

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Bonner Primary School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Nicola Denton
<b>RRSA coordinators:</b>	Oliver Larkin (RRSA lead) and Ryan Kirkpatrick
<b>Local authority:</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Assessor(s):</b>	Paul Harris and Wendy Watts
<b>Date:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2019

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The assessors would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, staff, parents and governors 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 assessment visit, the school completed a comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form.

It was evident that children’s rights are embedded across the school and underpin every facet of school life.

Particular strengths of the school include:

- A clear strategic commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is reflected in the ethos and everyday practice of the school at both its sites.
- Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of rights.
- An inclusive and positive learning environment underpinned by a strong culture of respect.
- An outward looking school community with pupils campaigning for children’s rights.

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

## 2. MAINTAINING GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING STATUS

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 the use of the Convention to act as an overarching framework for the school’s work and as a way of providing a consistent and common language across both school sites.
- Further develop pupil’s knowledge of the articles of the Convention through the curriculum, as appropriate.
- Explore the possibility of evolving the school’s ‘golden rights’ into a whole school [charter](#).
- Explore ways to further celebrate the impact of ‘pupil voice’.

## 3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

<b>School context</b>	Bonner Primary School is a community school for children aged 3 to 11 years with 876 pupils on roll. The school is based on two sites: ‘Mile End -BME’ (Nursery to Year 6) and ‘Bethnal Green-BBG’ (Reception to Year 6) which are approximately a mile apart. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is approximately 23%. 74% of pupils have English as an additional language and 3% of pupils have an EHC Plan.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher, Associate Headteacher (BME), Assistant Headteacher (BME) and RRSA coordinators (BME & BBG). Separate meeting with Associate Headteacher (BBG).
<b>Number of children and young people interviewed</b>	<u>BME</u> focus group: 15 pupils (Years 1 to 6); learning walk: 3 pupils and class visits: approximately 46 pupils (Years 1 and 5). <u>BBG</u> focus group: 15 pupils (Years 1 to 6); learning walk: 3 pupils and class visits: approximately 59 pupils (Years 2, 3 and 6).
<b>Number of adults interviewed</b>	<u>BME</u> 4 teachers, 3 support staff & 4 parents (includes a support staff governor) <u>BGG</u> 5 teachers & 5 parents (includes a member of support staff and a governor)
<b>Evidence provided</b>	Learning walks, focus groups, meetings, class visits and written evidence.
<b>Registered for RRSA:</b> October 2014	<b>Silver achieved:</b> April 2017

**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 development.

**Strand A has been achieved**

Pupils at both school sites (BME and BBG) have a secure knowledge and understanding of rights. Examples cited included the right to a good education, to be safe in body and mind, to be protected from sexual abuse and harmful drugs, to be listened to, to privacy, to be able to practise one’s own religion and beliefs, to relax and play, to be able to develop talents and abilities to the full and to have an adequate standard of living. They were unequivocal in confirming that rights are unconditional and inalienable; as a pupil explained “[you] can’t buy your rights or sell them”. Similarly, pupils also know that rights are universal (for the “whole earth”) and inherent (“from when you’re zero” and “first born”). A pupil explained how a “group of countries came together” to help establish children’s rights and article 42 was also mentioned by pupils as the “right to know your rights”. When asked to vote as to whether they considered all rights to be equally important or not, the vast majority of pupils confirmed the former.

Assemblies, bespoke class charters, displays, school events and elements of the curriculum support pupils in their learning about rights and the Convention. These are threaded through the daily life of the school so that the Convention is an integral part of children’s learning. Knowledge of rights is also informing pupils’ understanding of the global dimension. They are aware that the rights of many children and young people are being denied because of a range of issues such as conflict, child labour, poverty, lack of clean water, homelessness and bullying. For example, when discussing the conflict in Syria pupils described how this would detrimentally affect children’s rights to a safe environment, to be protected and access to education. When asked how the effects of climate change such as extreme flooding or drought are linked to children’s rights, pupils were able to make connections as to how this could affect rights related to safety, education and not being able to grow crops to help provide nutritious food. Staff gave several examples of how lessons have been linked to rights. These included children’s rights in Roman times compare with modern day UK (year 2) and apartheid (year 5 literacy work). In a focus group discussion, the roles of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King in the civil rights movement were very well explained and linked to the right “to be treated fairly” and article 2. Examples seen in the accreditation evidence included a year 1 PSHE topic about friendship linked to article 15, a year 3 PSHE activity about ‘wants and needs’ (articles 24 and 31) and a year 6 history activity based on using primary sources of evidence to research about Queen Victoria (article 17). Last November a ‘Rights Week’ was held across the school with different year groups focusing upon particular rights from the Convention. For example, year 2 explored e-safety linked to articles 13, 16 and 17 and year 6 wrote to the UN Secretary general in connection with child labour (article 32).

The headteacher, who joined the school in September 2018, explained that the Rights Respecting focus was very apparent to her upon arrival and an “intrinsic part of what goes on at the school”. She described how it “leads a lot of the vision of the school”, is “very embedded” and an integral feature of both school sites. School leaders and RRSA coordinators are enthusiastic advocates of the RRSA, highlighting that particular impacts of the work have been to enhance ‘pupil voice’ and to develop pupils’ awareness of the wider world both locally and globally. The Convention has therefore been used systematically across both sites to provide a framework for Bonner’s ethos, values and everyday practice. This strategic commitment can also be seen in the school development plan which highlights

that the school's 'vision and aims supports Articles 3, 28, 29, 30 and 31' and several policies such as the child protection and PSHE policies which also include reference to specific articles from the Convention. Governors and parents are supportive of the school's work. Staff at both sites are also similarly very positive about the impact of being a Rights Respecting community. Their comments included how it gave pupils "a sense of belonging and security" and that it has "given them that framework" and "language to talk". Both teaching and support staff have received training about the RRSA. For example, last May, INSET was provided for teaching assistants and mid-day meal supervisors which covered areas such as duty bearers, rights holders and use of Unicef UK's resource 'Myths and Misconceptions'. The staff handbook also refers to the Convention. The coordinators have been proactive in visiting other local schools to share and gain ideas about being Rights Respecting. A parent information leaflet about RRSA and the Convention is also available on the school's website.

**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.

**Strand B has been achieved**

Whilst the term 'duty bearers' is not commonly used, pupils understand that in school, the adults are responsible for upholding their rights. If they had a concern, pupils explained they "can tell the teacher what [is] the matter" and that there are "certain teachers you can talk to for an ongoing problem". Pupils also recognised how their actions can help support their peers with a 'playground buddy' explaining their role in "mak[ing] sure people have friends" and "if someone [is] hurt we will help them go to first aid". The school's behaviour policy highlights that 'it is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well'. An associate headteacher (BBG) when asked about equity, explained that this "is very much in the forefront of our minds", particularly in the context of the school being in area of social deprivation. She explained that "no child will ever be deprived of a school trip" and how the school is aspirational for its pupils.

Throughout the accreditation visit a positive and supportive learning environment was evident. In the focus group meetings, pupils listened respectfully to the contribution of their peers. 'Golden rights' (based on articles 12, 14, 19, 24, 28 and 30) are used throughout the school to support rights respecting actions and positive behaviour. Sanctions, such as reducing the amount of 'golden time' with a 'red slip' were seen by pupils as fair, commenting that it provided time for reflection and that "red slips can be lost" if improvements are made; as one of the co-ordinators explained "golden time is never fully taken away". Rights Respecting certificates recognise and celebrate pupils respecting each other's rights. When asked what they understood by the term 'dignity', pupil responses included that it is "like your image or reputation" and "that you don't just care about yourself but you care about other people". Pupils agreed that children in school were treated with dignity, giving separate PE changing areas for boys and girls as an example of how the school helps to uphold this.

The Bonner school community is an inclusive one where difference is respected and valued. For example, assemblies have included celebrating Chinese New Year, Christmas, Diwali, Eid and Harvest Festival. Assemblies have also been used to promote non-discrimination. As part of 'Rights

Week', a school leader explained how pupils from a London primary school (RRSA Silver) talked to year 3 and 4 pupils about their different religious beliefs and that "everyone has the right to choose what they believe". As the school bulletin also commented 'we are proud to be a school that champions respect for other cultures, religions and beliefs and campaigns for issues that affect children around the world'. Staff have also worked with a nearby special school to develop resources to help support pupils with ASD.

When asked, pupils in the focus groups at both school sites confirmed that they felt safe at school. A wide range of examples were provided by the pupils as to how the school helps them be safe. These included supervision by adults in the playground areas, CCTV, the presence of gates, visitor badges, and being able to speak with a member of staff if they had any concerns. A pupil also explained that "we've got playground buddies if [we are] sad [or] upset we can always go to them". E-safety was also discussed with pupils at BME and they were able to describe a number of actions to ensure that rights to safety and privacy are maintained. The school also participates in anti-bullying week and recently held a safer internet day with pupil digital leaders helping to support this at an assembly.

Pupils understand that children and young people have a right to nutritious food and clean water. They were able to give examples of different healthy food types and how these can form part of a "balanced diet". Pupils were able to link this to their school context, commenting on the availability of fresh water from drinking fountains along with salads and vegetarian options at lunchtimes. PE lessons, participation in 'daily mile' activities on occasions, swimming lessons (for certain year groups) and 'brain breaks' during learning were also given as examples of how the school supports their health and well-being. The school development plan includes a priority area for physical and emotional well-being which includes engagement with the 'MindUp' programme. Emotionally vulnerable children are supported by a learning mentor and may also join a nurture group for additional support. The PSHE curriculum and the work of external agencies also help to support pupil's health and wellbeing.

Pupils gave several examples of how they were involved with their learning. These included self and peer assessment, "targets" and marking "feedback" from teachers. Pupils have opportunities to actively engage with their learning. For example, there is "child-initiated learning" in the reception year and in year 4, a teacher explained how a "knowledge harvest" takes place before the start of a new topic. Opportunities exist for pupils to access learning at different levels of challenge such as 'mild, spicy and hot'. For one of their home learning activities, pupils were asked to compose lyrics about rights to a set piece of music. 'Pupil voice' in learning is also evident in children being able to choose each half term from a wide range of enrichment activities. Examples include 'Egyptians, The Amazon, Quidditch and Whizzy Science'.

**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.

**Strand C has been achieved**

Pupil’s views are listened to and taken seriously. Examples of this include (on both sites) an ‘Article 12 suggestions box’ and a curriculum survey capturing views from pupils (years 1 to 6) to help inform curriculum development. Each site has a school council made up of a pupil representative from each class (year 2 and upwards) elected by their peers. At BME, the council also oversees the Rights Respecting work, whilst at BBG a separate steering group of pupils operates. The work of the school councils and ‘playground buddies’ has led to the introduction of new playground equipment chosen by the children, playground zoning and fundraising for particular items of playground equipment organised and led by the pupils themselves. BBG steering group pupils and the co-ordinators have also met with the steering group from another London primary school to discuss the journey from RRS silver to gold.

Of particular note has been the school’s engagement with air pollution studies and campaigns. Last year, year 5 pupils (BME) took part in Loop Labs ‘Citizen Science Programme’ project. Part of this work involved the pupils giving a presentation and showing a music video they had produced about pollution issues, to a large number of people from the local community including parents, Tower Hamlets councillors and Mayor of London representatives. Science club year 5 BBG pupils have also participated in Tower Hamlet’s ‘Breathe Clean’ campaign and the BBG steering group have met with the Mayor of Tower Hamlets as part of ‘Clean Air Day’ to help promote ways of reducing air pollution. The school’s twitter feed of the latter event highlights that ‘every child has a right to a clean environment’ and also includes video clips from Tower Hamlets Council of the children speaking at the event. The school has also been acknowledged in the Unicef UK publication ‘Healthy Air for Every Child: A Call for National Action’ for ‘their help and insights’.

Pupils learn about the wider world in a variety of ways and through learning about rights a teacher commented how this “automatically gives them common ground with other children across the world”. For example, in year 2 a topic about Ethiopia involves pupils raising funds for the charity ‘Ethiopia Hope’ with a pupil explaining how this was “for people who are more in need than us”. Learning about rights has therefore also helped pupils become more empathetic. A teacher explained how “when they [the pupils] know their rights they can put themselves into someone else’s shoes” and that it “gives them a language to dissect what’s wrong”. Bonner participated in Unicef’s ‘OutRight 2017’ campaign by writing to the local MP and Home Secretary about refugee children’s rights and has also taken part in the ‘OutRight 2018’ campaign about air pollution. Following on from a ‘WE Movement’ workshop earlier in the year, homelessness and issues connected to gang and knife crime have been chosen by the BBG steering group and BME school council respectively. These will become part of the new PSHE curriculum map and a focus for future campaign work. As part of an enrichment activity last year, pupils participated in a ‘Water Walk’, linked to article 24, to help raise funds and learn about campaigning for clean water. The school has supported several charities including Unicef’s ‘Soccer Aid’, Children in Need and Comic Relief. Bonner is an outward looking school community and as a teacher commented pupils “become citizens at the age of four”.