



ST MARY'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Friday 9th December 2022

Dear Parent / Carer,

### **We are becoming a Unicef UK Rights Respecting School!**

St Mary's aims to be a school where children's rights are at the heart of our ethos and culture, to improve well-being and to develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. As part of this plan we are working towards recognition as a 'Rights Respecting School', an award given to schools on behalf of Unicef UK.

Unicef is the world's leading organisation working for children and young people and their rights. In 1989, governments across the world agreed that all children have the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These rights are based on what a child needs to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their potential.

St Mary's pupils will learn about their rights by putting them into practice every day. A Rights Respecting School models rights and respect in all its relationships.

We really hope that you will be able to support our school on our journey towards becoming a Unicef UK Rights Respecting School. It would be great if you could spend a few minutes reading through our questions & answers on the back of this letter, and we have also attached one of our Convention on the Rights of the Child documents.

For further information about Rights Respecting Schools please visit:

[www.unicef.org.uk/rrsa](http://www.unicef.org.uk/rrsa)

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rowling

*Fiat Mihi - Let it be with me*

Executive Headteacher: Mrs A McClurey  
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs S Ricceri-O'Neill

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Part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust

## Becoming a Unicef UK Rights Respecting School QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

It is an exciting time in the life of St Mary's school. We have embarked on a journey which will benefit the whole school community, from pupils and staff to parents and governors. Here's what we think you might like to know about it!

You might ask...	As school leaders we think that...
What is a Unicef UK Rights Respecting School?	<p>When schools get involved, the children learn about their rights by putting them into practice every day.</p> <p>Children and adults will learn about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which outlines what children need to survive and thrive, becoming the best they can be and achieving their potential.</p>
Why is this happening?	<p>A Unicef UK Rights Respecting School models rights and respect in all its relationships, whether between adults and pupils, between pupils or between adults. It is proven to benefit everyone in the school community to grow and learn together. Read more about the Award at <a href="http://www.unicef.org.uk/rrsa">www.unicef.org.uk/rrsa</a></p>
How will becoming a Rights Respecting School benefit my child(ren)?	<p>This approach works in many schools across the country to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. Headteachers from schools involved in the Award say it has improved children's and young people's respect for themselves and others and contributed to children and young people being more engaged in their learning.</p>
How can I get involved?	<p>We hope you will support the school's journey to become a Unicef UK Rights Respecting School. Please do read about the Convention and Unicef's work (see below) to see what it's all about!</p>
What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child?	<p>In 1989, governments worldwide promised all children the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention recognised that all children have the right to be treated with dignity and fairness, to be protected, to develop to their full potential and to</p>

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	<p>participate. The rights in the Convention describe what a child needs to survive, grow, and live up to their potential in the world. They apply equally to every child, no matter who they are or where they come from.</p> <p>The Convention changed the way children are viewed and treated – in other words, as human beings with a distinct set of rights instead of as passive objects of care and charity. It is the most widely ratified human rights treaty – only the United States has not ratified it. The UK signed up to it in 1991.</p> <p>You can read more about it at <a href="http://www.unicef.org.uk/crc">www.unicef.org.uk/crc</a> and download a summary of the articles at <a href="http://bit.ly/CRC-over11">bit.ly/CRC-over11</a></p>
<p>What is Unicef?</p>	<p>Unicef is the world's leading organisation for children and young people, promoting the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything they do. Together with their partners, Unicef works in 190 countries to translate that commitment into practical action.</p> <p>Unicef UK is a registered charity. It raises funds through donations from individuals, organisations and companies and campaigns to keep children safe. Unicef UK also works with schools, hospitals and local authorities in the UK to put children at the heart of what they do.</p> <p>To find out more about Unicef, go to <a href="http://www.unicef.org.uk">www.unicef.org.uk</a></p>

***Please do get in touch with us if you would like to know more.***

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 HOW THE CONVENTION WORKS

# CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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<p>Children must be registered when they are born and given a name which is officially recognized by the government. Children must have a nationality (belong to a country). Whenever possible, children should know their parents and be looked after by them.</p> <p><b>7</b></p>	<p>Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.</p> <p><b>6</b></p>	<p>Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.</p> <p><b>5</b></p>	<p>Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all the rights in this Convention.</p> <p><b>4</b></p>	<p>When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.</p> <p><b>3</b></p>	<p>All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.</p> <p><b>2</b></p>	<p>A child is any person under the age of 18.</p> <p><b>1</b></p>	
<p>Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.</p> <p><b>14</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.</p> <p><b>13</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.</p> <p><b>12</b></p>	<p>Governments must stop children being taken out of the country when this is against the law – for example, being kidnapped by someone or held abroad by a parent when the other parent does not agree.</p> <p><b>11</b></p>	<p>If a child lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.</p> <p><b>10</b></p>	<p>Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after – for example, if a parent hurts or does not take care of a child. Children whose parents don't live together should stay in contact with both parents unless this might harm the child.</p> <p><b>9</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to their own identity – an official record of who they are which includes their name, nationality and family relations. No one should take this away from them, but if this happens, governments must help children to quickly get their identity back.</p> <p><b>8</b></p>	
<p>When children are adopted, the most important thing is to do what is best for them. If a child cannot be properly looked after in their own country – for example by living with another family – then they might be adopted in another country.</p> <p><b>21</b></p>	<p>Every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life.</p> <p><b>20</b></p>	<p>Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them.</p> <p><b>19</b></p>	<p>Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child. When the child does not have any parents, another adult will have this responsibility and they are called a "guardian". Parents and guardians should always consider what is best for that child. Governments should help them. Where a child has both parents, both of them should be responsible for bringing up the child.</p> <p><b>18</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.</p> <p><b>17</b></p>	<p>Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation (or good name) from any attack.</p> <p><b>16</b></p>	<p>Children can join or set up groups or organisations, and they can meet with others, as long as this does not harm other people.</p> <p><b>15</b></p>	
<p>Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.</p> <p><b>28</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live so they can develop in the best possible way. The government should help families and children who cannot afford this.</p> <p><b>27</b></p>	<p>Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.</p> <p><b>26</b></p>	<p>Every child who has been placed somewhere away from home - for their care, protection or health - should have their situation checked regularly to see if everything is going well and if this is still the best place for the child to be.</p> <p><b>25</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.</p> <p><b>24</b></p>	<p>Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society. Governments should remove all obstacles for children with disabilities to become independent and to participate actively in the community.</p> <p><b>23</b></p>	<p>Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees (because it was not safe for them to stay there) should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country.</p> <p><b>22</b></p>	
<p>Governments must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold, or taken to other countries or places to be exploited (taken advantage of).</p> <p><b>35</b></p>	<p>The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.</p> <p><b>34</b></p>	<p>Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.</p> <p><b>33</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to be protected from doing work that is dangerous or bad for their education, health or development. If children work, they have the right to be safe and paid fairly.</p> <p><b>32</b></p>	<p>Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.</p> <p><b>31</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion - even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.</p> <p><b>30</b></p>	<p>Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.</p> <p><b>29</b></p>	
<p>Governments should actively tell children and adults about this Convention so that everyone knows about children's rights.</p> <p><b>42</b></p>	<p>If the laws of a country protect children's rights better than this Convention, then those laws should be used.</p> <p><b>41</b></p>	<p>Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities. Prison should only be the last choice.</p> <p><b>40</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to get help if they have been hurt, neglected, treated badly or affected by war, so they can get back their health and dignity.</p> <p><b>39</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to be protected during war. No child under 15 can join the army or take part in war.</p> <p><b>38</b></p>	<p>Children who are accused of breaking the law should not be killed, tortured, treated cruelly, put in prison forever, or put in prison with adults. Prison should always be the last choice and only for the shortest possible time. Children in prison should have legal help and be able to stay in contact with their family.</p> <p><b>37</b></p>	<p>Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of), even if these are not specifically mentioned in this Convention.</p> <p><b>36</b></p>	
 <p><b>CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD</b></p>						<p><b>THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD – THE CHILDREN'S VERSION</b></p> <p>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important agreement by countries who have promised to protect children's rights.</p> <p>The Convention on the Rights of the Child explains who children are, all their rights, and the responsibilities of governments. All the rights are connected, they are all equally important and they cannot be taken away from children.</p> <p>This text is supported by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.</p>  	<p>These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF – and other organisations work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.</p> <p><b>43-54</b></p>

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