

UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD

ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL ONE

School:	St Paul's CE VC Junior School
Headteacher:	Chris Partridge
RRSA coordinator:	Sally Jefferies
Local authority:	Somerset
Assessor:	Jilly Hillier
Date:	20 th July 2017

The school context:

St. Paul's Church of England Junior is a larger than average sized school with 303 children on roll. It is located in the centre of Shepton Mallet and receives children from two infant schools in the town. Many of the children come from families with challenging socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of children for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above the national average (27.7%). The number of children with special educational needs or disability (SEND) is 20.7%. The majority of pupils with SEND have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The proportion who have English as an additional language (EAL) is just above average at 23%.

First registered for RRSA: November 2015 **Recognition of Commitment:** April 2016

Ofsted: February 2014: Good. **SIAMS:** 2017 Outstanding

Assessment information:

Progress and evaluation form received	Yes	Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher / RRSA coordinator / KS1 Lead		
Number of children and young people interviewed	45 children (learning walk, focus group and in classes)		
Number of staff interviewed	3 teaching staff 1 parents 3 governors	1 teaching assistant	1 office manager
Evidence provided	Learning walk Year 6 leaving show	Written evidence	Class visits

The Assessment Judgement:

**St Paul's C of E Junior School has met the Standards for
Unicef UK's
Rights Respecting Schools Award at LEVEL 1**

The following good practice evident at the assessment contributes to the school's success at Level 1:

Standard A:

Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

- St Paul's Junior School has been on a journey of improvement during the past six years which has resulted in the school now being in the top10% of schools in Somerset and nationally. The senior leadership team explained this change was due to the strong inclusive ethos and the values of the school which are now child-centred and aimed to develop "*fully rounded individuals, who are outward looking and who have the best start in life.*" The RRSA Lead described RRSA as being an important part of this process which has added a "*focus and drive*" to decision making, acting as an "*umbrella for everything we do*" alongside the school's Christian values. Governors and parents interviewed were fully committed to RRSA and expressed their desire to continue the journey until it was "*absolutely embedded*" (Chair of Governors).
- The Strategic Development Plan is underpinned by Christian values and five key rights from the Convention (Articles 2, 12, 24, 28, 28 and 29). The Rights Respecting Ambassadors have been fully involved in adapting the SDP to a child-friendly version that is displayed in classrooms with practical suggestions for improving learning. A range of policies refer to the UNCRC including the Positive Behaviour and Self Esteem Policy which aims to equip children "*with a feeling of self-worth, a respectful attitude towards others, an excitement for learning and an enthusiasm for life*" Classroom Charters are included as part of this. Article 28 is referred to in the Attendance Policy and Article19 in the Safeguarding Policy.
- The senior leadership team demonstrated a good understanding of the Convention and its relevance to daily life in school. RRSA and the UNCRC is promoted amongst staff, including during the interview process of new staff. The school has good links with the local community with its grounds being used by the hospital, the infant school, the local football club (which promotes the RESPECT programme) and the Somerset Young Carers Association. Links are made with local businesses e.g. Tesco's Farm to Fork project to help children understand issues around food production and healthy eating. Senior leaders ensure that there are opportunities for children to learn about local and global issues and celebrate the diversity of the children in school within the context of rights through the curriculum, enrichment week, assemblies and through visitors to the school e.g. the Iman from Bristol.

Standard B:

The whole school community learns about the CRC

- Senior Leaders have attended Unicef training and an understanding of RRSA and the UNCRC has been disseminated to staff. Minutes of meetings show that governors are kept informed and those interviewed valued the way the knowledge of the UNCRC was enhancing children's learning. Each class elects a Rights Respecting Ambassador who works with the RRSA Lead to gather children's ideas about which rights the school will focus on. Children interviewed were confident in their knowledge of the five key rights that the school has prioritised for this year.
- Parents and governors interviewed felt informed about RRSA and social media is now used to highlight work on children's rights in school. A RRSA Leaflet for visitors and parents created by RRSA Lead is available in the school foyer. One parent described RRSA as the "*extra piece of the jigsaw that gives a holistic approach*" and a governor described how RRSA was helping to communicate to parents a "*practical application of the schools values.*" Displays around the school promote an awareness of RRSA and the UNCRC.

- Children talked about learning about rights through assemblies, charters and lessons such as RE and English. The Curriculum Policy shows how the curriculum is underpinned by the values of the school and respects the views of children. Links to articles in planning were evident for a variety of lessons including in Science, RE, topic work and through Enrichment Week. Curriculum Enrichment takes place regularly to ensure children have *“opportunities to develop skills not always easy to teach as part of main curriculum.”* Activities make links with key articles e.g. Chinese Ribbon Dance (31) and Portuguese Art (31, 29). Guidelines are given to ensure the full inclusion of children with SEN in these activities. Forest school activities are linked to rights and promote a respect for and awareness of the environment.

Standard C:

The school has a rights-respecting ethos

- Class charters based on rights were in most classrooms visited and children in the focus group discussed their value and how they helped create a rights-respecting learning environment. Although there were a range of views one boy said charters made a *“colossal difference”* to his classroom. All agreed charters were for children and adults together. Charters have also been developed for other areas of the school including the playground, the Library and for Computing. Restorative justice is used to solve disputes with the importance of *“listening to both sides”* (Year 5 child) being a priority. One parent commented that *“rights help develop empathy and awareness of everyone’s rights.”* A governor said that the *“language empowers children.”*
- Rights-respecting values and children’s wellbeing are a priority in the school and are developed in a variety of ways e.g. through opportunities to recognise children’s achievements, efforts, talents and attendance; through an appreciation of diversity; annual anti-bully and e-safety weeks; pastoral support and lunchtime clubs for children who need extra support at this time. Children said they felt safe in school. Learning about internet safety is linked to Article 17 and there is also a Computer Charter. Rights Ambassadors described this was an important charter because *“online children might look at things that are bad”* and rights will help them keep safe. The school’s Christian values and rights-respecting values have ensured that children are *“socially well-developed and have an understanding about how the school is doing the right thing for children”* (Governor).

Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

- It was very clear that children feel listened to and that their opinions were valued by adults. This was an aim stated by the Headteacher, reflected in conversations with children and supported by the recent SIAMS report (2017) that specifically mentioned RRSA and the school’s five focus rights that help ensure *“children feel listened to, confident and safe in expressing their ideas, knowing that they will be respected and taken seriously.”* There are opportunities for children to take on leadership roles e.g. the Rights Respecting Ambassadors lead on the development of rights in school working *“to make sure everyone respects each other”* (Rights Ambassador), gathering ideas from children in their classes and monitoring how the key rights are understood and enjoyed. The School Council see their role as *“making changes to help to make the school a better place”* and children in the focus group were able to provide a range of examples of their ideas being taken on board including putting a mirror in the toilets, requesting a shelter in the playground and consulting on the School Development Plan.
- Children are involved in decisions about their learning. Teachers talked about planning the curriculum in a way that allows for flexibility to respond to children’s interests, needs and ideas and in the focus group children talked about contributing to the development of topic work. There was also evidence of pupil conferencing showing respect for children’s right to

be heard about their learning. Children were involved in voting for the school's key values and key focus rights and in interviewing new staff. The Year 6 show which was taking place on the day of the assessment and was an example of children taking the lead and showcasing their talents.

- Children have access to information to help them make informed decisions. This includes a wide range of clubs for children including International Club, Choir, Netball, Homework Club and Geography Club. Children clearly value these opportunities and understood it was part of how the school ensures their talents and potential are realised as expressed in Article 29. Children have the opportunity to support the rights of other children e.g. through Sports Relief, the local food bank, the Christmas Shoebox appeal and Clarks Shoe Share.

Moving to Level 2:

Level 1 is an important milestone on the Rights Respecting journey. In the light of the assessment visit, the assessor has identified the following priorities for further progress. These recommendations, based on Unicef's experience with schools across the UK, will have been discussed in more detail during the assessment visit:

In order for the school to progress successfully to Level 2, the following steps and actions will be required:

- School Development Plan - make the child-friendly version known to children across the school so they all understand the school's priorities and their role in helping to achieve them explicitly referring to Articles 12, 13, 28, 29 and 17. Explicitly underpin priorities in the SDP with relevant articles from the UNCRC (Level 2 Criterion 2)
- Develop your role as an ambassador for the UNCRC especially in any future developments as a MAT (Criteria 4 and 18).
- Policies - a range of policies refer to the Convention, continue to look at the detail e.g. on the Positive Relationships Policy include training for Lunchtime Staff on a rights-respecting approach; on the Curriculum Policy explain how children's right to participate and be listened to (12) is central to topic planning and development (Level 2 Criterion 2)
- Learning about the UNCRC - extend the range of rights children learn about beyond the 5 key focus rights and work towards deepening the knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC across the school community (Criterion 6)
- Global Citizenship - look for ways to incorporate an explicit commitment to global citizenship and sustainable development into the heart of the school's vision and practice. Ensure there is support for staff to confidently develop children's understanding of rights in a local and global context and what it means to be a global citizen. Consider taking a local or global issue that children are passionate about and support them to start a campaign to address it. (Criterion 5, 9 and 18)
- Children's participation – continue to strengthen children's voice and participation their learning and wellbeing. Explicitly link children's leadership roles to articles and highlight how the children's leadership groups work together to embed a rights respecting approach.

In addition, the school might also consider:

- Attending RRSA Moving from L1 to L2 training or 101 Ways to Implementing the RRSA (see RRSA website for dates).
- Visit a RRSA L2 schools (contact me if you would like me to arrange this or suggest a school).