

RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Ad Astra Infant School
Headteacher:	Natalie Brown
RRSA coordinator:	Tess White
Local authority:	Poole
School context:	There are 270 pupils on roll, 25% of whom are eligible for Pupil Premium. 24% have SEND, 6% of children speak English as an additional language. The school is part of the TEACH Alliance Trust of schools. All the schools in the Trust are Gold Rights Respecting Schools.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Head of school, RRSA lead and safeguarding lead
Number of children and young people spoken with:	17 children, EY – Y2
Adults spoken with:	2 teachers, 1 HLTA and 2 parents
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: 5 th September 2016 Silver achieved: 17 th July 2017 Gold achieved: 25 th June 2019
Assessor:	Jilly Hillier
Date:	12 th July 2022

REACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Ad Astra Infant School continues to meet the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is based on a virtual reaccreditation visit. The assessor would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, and staff 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 and provided a good range of digital evidence.

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

Strengths of the school include:

- A continued strong commitment to children's rights from senior leaders in school and within the Trust who work collaboratively to place the CRC and especially Article 3 at the heart of the mission and purpose of the Trust schools.
- Confident children who demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of rights. They knew a wide range of articles, were confident in the concept of rights and shared their knowledge within the school community.
- The way the school responds to current events by putting children first, such as prioritising pupil voice after Covid, rebuilding children's social and emotional skills and the rethinking of support given to EAL learners as a result welcoming a child from Ukraine.
- Children who know that they have a voice, and who are engaged in school improvement and campaigning at a local and global level.
- A strong commitment to act as ambassadors for rights, promoting knowledge of the CRC and the Rights Respecting Schools Award with other schools and in the wider community.

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:

- Ensure that the excellent work to put rights at the heart of school policies, curriculum and practice continues when the new headteacher and RRSA lead start at the school.
- Continue to build the relationship with Poole SCITT (initial teacher training) contributing to raising awareness of the CRC with new teachers.
- Continue to support parents/carers to learn about and understand the CRC and engage further with the school's rights respecting journey, perhaps running a parental workshop to go with the pledge signing event.
- Continue to support children to develop and lead campaigns from a rights perspective. Consider the language used when supporting charities and fundraising to ensure this is based on a sense of fairness, equality and dignity.
- As planned, develop the Trust's Sustainability Plan, linking with rights and the UN Global Goals.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>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.</p>	<p>Teaching children about the CRC is part of the TEACH Trust’s ethos statement and is done in a structured way, including through policies, curriculum planning, assemblies, Article of the Week, displays and focused Rights Respecting Weeks. This means children are well informed, able to talk about a wide range of articles and understand that rights are universal, unconditional, inherent, inalienable and indivisible. They can describe what these terms mean in an age-appropriate way. One pupil explained, <i>“If you are only little, you need the rights to protect you”</i> and another said, <i>“Every single person in the whole world should have them,”</i> One member of the Rights Respecting Steering Group said, <i>“We help people learn about rights,”</i> and help them be <i>“kind and respectful.”</i> The term duty bearers is used by children and staff. Picture News is used to discuss global issues in an age appropriate way and <i>“broaden their view of the world.”</i> Children talked about how the war in Ukraine could affect children’s right to a <i>“safe and clean environment”</i> and to be respected. The curriculum has been revised so that it is progressive and carefully planned from EY through to Y6. This includes learning about the CRC and developing SMSC. One child said that they learn about rights in <i>“almost every lesson.”</i> Staff have INSET about the CRC and are committed to a child rights approach. One new teacher said that the school’s rights respecting status, <i>“drew me to the school.”</i> Another said how he valued the <i>“positive”</i> approach and consistent language of rights. Parents interviewed were very supportive of RRSA and feel well informed. One parent said RRSA had <i>“taught me a lot too,”</i> and another said that learning about rights had helped to bring her daughter <i>“out of her shell.”</i> Children are developing a pledge for parents and carers to show their support and understanding of the CRC.</p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>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</p>	<p>Since achieving Gold, the school has had a new headteacher and RRSA lead, but the commitment to RRSA has remained strong. The headteacher described how article 3, ‘Children First’ and the rights respecting value system are at the heart of decision making - <i>“It always starts with them... what is best for them.”</i> For example, when children returned to school after Covid-19, the decision was taken to extend the school day to help <i>“close the gap”</i> for those children who needed extra support. She explained, <i>“We also took on extra pastoral capacity and undertook training for staff on wellbeing, so they could look out for the signs that children needed support.”</i> New Wellbeing and Friendship Ambassadors have been trained to help rebuild positive relationships, social interactions and play skills that children had missed out during Covid. Children talked about the new play zones in the playground and the new equipment that takes account of children’s playtime preferences so that playtimes were more positive. A ‘Peer Shout Out’ board is on display, sharing children’s praise of other children’s positive behaviour. Positive relationships were also highlighted during Friendship Week. Children said they felt <i>“100% safe”</i> in school and explained how teachers give them advice and help them learn about how to stay safe online by <i>“not giving away information about yourself.”</i></p>

	<p>Children’s health and wellbeing has been a priority and one child said that knowing about rights helps you <i>“to feel happier and healthier.”</i></p> <p>Ad Astra is an inclusive school that explores and celebrates diversity through PSHE, stories, topic work, role models and by looking at different kinds of families. The headteacher described how the ‘literary spine’ had been redesigned to <i>“...reflect greater diversity, be more inclusive and create a sense of belonging.”</i> adding that <i>“Rights are woven through what we teach, how we behave and how we model.”</i> The concepts of equality, equity and treating people with dignity, respect and kindness are all explored with children and one child explained that <i>“children should be treated differently...”</i> because they are all different. As part of SEND training, staff have recently been supported to include a ‘way in’ to lessons to ensure everyone can access the learning whatever their ability. The Rights Respecters have met with the inclusion lead, so they understand how school supports children with different learning needs.</p>
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
<p>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 children experience their rights.</p>	<p>Children feel they make decisions with adults and help to make improvements through their roles as members of the School Council, Eco Club, as Rights Respecters, Wellbeing Ambassadors and Friendship Ambassadors. Evidence and examples they gave included making playtimes better, carrying out questionnaires on bullying and raising awareness of good mental health. The RRSA lead explained how promoting children’s voice was a priority, <i>“Staff make sure pupil voice is a big part of their teaching, using voting systems, checking worry boxes, using the language consistently.”</i> One School Councillor said, <i>“We try to make the school better ... we got to help to choose the new headteacher.”</i> The Rights Respecters have promoted the CRC on the school website using the ABCDE of Rights resource, and opportunities are provided for children to be ambassadors for rights in their local community.</p> <p>Children described how parents and the wider community joined Ad Astra for the Rights Respecting parade to the town square to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of the CRC. The mayor, local businesses and the local care home were invited, and the executive head spoke about children’s rights in the community, referring to the importance of supporting refugees. The headteacher described how welcoming a child from Ukraine had led the Trust to <i>“audit all our EAL resources”</i> and <i>“think about what we do”</i> to support families. They created their own induction programme and a Welcome Pack for families and have shared this with the Borough. The headteacher described this as <i>“Rights respecting in action!”</i> Children also talked about a recent fire that had spread across the local heathland, very close to their homes. Although worried by the event, children wanted to take action and raise awareness of fire prevention. Working with a local fire fighter, a poster competition was set up linked to the right to a clean and safe environment. Winning posters will be shared with the local community. Children’s rights are also promoted at the Summer Fayre and staff promote the rights of others by taking part in the Tough Mudder challenge to raise money for young carers. Evidence showed that learning about campaigning is explicitly taught as part of Rights Respecting Week.</p>