

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Valley Invicta Primary School at Leybourne Chase
Headteacher:	Nicola Craig
RRSA coordinator:	Lauren Carlow
Local authority:	Kent
Assessor(s):	Paul Harris and Frances Bestley
Date:	18 th October 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The assessors would like to thank the children, school leaders, staff, parents, grandparent and governors 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 assessment visit, the school completed a comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form.

It was evident that children’s rights are embedded across the school and underpin every facet of school life.

Particular strengths of the school include:

- A collective commitment from stakeholders to the principles and values of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children have a secure knowledge and understanding of children’s rights.
- ‘Pupil voice’, with children empowered to be active participants in the life of the school and wider community.

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:

- Further develop pupils’ understanding of global citizenship through implementation of the school’s new curriculum and ongoing engagement with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and [The World’s Largest Lesson](#).
- Continue to embed the principles of the Convention and consistency in use of rights respecting language across the school community including within the specialist resourced provision.
- Continue to explore ways that ‘pupil voice’ can be developed in the life of the school and wider community.

3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School context	The school opened in September 2015 and is part of the Valley Invicta Academies Multi-Academy Trust. There are 194 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is 10.3% and 6.7% of pupils speak English as an additional language. 8.7% of pupils have an EHC Plan and/or an IEP. The school has specialist resourced provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Leybourne Chase was graded ‘good’ in all areas by Ofsted in September 2018.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher, RRSA coordinator and SEN coordinator.
Number of children and young people interviewed	Focus group: 19 pupils (years 1 to 6) Class visits: approximately 50 pupils (year 2 and 5 classes). School council: 14 pupils (current or former members).
Number of adults interviewed	2 teaching staff (includes a governor), 2 support staff (includes a parent), 3 parents (includes a governor and chair of governors) and a grandparent.
Evidence provided	Learning walk, focus groups, written evidence and class visits.
Registered for RRSA: March 2017	Silver achieved: June 2018

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

Pupils gave examples of several children’s rights. They have a very secure understanding that rights are for all children in the world, are there from birth, cannot be taken away, do not have to be earned and all are equally important. *“No matter what you do your rights can’t be taken away...Rights are something that are always there”* pupils emphatically stated. Pupil responses from the focus group discussion also included how children have a right to know their rights, that children’s rights apply to those under eighteen years of age and that the United Nations was the organisation which produced the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which has fifty four articles. Pupils also understand that the rights of many children and young people in the world are being denied because of issues such as homelessness, pollution, lack of water, natural disasters (for example, tsunamis and avalanches) and the effects of conflict in areas such as Syria. They are also aware that for refugee children, rights such as those to shelter and safety are being detrimentally affected.

Displays around the school help to promote rights and the Convention. For example, in the main hall there are displays of the school charter, playground charter, the work of the steering group, Unicef UK’s ‘ABCDE of rights’ resource and the school’s OutRight work. In the main reception area links between several articles from the Convention and the life of the school are displayed along with a copy of the Convention. Additionally, rights were highlighted in several displays with the use of use of the UN logo including a display about global warming and deforestation (Article 24). Pupils also learn about rights through assemblies, a fortnightly focus on a right, elements of the curriculum, school events and there is a copy of the Convention in the children’s planners. For example, an assembly about dignity was linked to Article 2 and an art afternoon earlier in the year enabled each year group to explore a particular article from the Convention, for example Articles 28 (reception year), 14 (year 3) and 2 (year 5). The school is developing a new curriculum which includes the current half term theme of ‘sustainability’ with future themes planned including ‘tolerance and social justice’, ‘conflict’ and ‘identity and diversity’. Curriculum overview documents for each year group identify where links to specific rights can be made for the sustainability topic.

The headteacher explained that a priority for the school when it opened (in the 2015/16 academic year) was to *“make this school a community and bring us together”*. She described how the school’s rights respecting work has provided a *“shared language”*, *“grown with the school”* and is *“the heart of the school”*. School leaders, staff, parents and governors are enthusiastic advocates of the Convention. Their comments included how the school’s right respecting focus has become *“so deeply embedded in the school”*, ‘pupil voice’ has grown, children are *“becoming champions for change”* and an understanding of diversity is being fostered. A weekly update about the school’s RRSA work is published on the website and emailed to governors. The updates provide an excellent insight into the school’s rights respecting work and is a comprehensive record of how it is linked to the everyday life of the school and the work of the steering group. Staff have received training and as the RRSA coordinator explained, planning the new curriculum and looking at rights is *“becoming our main focus”*. The coordinator has given a presentation to the governors, supported the RRSA work of two other schools in the Trust and visited with the headteacher a RRSA Gold secondary

school. The coordinator also meets regularly with the chair of governors to discuss the school's work and the chair of governors has also attended two of the steering group meetings.

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

Pupils understand that adults in their role as duty bearers are responsible for upholding their rights. They were able to explain how the school supports their safety, well-being and education, and are also confident that their views are listened to and taken seriously. The school's website information about 'pupil voice' includes reference to Article 12 and that 'we recognise our role as duty bearers to ensure that all children feel that they are respected, listened to and valued as individuals and as a collective group'. The website also has a presentation given to parents and carers at a safeguarding information evening which includes a slide about 'children's rights- an adult's duty' referencing Articles 3, 16, 17, 19 and 36. Children have a good understanding of Article 2 and the right to non-discrimination. This has been explored at assemblies along with the theme of equity. Fairness has also been discussed at an assembly in relation to learning about Fairtrade. Pupils confirmed that they thought the school's behaviour policy to be fair and last academic year some year 6 pupils contributed to the policy's review with suggestions for celebrating positive behaviours and awards.

When asked why pupils believed they were at a gold rights respecting school, a pupil commented that *"we respect our rights and we respect other people's rights"*. The impact of the school's rights respecting work is seen very positively with a pupil explaining *"you know how to treat your friends and family"*. During group discussions, children listened respectfully to the contribution of their peers. There is a school charter, class charters and a playground charter with the latter, for example, referencing Articles 2, 12, 15, 24, 28 and 31 and including rights respecting actions for both children and staff. Year 5 pupil peer mediators also help to resolve minor conflicts at playtimes. Dignity was described as *"not [to] make fun of people"* and children agreed that they are treated with respect. A pupil explained the importance of everyone being *"treated the same"*- both equally and fairly. The school's 'toileting care policy' also highlights the importance of ensuring pupil's dignity 'will be respected at all times'.

Pupils were able to give examples of how the school supports their safety. These included the presence of staff, gates and fire alarm procedures. *"Grown-ups have a duty to protect children"* explained one child. *"We tell a teacher, a duty bearer if we don't feel safe."* In February this year, the school held a 'safer internet day' (linked to Article 17) and pupils took part in a range of activities connected to online safety. They were able to link the latter to helping to uphold their rights to be safe and privacy. Last autumn the school held a 'Stay Safe Week' which included assemblies and activities linked to various aspects of safety including the role of paramedics and building site safety, and an anti-bullying day with workshops about for example, cyberbullying, conflict resolution and celebrating differences. When asked, pupils confirmed that they felt safe at school.

'World Health Day' was celebrated at an assembly earlier in the year. The school's newsletter (which linked this to Article 24 and the global goal 'good health and well-being') outlined how the children

explored different ways which help to be as healthy as possible such as having enough sleep, good hygiene and the importance of exercise. Pupils were able to describe how the school supports their health and well-being with the provision of healthy food at lunchtimes including salads, access to medical assistance, free fruit being available to key stage 1 children, participating in PE lessons, regular ‘mile runs’ and being able to take part in various sports activities such as football, netball and golf. Good mental health was described by a pupil as “*feel[ing] good about yourself*” and children are confident that staff would listen to any concerns they may have and that these would be taken seriously. ‘Zones of regulation’ are used by children to convey how they are feeling and a ‘worry box’ is also available for use. The PSHE programme also helps to supports children’s knowledge and understanding about their health and well-being.

An inclusive ethos is nurtured in various ways and children made frequent reference to non-discrimination throughout the visit. For example, a large display about different faiths (linked to Article14) was seen during the learning walk and a pupil described how all faiths and none were accepted within the school community. Year 5 play leaders and sports leaders help organise games at playtimes for children to participate in if they would like to and there are also weekly celebration assemblies. Linked to Article 29, pupils took part in a ‘Cultural Diversity day’ earlier in the year. Children had opportunities to explore aspects of different cultures including from Polynesia, South Africa and Greece. Wider afield the school’s work is also supporting community cohesion. For example, there has been a ‘Grandparent Day’ school event, the Christmas nativity has been held at a local riding centre for the disabled and the school has joined a community based scheme in connection with receiving food surplus donations from a local supermarket, highlighting the link to the Convention with this work.

Children know they have a right to an education and to learn. Their comments about learning included how staff “*encourage you*” and that resilience meant “*don’t give up*”. Aspirational texts are displayed around the school such as ‘if you never chase your dreams you will never catch them’. The school’s teaching and learning policy includes expectations of teachers based on respecting ‘pupil voice as a precedent for best practice in involving children in learning outcomes’ and the attendance policy highlights Articles 28 and 29. Pupils are able to play an active part in their learning including the use of formative assessment methods such as self and peer assessment, being able to edit their work and having discussions with talk partners.

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

The school’s steering group (also the school council) has two pupil representatives from each class from year 1 and above, who were elected by their peers. Representatives from reception year join the group later in the year. The council meets regularly and discusses ideas and issues raised by pupils. The council wanted to widen the opportunity for children’s voices to be heard and a post-box for suggestions has also been made which children can use; as a pupil explained the suggestions are taken to the steering group to “*listen to how people want to make our school better*”. The group have been proactive in promoting the Convention and children’s rights. Examples in the last year or so, include collecting ideas from classes and meeting with lunchtime supervisors in order to produce the

school's playground charter, establishing a safe, welcoming and child friendly library, creating a video about being a rights respecting school which can be found on the school's website, visiting a local school in the Trust to help provide guidance about playground charters and helping to bring about the introduction of playground and field rotas. Other pupil leadership roles include peer mediators, play leaders, digital leaders and sports leaders.

Earlier in the year, some year 5 and 6 pupils gave a presentation about pupil voice at an NHS England Clinical Commissioning Team event which was attended by about two hundred people including NHS and county council representatives, MPs and headteachers. The presentation focussed on the Convention, pupil voice, children's rights and being a rights respecting school. Following work in their geography topic, year 3 pupils have raised road safety concerns about walking to school and wrote to the local MP about these who has since visited the school and met with the pupils. Classes across the school have participated in Unicef UK's OutRight 2018 campaign about air pollution with children from some year groups sending postcards about this issue to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Other examples of pupils being empowered to have their voice heard include individual children highlighting concerns that they have and taking the initiative, for example by writing to the local MP or fund raising for a charity.

A pupil explained that a global citizen was "*someone who helps the world*". Global citizenship has been explored in class and the current half term topic has been about sustainable development. As part of the latter, pupils took part in a drama workshop about climate change with each class focussing upon an issue such as plastic pollution of the oceans and deforestation and there has also been a 'recycling week'. Children's understanding of the wider world is also being developed through assemblies which have included learning about the lives of Malala Yousafzai, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, exploring issues such as climate change and child labour, and celebrating events such as 'International Day of Peace'. Each afternoon begins with classes watching BBC 'Newsround' followed by discussion about what has been presented and possible links to rights. In February this year, each class explored a global goal (for example, zero hunger, no poverty and clean water and sanitation) and created pieces of artwork in connection with this. Each class chooses a charity to support, presents an assembly to the school about this and raises funds for the charity. In the last academic year, charities supported have included Great Ormond Street Hospital, Comic Relief and Shelter. Other charities supported by the school have included Unicef UK through participation in Soccer Aid, Macmillan Cancer Support and the local foodbank with donations from the school's harvest festival.