutor time and staff explained how they incorporated rights issues in such subjects as English e.g. Hear my Voice project, Art e.g. Liberating Art based on work made by detainees in Guantanamo Bay, RE and Politics. The assembly rota also showed opportunities for learning about rights e.g. World Children's Day and the work of Unicef and Amnesty International. The importance placed on creative expression is clear. Students' have worked with a human rights artist and explored topical issues relevant to young people. Work is impressive and displayed throughout the school.
- RRSA is a key element of the PSHCE section of the School Improvement Plan and the Headteacher and the Rights Ambassadors have promoted RRSA with primary schools in the Bridport area.

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

- Work towards deepening and widening knowledge of the CRC across the whole school. Embed an understanding of Duty Bearers and Rights Holders and rights as inherent, unconditional and universal. Continue to establish a school-wide understanding of the principles of the Convention and the innate dignity of every human being. Embed the language of 'respect' for others' rights and an understanding that responsibility lies with adults as duty bearers
- Consider each house being a champion for a specific article, finding creative ways to promote it to the rest of the school. Embed an planned approach to learning about the CRC across different subject areas, explicitly showing links to the CRC
- Explore global issues from a rights perspective so students develop a heightened sense of justice and equality. Consider engagement with the World's Largest Lesson and the Sustainable Development Goals.

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.

- Students interviewed felt that school supported them to enjoy their rights and were able to clearly articulate the role the Inclusion Centre plays in ensuring the rights of all are respected. It has been a priority to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable students are given equal opportunities to participate and achieve. Relationships are positive and discriminatory behaviour is clearly not accepted by students. One student gave the example that if a homophobic remark was made by a student, it would not be tolerated by others. One student commented, “Everyone respects each other – students and teachers.” A member of staff commented on the changes that had taken place in school, “This is such a different school now – inclusive, calm, polite and happy.”
- Students feel safe. This was confirmed by the recent Ofsted report (Feb 2018): ‘Pupils are safe. Processes for managing safeguarding are robust ... The personal safety and well-being of pupils are secure.’ One student commented, “School takes issues very seriously and acts on them.” Individual students spoke about how school provides them with a safe space, where they feel “more positive.”
- The social and emotional wellbeing of students is a clear priority. The school is part of the ‘Nurturing Schools Programme’ and has designated ‘safe place rooms’ and exit cards to enable students to easily access support. When asked, ‘What makes the school stand out as a Rights Respecting School,’ one student who had moved schools recently said, “I was nervous before coming but was made to feel comfortable very quickly.” Staff training on LGBT awareness and the appointment of Diversity role models has created a holistic approach amongst staff towards student development, support and nurture. Ofsted stated, ‘They enjoy learning about how to stay healthy and about emotional and mental health, safe and positive relationships and how to prevent substance misuse.’
- Students are valued as individuals and included. A particular strength of the school is its inclusion programme that effectively supports vulnerable young people to access emotional support, gain confidence, improve their wellbeing, access their learning and participate fully in the life of the school. Of particular note is the school's tracking and prioritising of the participation levels of pupil premium students. For example, participation in rights respecting related activities is 22% higher amongst pupil premium students than non-pupil premium. The school has inclusion champions in each faculty area and the school participated in Pride month.

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



- Consider developing the school improvement plan so that the CRC is a thread throughout and ensure that policies are explicitly underpinned by the CRC. Involve students at a strategic level whenever possible.
- Ensure students are fully involved in designing school systems and trust procedures that keep students safe and promote a positive learning environment.
- Continue to develop the school charter so that it is known, valued and lived by everyone. Focus on the language of 'respect for rights' and include the actions for adults (duty bearers) as well as students that will continue to embed a rights respecting ethos throughout the school.
- Continue to support students to value their (and others') right to an education and play an active role in making decisions about their learning.

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.

- The Headteacher stated that one of the biggest impacts of RRSA is the “more direct route” students have to influence decision making in school and how to make school life better. The House system was developed after initially gaining Level 1, to ensure greater student participation. The student leadership team works with the whole school and the Chair and Vice Chair meet every half term with senior leaders and have been involved in discussions about recycling, changing house emblems and uniform.
- The Headteacher commented that rights affect all aspects of young people's lives not just “in school 8.30 – 3.30” and consequently student involvement in the local community is important. A governor stated, “I meet regularly with the school's RRS student group ...The students have been fantastic ambassadors both within and beyond school.... They have spoken publically about the school's approach to RRSA and how they wish to spread this across Bridport.’ The Rights Respecting group described how they had led sessions on rights for students in assembly, led the development of the school charter, ran sessions for staff, met with the Mayor to discuss the Town Charter and made links with primary schools. The Mayor invited the students to speak at the Town Hall to share their passion for Rights and how Rights within schools can be spread out into the community. Bridport has now been recognised as Rights Respecting Town.

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- Continue to provide meaningful opportunities for student participation at a variety of levels to influence and shape the life of the school e.g. in school improvement planning and evaluation of teaching and learning



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- Consider providing more opportunities for student led whole school/ house campaigns on local and global rights issues. Consider taking part in Unicef's annual Outright Campaign.
- Build on the excellent work of the Rights Ambassadors to develop an awareness of children's rights within school, other local schools and the local community