

# RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Cockton Hill Junior School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Emily Stevens
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Rebecca Trow
<b>Local authority:</b>	County Durham
<b>School context:</b>	The school has 225 pupils on roll. 56% of pupils are entitled to FSM/ pupil premium funding. 3% of children speak English as an additional language. The school identifies 24% of pupils as receiving SEND support with 2 currently undergoing statutory assessment. At the time of the visit there was a temporary leadership structure in place due to staff taking maternity leave.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting:</b>	Acting Headteacher, Acting Deputy Headteacher, RRSA coordinator, Acting SENDCO, SMSC and RE lead
<b>Number of children and young people spoken with:</b>	16 children including some from pupil leadership groups
<b>Adults spoken with:</b>	1 teacher, 1 HLTA and 1 parent
<b>Key RRSA accreditations:</b>	Registered for RRSA: October 2010 Bronze achieved: February 2011 Silver achieved: June 2017 Gold achieved: June 2018
<b>Assessor(s):</b>	Isobel Mitchell and Hilary Alcock
<b>Date:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2021

### ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

**Cockton Hill Junior School has met 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 accreditation visit. The assessors 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 collection 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 school with inclusion at its heart, where pupils feel safe and secure and are articulate about the importance of knowing about children's rights, the difference this makes to their lives and their desire and determination to help realise these rights for others.
- Rights are explicitly linked to all areas of the school's work - visible on displays linked across the curriculum and very prominent on the website and school communications.
- Continued commitment by the whole school to place the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of policy and practice. After many years engagement with the Rights Respecting School Award there is still innovation and creativity in the way it is taken forward and adapted.
- Strong pupil participation. There are several different mechanisms for children to feed into decision making and leadership in different areas of school life. Children felt listened to, that their views matter and that they could make a positive difference.

### **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:**

- Continue to develop strategies to empower children to challenge injustice and create further opportunities for all year groups to be involved in campaigning and advocacy on children's rights. Consider using the UN Global Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for this and the Unicef Advocacy Toolkit.
- Continue to strengthen the school's partnership with Alpha Boarding School in Pokhara, Nepal exploring how a rights lens can help pupils develop greater empathy and understanding of the lived experiences of children around the world.
- Continue to act as ambassadors for rights and the RRSA in your local area and consider working with local secondary schools.
- As class charters are reviewed consider how to ensure that they are used as ongoing reference points for learning environments based on mutually respectful relationships underpinned by children's rights.

## 2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>1. Children, young people and the wider school community know about and understand the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and can describe how it impacts on their lives and on the lives of children everywhere</p>	<p>Children explained the relevance of a range of rights to their everyday lives. In addition, older pupils knew about rights connected to the protection of children outside of their own experience for example in relation to abduction, detention and armed conflict. Pupils commented that, <i>"We talk about rights all the time... learning about rights is everywhere in our school."</i> One pupil stated that, <i>"The good thing about this school is that people are nice to each other and respect each other's rights."</i> Children learn about rights in assemblies and they explained how they use texts within lessons to help them to understand their role as global citizens and to, <i>"Help keep the environment clean and safe."</i> They also commented that, <i>"Sadly there are children who don't get their rights, but we think people like Unicef, and other charities are trying to stop that."</i> The acting headteacher commented that, <i>"You can see and feel the child rights-based ethos within the school...learning about rights is not a bolt on but part of who this school is...rights are interwoven with everything we do."</i> Senior leaders and class-based staff all spoke about how the CRC is included within planning across the curriculum. As such they consider that, <i>"Children's awareness of the whole world has increased, they know more about how the rights apply to other people as well as themselves."</i> The RRSA and SMSC coordinators meet regularly with a designated governor to discuss the continuing development of the school's RR journey. A parent of a Y6 child said that, <i>"We can see how our daughter learning about her rights has made her very respectful and her confidence has grown massively."</i></p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>Children know that, <i>"All adults need to protect children's rights because they are duty bearers."</i> Children said that having a different article, that was changed regularly, on their classroom door helped them to appreciate that teachers are serious about children learning about their rights. Children understand that some children need extra or different help in school and consider this to be fair. School strategic documentation specifically refers to the CRC.</p>
<p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights</p>	<p>One pupil commented that, <i>"The teachers are understanding and they are really kind."</i> Another explained that, <i>"If one of us is not respecting our rights the teacher talks to them and asks if they are ok and if there is anything wrong... they listen to your side of the story."</i> One pupil described dignity as, <i>"What you think of yourself ... and you should feel proud of who you are."</i> A HLTA commented that, <i>"Children now solve more conflicts independently because they are more confident to talk about how they feel."</i></p>
<p>4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.</p>	<p>All children spoken with said they feel safe in school and, <i>"We would talk to a teacher if we didn't feel safe and they would sort out the problem."</i> They gave practical examples about how to keep safe online at school and at home in relation to keeping personal information private, password security strength and cyber bullying. One pupil said, <i>"Be careful of scammers and always tell a trusted adult at home or school if you think something is wrong."</i></p>

<p>5. Children’s social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.</p>	<p>The pupil led Working Out Worries (WOW) group explained that they, <i>“Try and make sure everyone has a happy time at school. If we see someone who is on their own, we find out what’s worrying them and ask if they want to join in playing with us.”</i> Children described how discrimination can cause people to feel unhappy or be worried. Senior leaders commented that the school’s Breakfast Club is, <i>“Part of our commitment to developing the whole child...and along with our Positive Futures Worker it’s really helped to improve attendance.”</i></p>
<p>6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.</p>	<p>Children explained <i>“At school we get along with everyone and knowing about our rights helps with this; for example, if someone has a different religion, they are allowed to believe in this and not be treated any differently.”</i> Older pupils used the terminology ‘sexual orientation’ commenting <i>“We need to be respectful to those who are in the LGBT+ community.”</i> Pupils have designed a whole school pictorial Code of Conduct for everyone on school premises that represents protected characteristics.</p>
<p>7. Children and young people value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.</p>	<p>Children described respectful classroom environments where, <i>“The teachers ask everyone to answer questions to make it fair.”</i> One explained <i>“When we watch Newsround everyone says their opinion which we are all fine with because it’s their choice about what they think... no one should treat you with disrespect because of what you think. If I disagreed with someone then I would say ‘well that’s what you think’.”</i> Pupils take part in half termly monitoring of lessons in relation to lesson content, attitudes to learning, levels of support and enjoyment. These findings then influence subject leader actions.</p>
<p><b>STRAND C</b></p>	<p><b>Highlights and comments</b></p>
<p>8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.</p>	<p>Children described how, <i>“The School Council has loads of people from different classes. We talk about ideas from the other children in our individual classes and then discuss improving school overall.”</i> One pupil said <i>“Adults will listen to us and take action from what we say.”</i> Staff explained how pupils were recently involved in helping to select the acting headteacher, <i>“They asked questions about how candidates would uphold their rights.”</i> Staff running nurture groups commented that, <i>“ We use pupil voice all the time. Children share their ideas and have choices and make decisions about how they want to organise their learning space.”</i> Senior leaders emphasised that, <i>“Our children are the guiding force for what happens in school.”</i></p>
<p>9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.</p>	<p>The pupil Eco Group explained that, <i>“We talk about how we can help the environment and get our ideas out to stop climate change.”</i> Children described why they consider that climate change affects children’s rights. They had ideas for solutions commenting <i>“We need to cut down the causes like saving energy and stop forests getting cut down because they help with our breathing.”</i> They undertake litter picks and ran a campaign to reduce the amount of dog fouling near to the school and contacted local decision makers about the issue. The school participates in recycling initiatives, Switch Off Fortnight and supports a range of charities. Children are involved in the planning, preparation and organisation of fund-raising events which are linked to the CRC.</p>