

# RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Highlands Primary School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Dr Kulvarn Atwal
<b>RRSA coordinators:</b>	Sandeep Kaur, Danielle Fitzpatrick and Savera Anjum
<b>Local authority:</b>	London Borough of Redbridge
<b>School context:</b>	There are 693 pupils on roll at Highlands Primary School. 14.3% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, 4.0% have an EHCP and 67.1% speak English as an additional language.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting:</b>	Headteacher, Head of School, RRSA Coordinators, Inclusion Lead, Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead, Steering Group Teacher
<b>Number of children and young people spoken with:</b>	5 Rights Ambassadors on a tour, 2 classes of children on tour, and 19 children from across the school in a focus group.
<b>Adults spoken with:</b>	15 adults including teachers, support staff, parents, governors, a School Improvement Partner and Local Authority staff
<b>Key RRSA accreditations:</b>	Registered for RRSA: Jan 2012 Gold achieved: July 2014 Silver achieved: July 2013 Gold reaccreditation: May 2019
<b>Assessor:</b>	Helen Trivers
<b>Date:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2024

## REACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Highlands Primary School continues to meet the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

# 1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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:

- Very articulate children who demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of rights. They knew a wide range of articles and were confident in the concept of rights and are committed to helping to realise these for other children locally and globally.
- The extent to which rights and rights respecting language are embedded in day-to-day life of the school and are linked within the curriculum in a way that enriches the learning for all children.
- All adults are passionate about the rights respecting work of the school and the impact this is having on outcomes for children.
- A nurturing family atmosphere with strong relationships with parents/ carers who also value the school's rights respecting work.
- The empowerment of children to be campaigners for their rights and the rights of others. Children see themselves as global citizens and are supported to make positive changes.

**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 ensure that rights are explicitly linked to the curriculum, activities, and events throughout the school year.
- Create further opportunities for pupils and staff to learn about rights in greater depth, including the origins and wider context of children's rights.
- Focus on the precision of language used when discussing rights with children ensuring the rights language is true to the content of the CRC.
- Continue to explore with children/young people and staff the meaning of key concepts underpinning a child rights approach, for example dignity and equity and how these are enacted in school practice.
- Continue to develop opportunities for children and young people to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school, recognising the role of children in helping adults understand problems and develop achievable solutions.
- Continue to act as ambassadors for rights and the RRSA through your networks and in collaboration with the LA and local schools.

## 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>All members of the Highlands School community are passionate about being a Rights Respecting School. Children talked confidently and knowledgeably about CRC articles and how they link to their own lives and the lives of children across the world, and adults including teachers, parents, senior leaders, support staff and governors all agreed that this is an integral aspect of their school, <i>"It's a way of being; there's a magic in being rights respecting,"</i> said the headteacher. A member of staff said, <i>"We live and breathe the rights as adults. Rights Respecting is our core."</i> One child said, <i>"If children don't know about rights, they won't have the power to make a change. So, we make sure all children know about rights."</i> Children take part in Article of the Week assemblies where they focus on specific articles, and rights are threaded through the curriculum enabling children to discuss rights in a meaningful way. For example, one child shared, <i>"In geography we learned that climate change affects the whole world... we saw that icebergs are melting and this impacts on Article 24,"</i> another added, <i>"In English we read No Ballet Shoes in Syria, about a refugee child. It was about how much we need the rights."</i> Children also develop a good understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), their knowledge of these deepening as they move through the school. Displays across the school use rights language and make explicit links to CRC articles. All children spoken with were confident in the principles that underpin rights and understood that rights are not respected all of the time, <i>"In some countries, rights aren't respected. They still have them, but they don't get to enjoy them."</i> Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school's focus on rights and the way that their children are being supported to become responsible and active global citizens, with strong values and a sense of duty to others, one sharing, <i>"My children live and breathe the rights. It's about being a good, decent human being,"</i> another adding, <i>"We are all part of a community. Our kids care about this community, and we all do it together."</i> A governor said, <i>"Our children take these values with them, creating a better society, it's a ripple effect."</i></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</p>	<p><i>"You can feel the vibration of Rights Respecting energy everywhere,"</i> one child declared whilst on the tour. There is a positive, nurturing ethos and environment, and staff work closely with families to ensure that they can access what they need for children's rights to be met. Children are helped to discover and nurture their talents, for example, all children in Y4 and 5 learn a musical instrument, and children are encouraged to make the most of the extensive extra-curricular programme. One child shared, <i>"There are lots of things that make children feel special in this school. We celebrate children who show Rights Respecting values."</i> The school uses a dialogic approach to teaching and learning and every class has a talk charter as well as a rights charter to promote clarity about the respect, equality, and dignity that a talk rich classroom requires. Children with specific learning needs are supported through the Oak provision and join with their class whenever possible, a member of staff sharing, <i>"Children are passionate about Article 23 and ensuring all children can learn."</i> Topics and books are chosen to ensure that</p>

<p>respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes wellbeing</p>	<p>children are learning about issues that will support them to engage as informed, active global citizens, and care is taken to ensure that every child feels represented in the learning materials, a member of staff sharing, <i>"We bring in speakers from diverse backgrounds,"</i> another staff member adding, <i>"We celebrated World Hijab Day – this was an idea from one of our families."</i> Teachers are all trained in Trauma Informed Approaches and there is a restorative approach to dealing with issues. Adults understand that children come with previous trauma, some of which is familial trauma, and every effort is made to support children to overcome this. The Nurture Lead shared, <i>"I support colleagues to have an empathetic approach. The child feels seen,"</i> and staff, including midday supervisors, have explored strategies for supporting dysregulated children. <i>"Wellbeing is a priority for us,"</i> shared the headteacher and this is brought to the fore by a school-wide Wellbeing Charter created by the Wellbeing Committee. The Wellbeing Lead shared, <i>"We've done lots of work with staff as well as pupils to improve mental health across the school."</i> Some staff members are trained as Senior Mental Health Leads and Emotional Literacy Support Advisers to take this work forward and older pupils are trained as peer mediators to coach and mentor younger children. The school works with colleagues from the LA Mental Health Support Team to support families, children and teachers in developing greater awareness of mental health. Highlands is drawing on an initiative from Japan to become a Blue Zone school which will promote the health and longevity of the whole school community. A blueprint has been created showing how this will be developed, with links to children's rights made explicit.</p>
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<p><b>STRAND C</b></p>	<p><b>Highlights and comments</b></p>
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<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>Pupils enjoy taking on roles and responsibilities across the school and feel that they can make a difference, <i>"I'm in the School Parliament. The teachers respect our ideas and help us to make them happen."</i> Members of the Pupil Parliament organised a Peace Fair to raise money for children affected by the war in Gaza, proudly announcing that they raised over £5000, a teacher sharing, <i>"They felt passionately that they wanted to do something because children's rights weren't being met."</i> The Pupil Parliament is also focusing on zero waste SDG and is working to improve the quality of school lunches hoping that this will lead to less food wastage. The member of staff that supports the Pupil Parliament shared, <i>"It has given the children a sense of power. They feel in charge, and they take it seriously,"</i> adding, <i>"We are building citizens of the world. When you give them the power, they know they can go out into the world and make a change."</i></p> <p>The headteacher said, <i>"Our aim is for rights respecting to reach beyond the school gates. We want to develop citizens who can make a difference in the world."</i> This is reflected in the wider curriculum where children learn about global issues and participate in activities such as videoconferencing with children and experts all over the world. Children also take part in the UNICEF UK OutRight campaign each year and develop their own campaigns linked to their work on the SDGs. Children are currently campaigning for better guidance and support for primary school children accessing social media; they have spoken with their MP and are now creating an online charter that all parents will have to sign. The headteacher speaks at conferences and events to promote the power of being a Rights Respecting School, sharing, <i>"We are ambassadors for Rights Respecting Schools,"</i></p>
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