

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School
Headteacher:	Robert Swanwick
RRSA coordinator:	Dominic Kerr, Emily Tierney
Local authority:	Birmingham City Council
Number of pupils on roll:	720
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Senior Assistant Headteacher, 2 RRSA coordinators (1 of whom is also a governor)
Number of children and young people spoken with:	10 pupils from Y7 -Y9 including Rights Ambassadors
Adults spoken with:	Assistant Headteacher, 2 teachers, 1 support assistant
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: 24 th June 2019 Bronze achieved: 18 th March 2020
Assessor(s):	Hilary Alcock
Date of visit:	26 th May 2022

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Cardinal Wiseman Catholic College 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.

- Pupils spoken with knew a wide range of Articles from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). They understood that rights are Universal, Unconditional, Inherent and Inalienable. They described how they learn about rights during dedicated fortnightly Article of the Week sessions and within PSHE lessons. One commented, *“ Learning about our rights has taught us about the importance of using our voices to speak up.”* They explained how armed conflicts such as those in Afghanistan and Ukraine resulted in, *“Children not being able to get their right to education or clean water and they might be used for child labour.”* Rights Ambassadors have been very proactive in formulating and delivering presentations to help inform other pupils about the CRC.
- Senior leaders are clearly committed to the school becoming fully Rights Respecting. The Senior Assistant Headteacher commented, *“ A child rights based approach supports our fundamental aim to develop our children as good human beings who respect and celebrate diversity within a school environment where the child’s voice is at the centre of everything. ”* The RRSA coordinators provide ongoing training and support for staff about the CRC resulting in them being increasingly confident to use rights based language, deliver discrete right based lessons and begin to incorporate rights into the wider curriculum. Staff commented, *“ Children’s rights are now real in this school, not just on paper.”* Governors are informed about RRSA progress through formulating and reviewing the annual school development plan. Parents have been informed via the school’s website and through an open school event for families and the local community.

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

- Continue to widen the range of articles that the whole school community are familiar and further develop knowledge and understanding of the CRC, its origins, values and principles and, for older pupils, its place within the wider framework of Human Rights.
- Consider further CPD on global citizenship and sustainable development perhaps through engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals and [The World's Largest Lesson](#) to help develop an understanding of global issues and how they impact on children's rights and the wellbeing of the planet.

Utilise CPD in this area to continue to support children to develop their understanding of sustainable development.

- Encourage teachers to further develop explicit reference to rights in their planning of a range of subjects and projects within the Transformative curriculum.
- Consider including reference to specific rights from the CRC into relevant policies. You might find [Articles in Action](#) a helpful resource.
- Support parents/governors/families/the wider community to learn about and understand the CRC and engage with the school's rights respecting journey. This could include support and information on the website/ school newsletter and home school learning activities. Children could help to lead on this.

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.

- Children know that the adults in school are responsible for ensuring that they learn about their rights and can access them.
- Pupils spoken with all said that they felt safe in school. They know who they would speak with if they had a concern for themselves or someone else commenting, "*We can always talk to a teacher about how we are feeling or if we felt unsafe or if something was worrying us.*" A new specific email address for students to report any concerns was set up following a suggestion from the Rights Ambassadors. Pupils described how they learnt about safety online and and cyber bullying. They knew that these issues relate to their rights to privacy, reliable information and safety.
- "*We respect teachers and they respect us and our rights which makes it a nice environment to be in,*" said one pupil. Another commented, "*We've learnt about the right for people to have different identities and now I would do something about it if I saw someone being treated differently because of this.*" Another spoke about the importance of learning about racism. The school has started to develop Wall Art to raise the profile of celebrating diversity, linking this with the CRC, the school's virtues plus their weekly Transformative curriculum offer all of which aims to increase and diversify pupils' experiences and raise their aspirations. "*We believe that teaching children about their rights demonstrates the value that we all place on our young people,*" commented one of the RRSA coordinators.

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

- Strengthen the use of the language of ‘rights holders’ and ‘duty bearers’ amongst adults and children (Outcome 2)
- 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)
- Create opportunities to explore the concepts of fairness and equity and ensure pupils can describe how school promotes these concepts. (Outcome 2)
- Explore with staff and pupils the concept of ‘dignity’ – what it means and how it underpins policies, actions and interactions between everyone at school. (Outcome 3)
- Continue to provide opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity in a range of ways. (Outcome 6)
- Develop the role pupils have in engaging with their right to learn. Consider, with them, how they can be more active participants in deciding what and how they learn and what they need to do to progress. (Outcome 7)

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.

- *“All the teachers listen to us and we know that our ideas can help to make the school better,”* commented one pupil. Another described how, *“If you want something changing speak to a School Council member. They will then talk to the teachers at their meetings and tell us what they said.”* Following the installation of new doors pupils asked for the doors to be numbered which duly happened. They also instigated introducing recycling bins around the school which they said are, *“More Eco friendly.”*
- Pupils across the school wrote 600 cards to their local MP which resulted in him visiting the school so that he could answer questions relating to pupils’ concerns about the treatment of refugees. The school is increasingly raising awareness of how its fundraising and charitable activities help to improve children’s access to their rights locally and globally.
- Staff commented, *“The passion for children’s rights is spreading throughout the school. Our Rights Respecting journey is making our pupils’ world a little bit bigger. They are now more confident to discuss wider issues because of the knowledge they have about the CRC and are more confident that they can make change happen.”*

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

- Continue to provide opportunities for children to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school. Link this to pupil participation and an understanding of democracy. (Outcome 8)
- Continue to develop children and young people's understanding of what it means to be a rights respecting global citizen. Support them to be informed about the world so that they are critical thinkers and challenge discrimination and stereotypical attitudes. (Outcome 9)
- Support children and young people to engage in a range of advocacy, campaigning and fundraising activities that promote children's rights locally and globally perhaps linking with Unicef UK's [Outright](#) Campaign and using Unicef's [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#). (Outcome 9)
- Further develop campaigning and fundraising activities from the perspective of rights, justice and equity so all children are seen as rights holders rather than just recipients of charity. (Outcome 9)
- Enhance ambassadorial activity by encouraging children and staff to promote knowledge of the CRC and the Rights Respecting Schools Award with other schools, e.g. through primary/secondary liaison/transition, and in the wider community. (Outcome 9)