



# UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL ONE

<b>School:</b>	Corsham Primary School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Fiona Allen (Executive Headteacher)
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Sophie Miller
<b>Local authority:</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Assessors:</b>	Jilly Hillier and Stella Man
<b>Date:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2015

## 1. INTRODUCTION

We would like to thank the leadership team, staff and young people for their warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with adults and children during the assessment and for the evidence detailing the work towards becoming a Level 1 Rights Respecting School. Prior to the assessment visit you provided a combined planning form and an impact evaluation form. It was clear to the assessors during the visit that everyone places a real importance on developing a rights respecting ethos.

It was notable that RRSA is contributing to the school's child centred ethos and has been instrumental in helping to provide a unified approach for a school located on two sites ensuring the provision of equal opportunities for all children at Corsham Primary School.

Standards A, B, C and D have all been met.

## 2. THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

### 2.1. The school context

Corsham Primary School is a large and expanding school made up of two former schools and based on two sites. These sites are Pound Pill and Broadwood and have an Executive Head and one leadership team. There are 632 pupils on roll. It is the lead school in the Pickwick Learning Teaching School Alliance. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage but families from other cultures are represented at the school including those of Traveller background. Very few have English as an additional language. An above average proportion of children are eligible for free school meals and pupil premium. The school has a special needs unit based at the Pound Pill site and the proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2013 and was rated as Outstanding. The school achieved RRSA Level 1 in June 2011 and wanted to be re-assessed at Level 1.



## 2.2. Assessment information

Self-evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Executive Headteacher Head of School Deputy Headteacher RRSA coordinator
Number of children and young people interviewed	49 in focus groups/ tour guides/ small group conversations in class  8 classes visited
Number of staff interviewed	9 teaching staff 1 parent 1 governor
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence Assembly Lessons

### Standard A: Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

**Standard A has been achieved**

The Executive Headteacher and senior leaders at Corsham Primary School feel strongly that the school's vision is underpinned by rights respecting values. Although the UNCRC is not explicitly referenced in the vision, the principles of equality and participation are clearly fundamental to the school and the assessors felt the atmosphere reflected a rights-respecting approach and ethos. The Executive Head explained, 'It's all about equality, about children understanding they have rights and that other people have rights.' She added, 'It's also about the global dimension and helping to broaden children's horizons.' For a school in which the majority of children are White British she felt it was really important for children to understand 'the bigger picture.' RRSA had also been important in bringing the two school sites of Pound Pill and Broadwood together when they became one, ensuring equality of opportunity and provision.

Achieving Level 1 features in the SDIP under Behaviour and Safety and there is a plan for achieving this in the Teaching and Learning section. At present, policies do not explicitly refer to the UNCRC or specific rights, however, staff feel that their underlying principles



place the children at the centre of every decision made. The Green Procurement and Fairtrade Policy shows how the school is committed to environmental practices and concern for the welfare of others. Making the Convention explicit in policies would be a step to consider moving forward.

Senior leaders demonstrated a good understanding of the Convention and leaders of the Curriculum Development Group have committed time to develop rights respecting classroom practice and procedures. The RRSA Lead explained that RRSA is central to planning and teachers confirmed that the process of linking rights to the curriculum is effective CPD. Leadership assemblies teach about rights and teachers say they find these inspiring to their own teaching and learning about rights. The website, newsletters, homework, lessons and displays all help to promote rights within the school community. Teaching and non-teaching staff attend training days.

The school promotes RRSA and the Convention at Teaching School Alliance meetings and have encouraged other local schools to apply for the award. There are also many opportunities to share good practice and promote the Convention when teachers and students visit the school as part of the School Direct initiative. The local community have the opportunity to get involved with the school for example through the Indhu Rani afternoon and the community orchard. Globally, the school has links with a school in the Gambia and supports charities that impact on children rights.

A systematic approach to global citizenship and sustainable development is developing well. For example, there is an International Policy and a Green Procurement and Fairtrade Policy. A vast range of Awards also show the school's commitment to the environment e.g. the Eco Schools Award was renewed this year. A whole school Citizenship Week ensures that learning about rights is linked to global citizenship and the global dimension. Topics covered for example in Year 4 included global news events such as the Nepal earthquake and the consideration of children's rights denied during times of crisis and how we might respond. Assemblies, PSHE, focus weeks and cross curricular work promote rights globally.

**Standard B:**  
The whole school community learns about the CRC

**Standard B has been achieved**

Children interviewed in focus groups and in classrooms could describe a range of rights including the right to live and grow, education, healthcare, a clean environment, to be listened to, own beliefs and to be cared for. On the day of the assessment, the whole school was involved in Citizenship Week. The assessors talked with groups of children including children in the Speech and Language Unit who were happy to talk about their learning about rights and children in a Year 4 class who were involved in a Global Contributions activity which linked such events as the Ebola crisis to the right to healthcare. Children knew that the Convention was for all children and could describe circumstances in which some children were not able to enjoy their rights, for example in Syria where some children were missing out on education and in India where some children might not have access to healthcare. They were aware that some children in the UK might also not enjoy their rights if



they were homeless or if they were not treated well by their parents. Staff said they had received information at staff meetings and felt confident to teach about the Convention and share ideas.

Parents, carers and governors have been informed that the school is working on RRSA and through the school newsletter, website and governor meetings. The School Council selected a list of the key articles for each classroom and annual events such as Fairtrade Fortnight place global citizenship and rights as a key focus of the school. Home school activities e.g. designing a poster about rights ensure that there are opportunities for parent and carers to discuss rights with their children.

The assessors saw evidence of assembly planning linked to rights and displays linked to the Convention. For example, each class had contributed their ideas for an art display based on a key right such as 'Hear our voice' (Article 12) and the right to have your own culture and beliefs (Article 14) and the right to education (Article 28). Children also talked about how they learnt about rights through their charters, in circle time, assemblies and PSHE. The Geography Curriculum Development leader has responsibility for coordinating the RRSA journey as it links to the global dimension which the school is keen to develop further. There was some evidence of lesson planning that incorporated learning about rights such as the Y3 Weekly Planning Sheet for Fairtrade Fortnight. Some planning for Citizenship week explicitly referred to rights, although this was not consistent across the school.

The assessors saw some thoughtful citizenship lessons across the year groups that extended children's thinking about rights and democracy, recycling, climate change and environmental sustainability. This showed how children are beginning to link rights with global citizenship. One girl said that learning about rights helped them to know about 'how to live their lives.' Learning about sustainability is important and children act as Eco Buddies and are involved in the Gardening Club developed by parents. The school has the Royal Horticultural Society and SW in Bloom 'It's Your Neighbourhood' Award for 2014.

**Standard C:**  
**The school has a rights-respecting ethos**

**Standard C has been achieved**

Each class, on both sites, had a charter displayed in the form of a globe to reflect the fact that children's rights are universal. Different classes had selected different rights such as play and learn in the Foundation Stage to more sophisticated rights in Year 6. Children explained how they discussed what they needed to do to respect those rights. Alongside the charters, each class had Golden Rules with Do's and Don'ts. A discussion took place with children and staff about the possibility of combining the two systems to reflect rights respecting behaviour and language.

It was clear to the assessors that children enjoy working in a positive learning environment in which they are confident to share their opinions and knew their voice was heard. Children felt their teachers listened to them and were 'firm, but fair' (Year 4 child). Classrooms visited and lessons observed showed children and adults working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Children working in the special needs unit were equally engaged in their learning and confident to speak about their learning about rights.



Charters and Golden Rules help provide a framework for behaviour in the classroom and the school has adopted Building Learning Power strategies using positive relationships to help children in and out of the classroom. In 2013, Ofsted reported that children's behaviour was outstanding and the assessors felt the school had a calm and caring atmosphere.

Systems are in place to ensure that children are at the heart of helping to create a safe and healthy environment and children indicated that they felt safe in school and supported in their learning. One Year 4 child explained that the school looked after them by making sure they had healthy lunches with chips only on a Friday and fruit for snacks with 'no chocolate allowed!' The school had achieved an 'eat out, eat well' award from Wiltshire Council which recognises caterers' efforts to provide healthy eating options. Another Year 4 child explained that they had breaks from their learning because they 'had a right to play.'

Peer mediators and Playground Buddies are in place and one Year 6 child explained 'instead of teachers doing it, peer mediators give children clues about how to make your problem better.' She went on to explain that Playground buddies 'help people who feel a bit lonely.' Worry boxes and suggestion boxes are available in classrooms so that children's concerns and ideas are voiced and listened to. There were no incidents of bullying recorded on the impact evaluation form and two exclusions in 2014-5.

The school has created an environment that encourages children to engage with, and see the value of outdoor learning from growing their own vegetables to keeping pigs and chickens. This helps them to connect to green issues at a local level and then this is built on through exploring global issues such as the impact of climate change and the effect of building a theme park in a rainforest. Children are beginning to use the language of rights to help them understand global events such as the Ebola crisis.

### Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

**Standard D has been achieved**

The Deputy Head described one of the main impacts of being a rights-respecting school was the way children had been given 'a voice and a platform in school.' This was confirmed by children interviewed who unanimously felt they were encouraged and supported to express their views. The elected School Council has a valued role in school and is an important consultative group. Minutes of meetings show how the School Council are involved in helping to run the Anti-Bullying Week, the new virtual learning platform (Blue Turtle), the Craze of the Month, RRSA, assembly planning, fundraising and class charters. Those not on the School Council contribute their ideas through questionnaires, the Suggestion Box, by talking with staff and being involved in regular Pupil Conferencing sessions. When changes were being made to the school's reading policy, for example, pupils contributed their thoughts through pupil conferencing. One teacher explained that involving children was 'part and parcel of what we do.' A traffic light system using coloured cups is a practical way children show how they feel about their learning in the classroom. They also contribute their ideas to topic planning. The RRSA Lead explained, 'Nothing is set in stone until we have consulted with the children.' Children also explained how they frequently started new activity clubs.



Children are provided with a stimulating learning environment and access to different forms of information and ways of learning to meet different needs and learning styles. For example the immersive room provides a creative learning space for children, the Brook Centre supports children with special needs and the outdoor learning facilities provide opportunities to learn about the environment. On the assessment day, Year 6 children were involved in a careers day and had access to speakers and information to help them think about possible future careers. Year 5 were involved in the election process that will culminate in a group of children leading the school for a day. Another class had a visitor from the NSPCC talking about ChildLine and safety issues. Children also support each other's progress through learning partners and champions.

Through a rich curriculum and charity work, children have thought about children's rights in school and on a global scale and have been involved in activities to support the lives of children locally and globally. This has included supporting each other in school; raising money through harvest assemblies; raising money for Comic Relief and for a child in a village in India. One teacher has been on a study visit to the Gambia and has shared her experiences with the children.

## 2.3. The future

The assessor would like to encourage the school to continue work on becoming rights respecting and work towards the award at Level Two.

The following recommendations are made to support the journey based on those that have proven valuable in other schools and settings in helping them to develop their practice at Level 2. The recommendations made by the assessors are listed below.

Corsham Primary School is a successful, achieving school with a calm, respectful atmosphere and stimulating learning environment. It is involved in many initiatives that help provide children with an enriching learning experience. RRSA is one of the school's programmes. The assessors feel that if the school places the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as an explicit defining element in its vision and strategic decision making process, it would have the potential to be an inspiring and influential advocate for children's rights and wellbeing locally and more widely through its role as the lead school in the Pickwick Learning Teaching School Alliance. In this way, more children and adults would know about, and benefit from the values of the Convention and the positive impacts of RRSA. With this in mind, below is a list of good practice ideas that the assessors have seen in other RRSA schools that might be helpful in moving forward:

Consider underpinning the school's vision by Article 29 of the Convention that outlines the goals of education for children.

Provide opportunities for children to be involved in decision making at a strategic level e.g.

- Discuss with children the vision of the school – do they feel this reflects them as a rights respecting school?
- Involve them in the interviewing process of new staff.
- Involve them in contributing to the review of policies (where appropriate) such as Teaching Learning and Behaviour.



- Children present to the governors about RRSA and the school's progress.

Make learning about the Convention explicit and consistent in planning across the year groups (possibly modify planning sheets so that there is a space for referencing which rights/articles will be learnt and when).

Include RRSA as a regular item on staff and governors meeting agendas so there are frequent opportunities to share good practice and keep governors up to date and informed about the Convention.

Link charters with rights respecting language and behaviour throughout the school – celebrate with certificates saying which right was respected, or discuss which right was denied if behaviour is challenging. Consider replacing Golden Rules and Do's and Don'ts with one system based on rights and respectful actions. Many of the Do's are already rights respecting actions just not labelled as such. This will further engage all children in promoting rights respecting actions.

Use the attractive school environment to enhance learning about rights e.g. include article of the week on the screen in the entrance; have a RRSA/ UNCRC Board near the entrance showing what it is and what it means to the school.

Help children to see how the school is helping them enjoy their rights through displays e.g. by encouraging learning walks by children who reflect on which rights are appropriate for particular places, for example the School Council board and Article 12; the library and Article 17

Continue to develop campaigning activities to raise awareness of children's rights locally and globally.

As the RRSA Lead is shortly to start her maternity leave, ensure plans are in place for someone else to drive actions forward.