



RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

This has been a virtual accreditation.

School	The Rowans AP Academy
Local Authority	Medway
Number of pupils on roll	62
Headteacher	Fiona May
RRSA Coordinator	Jack Weston and Lee Ketcher
RRSA Assessor	Helen Trivers
Date of visit	21st April 2021
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher and two RRSA leads
Number of pupils interviewed	5
Number of adults interviewed	2
Evidence provided	Silver evaluation form, detailed digital evidence and focus groups.
Date registered for RRSA	19 September 2016
Bronze achieved	04 October 2017

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

The Rowans AP Academy has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver: Rights Aware.

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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.

- The Rowans has a weekly assembly programme to introduce pupils to articles from the CRC which has prompted pupils to discuss rights further within lesson time. Rights are being integrated into curriculum areas, such as science and humanities and the school held a *Respecting Schools Week* to give pupils focused time to discuss rights issues. Pupils spoken with named rights such as the right to education, clean water and healthy food, to be protected and to be listened to. They knew that rights were universal and unconditional.
- Pupils are starting to explore global issues and their role as global citizens. Pupils discussed learning about the war in Yemen and the impact on children and children's rights. They expressed empathy with the children and a frustration and desire to make things better. *"I couldn't believe it - it made me feel guilty and sad because they can't even get simple things."* The headteacher explained, *"Our pupils can find empathy difficult, but rights have helped them to develop this. They understand their rights and can develop comparisons with other children, developing that sense of responsibility to others."*
- Staff are supported and encouraged to develop their teaching and learning by the two RRSA leads, who run CPD sessions on rights and have supported teachers mapping rights to the curriculum.
- The school engaged the wider school community with their Rights Respecting work through lockdown by delivering enrichment packs to families containing information about the CRC and activities to explore together. They also use a range of social media to engage families with conversations about rights.

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

- Continue to develop knowledge and understanding of the CRC, its origins, values and principles and its place within the wider framework of Human Rights.
- Ensure staff and young people have an understanding that rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional, using language appropriate to young people's age and ability. Consider using the RRSA [resource ABCDE of Rights](#).
- Ensure the school community have a clear understanding of the concepts of 'rights holders' and 'duty bearers'.
- Continue to support pupils to develop their understanding of sustainable development. Consider exploring the UN Global Goals (Sustainable Development Goals) further through [The World's Largest Lesson](#) and support pupils to think about how they impact on children's rights and the wellbeing of the planet.

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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.

- The ethos and culture of the school and the school's vision and values really underpin their day to day work and closely link to rights. Both staff and children clearly understood and lived those values.
- The school governor spoken with was very positive about the impact of the school's focus on rights. *"Rights go through everything the school does. Rights Respecting has been on the School Improvement Plan for the last two years and we regularly talk about the impact of policies and the rights of children."*
- Pupils and staff reported that relationships in the school are positive. The school uses a restorative justice approach to resolve conflicts and the RR steering group initiated work to explicitly build in conversations around rights and respect for rights into these conversations.
- Pupils spoken with reported feeling safe at school and were able to name a number of ways the school keeps them safe, all knowing what to do and who to speak to if they had concerns. During lockdown the school kept in constant contact with all pupils through weekly phone calls and house visits and set up a google form for pupils to communicate with the school at any time if they had worries or concerns.
- The school has been active in celebrating diversity and inclusion in a number of ways including through displays throughout school and a regular spotlight during assemblies highlighting the achievements and journeys of people from a range of different backgrounds, all underpinned by rights. There has been a focus on challenging homophobia, including all staff wearing rainbow lanyards and creating a script to challenge homophobic language.
- The school has supported pupils to reengage with their right to education, after often having negative experiences at mainstream schools. The pupils talked about valuing their right to education now and feeling supported to make progress and be the best they could be. *"At mainstream I was pushed aside. Here, staff help you as much as they can. They are really supportive."* The school's success with engaging pupils with their right to education was evident in their impressive levels of engagement with home learning during the most recent lockdown.

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

- Continue to link relevant policies and practices to rights principles and articles from the CRC. Ensure that the links to specific rights are considered and made explicit in communications about the work the school is doing.
- Create opportunities to explore the concepts of fairness and equity and ensure children and young people can describe how school promotes these concepts. (Outcome 2)
- Consider developing school or class charters to embed the language of 'respect for rights'. [UNICEF RRSA Charter Guidance](#) offers support with how to include actions for duty bearers as well as for pupils. (Outcome 3)

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- Explore the concept of 'dignity' with staff and pupils. Consider what it means and how it underpins policies, actions and interactions between everyone at school. (Outcome 3)
- Continue to promote an ethos of inclusion where all feel supported and valued and diversity is explored and celebrated, relating this explicitly to non-discrimination. (Outcome 6)

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.

- Pupils spoken with felt that they are listened to at school and were clear about how they could raise both ideas and concerns. Regular questionnaires are reviewed by the school council who discuss the results and decide what to act upon. Pupils understood the role of the school council and were able to give examples of elements of school life that they had influenced, such as the timing of the school day, subjects that could be studied, free school lunches for all and changes to reward systems. They also said there were ideas that the school had not agreed to but explained that they had been carefully considered and reasons why they were not viable had been clearly communicated.
- Pupils engage in a range of fundraising activities and are now much clearer about why they are raising money and where the money goes and how this links with children's rights. The school council is now responsible for deciding who to fundraise for. The pupils also engage in a number of projects in the local community such as delivering meals to the elderly, shoebox appeals and local work on knife crime.

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

- Continue to develop your participation mechanisms to further empower young people to influence decision-making across the school.
- 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)
- 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)

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