



# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

## SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

### ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

This was a virtual accreditation visit.

<b>School</b>	<b>Valley Invicta Primary School at Kings Hill</b>
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent (The school is part of the Valley Invicta Academies Trust)
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	167
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steph Guthrie
<b>RRSA Coordinator</b>	Carla Ambrose
<b>RRSA Assessor</b>	Martin Russell
<b>Date of visit</b>	8th July 2020
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, RRSA Lead
<b>Number of pupils interviewed</b>	4 children from Y6
<b>Number of adults interviewed</b>	As above
<b>Evidence provided</b>	Extensive and varied examples of the school's work were shared including photos of charters, planning, policies and pupils' work.
<b>Date registered for RRSA</b>	03/09/19
<b>Bronze achieved</b>	27/03/19

### ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

Valley Invicta Primary School at Kings Hill  
has met the standard for Unicef UK's  
Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver: Rights Aware.



## EVIDENCE FROM THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

### 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 living.

- Children and adults know a wide range of articles from the Convention and how they apply to their own lives. The pupils fully understand that rights are universal, "They are for all children in the whole world under 18." The children are clear about the unconditional nature of rights; that they have their rights no matter what. Asked about the value of knowing their rights one child explained that by knowing about them they can feel safer and they can be sure that their views will be listened to by adults. They also understand the concept of Duty Bearers and that the Government is ultimately responsible for ensuring that they can access their rights.
- The children spoken with demonstrated good global awareness and discussed how, for some children, rights are not always fulfilled. They went on to explore a variety of reasons why this may not be the case, including the challenges facing refugees, the impact of climate change each of which may prevent children from "...being safe or having the rights to shelter and education." In a UK context, they referred to homelessness, bullying and poverty. Both children and adults were very confident in pointing out how learning about rights is integral to the curriculum; the children offered RE topics and "learning about the first and second World Wars" as themes which related to a number of rights. Relevant articles are linked in teachers' longer term curriculum mapping. Pupils also described how their knowledge of rights is reinforced through assemblies, awards and other visual reminders around the school.
- The headteacher was very clear that rights respecting has brought "a new dynamic" to the school, coinciding with the arrival of new senior staff. The SLT and governors are wholeheartedly committed to a rights-based approach with the desire to "Develop the children as whole citizens." Respect is a key driver for the school and, linked to rights, has become a golden thread unifying all aspects of school improvement. It was pointed out that the school wants the children to connect with their communities both locally and globally and rights respecting is helping to "open their eyes to a wider world."

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Ensure staff and young people have an understanding that rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional, using language appropriate to children and young people's age and ability. Consider using the RRSA resource [ABCDE of Rights](#).
- Continue to work towards everyone having a clear understanding of the concepts of 'rights holders' and 'duty bearers'.



## 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.

- Staff explained how becoming rights aware had further strengthened the school's desire to move the pupils on from being passive recipients of their education; the headteacher explained that they want the children to actively engage in their learning and their life as a whole. The children spoke with confidence about the various ways in which staff enable them to access their rights and they were clear that the systems for reporting and responding any difficulties they may have are widely understood and trusted by all pupils. They described how their class charters, created through discussion at the beginning of each year, serve not only as a reminder about their rights but as a stimulus for discussion as a class and among peers.
- Through consultation in assembly the children created a 'How We Stay Safe' policy. Their views, feelings and opinions are collated in our questionnaire data and they brainstormed ideas to improve outcomes. The children in the school have agreed on behaviour guidelines for play and lunch times and this is reflected on our playground charter display. Anti-Bullying work has long been a priority, but the school has enhanced this recently with the children actively involved in the Diana Award programme. One of the children commented that knowing about rights, "Makes school more enjoyable and a safer place."
- The school is a highly inclusive community. Pupils and staff in the specialist provision are fully integrated into every that happens on site. Cross age working and collaboration is encouraged wherever practical and there are regular community celebrations which highlight the traditions and cultures of the different national and ethnic communities represented through the school. The supportive and inclusive ethos of the school impacts staff positively too with systems such as peer coaching which has contributed to the strong culture of mutual support and respect across the community.
- Numerous strategies are in place to support all aspects of the children's wellbeing. These are increasingly expressed in terms of the children's rights. A particular focus has been on emotional wellbeing mental health with programmes such open 'drop-in' sessions as well as longer term targeted interventions. Active programmes of cross age working also support wellbeing as well as a positive sense of inclusion; one adult explained, "we want the children to inspire each other."

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to embed the RRSA Charter Guidance and focus on making the language of 'respect for rights' explicit so that relationships are seen as mutually respectful.



- Explore with staff and children the concept of ‘dignity’ – what it means and how it underpins policies, actions and interactions between everyone at school.
- Explore with the school community the links between improved outcomes for children and the implementation of a rights-based approach across the school. (Outcome 2)

## 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.

- Pupil participation and voice is a distinctive and very positive characteristic of the school. Centred around an innovative Together Everyone Decides (TED) philosophy, children can seek to join a broad array of different focus groups according to their particular interest from gardening to RRSA! There is also a Pupil Voice Leadership Team. The voice of the children is clearly valued and respected at Kings Hill; the headteacher pointed out that “We are not just enabling the children but empowering them. We want them to really connect both locally and globally.” Recent initiatives resulting from pupil suggestions include the introduction of a ‘Buddy Bench’ and improved markings on the playgrounds. The children have also designed their own games to ensure that everyone can be included if they want to be.
- There is a well-established commitment to international awareness and global citizenship, with the school actively involved with Oxfam on a range of projects and the staff and children have a growing knowledge of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As well as a range of charity fundraising activities for both local and global causes, the children participated in last year’s Unicef Outright project to help build their capacity for campaigning on rights-based issues. Current plans include taking part in the Send My Friend to School campaign. The curriculum gives regular access to global and national news through ‘BBC Newsround’ and pupils increasingly see themselves as changemakers. In a community with so many well informed, confident young people who are empowered with an excellent understanding of rights, the potential for developing a culture of impactful campaigning is immense.
- In preparation for the visit a range of children were asked to write down their views about the impact of becoming rights respecting. Among many positive statements was this from a Y6 pupil: “I think it’s a good thing being Rights Respecting because I feel so much happier and it has helped boost my confidence knowing I can always have rights. Other people should apply for the Rights Respecting Schools Award because it makes the school a better place, plus it keeps it enjoyable. This also makes the school a safer place for children.”

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.



- Continue to provide opportunities for children and young people to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school. This could include explicit involvement in school improvement planning, policy review processes, the evaluation of learning and teaching etc. (Outcome 8)
- Build upon your advocacy, campaigning and fundraising activities to promote children's rights locally and globally - perhaps further engagement with Unicef UK's [Outright](#) Campaign and using Unicef's [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#).
- Consider further ambassadorial activity by encouraging children and staff to promote knowledge of the CRC and the Rights Respecting Schools Award with other schools, especially secondary, and in the wider community. (Outcome 9)