

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Goodway Nursery School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Beth O'Neill
<b>RRSA coordinators:</b>	Beth O'Neill
<b>Local authority:</b>	Birmingham
<b>Assessor(s):</b>	Hilary Alcock & Frances Bestley
<b>Date:</b>	2 July 2019

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The assessors would like to thank the children, staff and parents 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 an extremely comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form.

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

Particular strengths of the school include:

- Children who could speak confidently about their rights.
- Staff knowledge of Articles within the CRC and their ability to make these relevant and realised within the context of the children's daily experience within the nursery.
- A strategic approach linking all practices systematically to the Convention and principles of rights.
- Very strong links with parents.

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 build on the excellent practice seen throughout the visit.
- Act as an ambassador for RRSA with local primary schools.

## 3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

<b>School context</b>	Goodway Nursery School is a small nursery school in Birmingham. There is provision for 25 two year olds and 52 three year olds. Almost half of the children are of a minority ethnic heritage; just over 30% are eligible for early years Pupil Premium.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher and RRSA team
<b>Number of children and young people interviewed</b>	4 children from steering group; 4 children on the learning walk, 20 children in two group time sessions
<b>Number of adults interviewed</b>	3 teaching staff, 4 parents, one of whom is a governor, 2 governors
<b>Evidence provided</b>	Learning walk, portfolio of evidence, group sessions, safety check, songs
<b>Registered for RRSA: June 2015</b>	<b>Silver achieved: July 2016</b>

### 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**

Children talked about a wide range of rights appropriate to their age. They mentioned the right to a name, to be listened to, to be safe, to privacy, to be protected, for healthy food and clean water, to have an education and to play and to shelter. They knew that rights are for all children. They related these to their daily experiences at nursery and at home and understand that adults have a duty to uphold their rights. Children talk about their rights to each other. Staff gave one example of when a child was recently expressing her worries about starting 'big school' in September, saying that the teachers wouldn't know her name, when one of her friends said, *"Don't worry, they will know your name because you have a right to a name."*

Articles are visible around the nursery. Widget symbols are used to make them more accessible for all children. They are on displays, for example Article 24 is displayed on snack tables and Article 30 on a display about 'Our families'. Adults use language emphasising respect for rights during daily interactions in child led play and learning, as well as in adult led group time sessions e.g. respect for the environment and teaching children about air pollution during Walk to School Week. A range of Charters have been developed which support the use of rights respecting language and all children from when they enter the nursery at two years old learn the school's 'rights song' and sing it every day. A member of staff explained that, *"Now children use the language of rights as if it is normal language; they talk about rights all the time whereas in the beginning it was all adult led."*

The headteacher, who is also the RRSA coordinator, commented that, *"Since we started our Rights Respecting journey in 2015 the changes within the nursery have been profound. These have come about because the staff have developed a deep understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and this now permeates the culture of the school; children expect to be treated with respect and dignity which feeds into safeguarding."* She went on to explain that a significant difference between when the nursery gained its Level 1/ Silver award three years ago is that, *"Before we were committed to a child rights based approach, but we didn't really understand it enough, whereas now everyone totally believes in it; it's been transformational. We now see how using the CRC to underpin everything we do means that children are treated with the respect they deserve as well as building a foundation for them for their whole life; to grow up feeling valued."* A member of staff explained that the impact of all staff developing this increased understanding about the articles within the CRC means that, *"We can now simplify the articles appropriate for the children's level of understanding; it's now normal to include them in everything we do, it's so much part of our ethos."* Strategic documentation such as the school's development plan and policies also clearly identify a commitment to the CRC and links to the CRC are embedded within the school's values. A governor explained that, *"Through learning and monitoring walks we are observing the development of the journey...it's so real, so genuine...rights language is modelled by the educators across the setting which empowers the children to have a voice."*

Parents and carers learn about the nursery's commitment to rights from the outset, during home visits prior to children starting at the nursery, as well as through newsletters and the school's website. A community room used for workshops and meetings with families has a wide range of displays that provides information about the CRC for adults and shows what this looks like within the day to day practice within the nursery. The group of parents spoken with during the visit were passionate about the benefits they see for their children. Comments from parents included, *"My child talks a lot about the rights she has at home... using the language of rights has built my child up, it's changed her life... my child will say 'stop, you are not respecting me, let's talk'."* Parents value the regular messages they receive about their children's learning via the online Tapestry system. One parent explained that, *"Tapestry is brilliant; you can talk about rights with your child at home, the conversation stems from what the teacher puts on there."*

**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**

The Rights Champions could describe how the nursery helped them to access their rights. They had clean water to drink; their lunches had healthy food like carrots and broccoli; the cupboard under the sink contained plasters and bandages that you were given when you cut yourself. During the learning walk children showed us their wide range of charters all linked to articles which identified actions for children and for teachers and parents as duty bearers. The children talked us through the toilet charter and explained that this kept them safe because *“if someone weed on the floor you might slip and hurt your bottom.”* The take home bears and the accompanying booklets provided evidence that children and their parents could apply their rights outside school; there were lots of pictures and writing about the bears enjoying rights. Children explained *“our teachers choose us to be a helper and to hold Sally”* and that this was fair because everybody got a turn. The teacher demonstrated her lists of turns during the group session. Children told us that they would talk to a teacher if something was wrong. This was corroborated by staff who agreed that children were confident to talk about how they felt.

Throughout the visit there was evidence of very good relationships between children and adults. During the focus group and group sessions children listened well to one another and during the learning walk they helped one another. Free flow was calm and purposeful with children collaborating on a range of activities. The school uses conflict resolution to manage issues. A teacher explained that initially it had been *“teacher resolution”* but *“now they can sort it out themselves.”* Parents explained that this practice had also been transferred home citing examples of their children saying *“But mummy I can say sorry and we can talk about it.”*

The right to be safe is taken very seriously. One of the school values is ‘Security – creating an environment where children feel safe both emotionally and physically, building their resilience through secure attachment’. During the Forest group session there were lots of references to holding sticks and scissors carefully to be safe. A teacher described how children had extended their understanding of safety from not being hurt to not being shouted at by other children. Staff reported that children saying, ‘Stop that’s not respecting me’ was commonplace. A parent explained how this language was used at home with siblings and parents. Another parent stated, *“My daughter knows that she needs to be treated properly. It’s given her protection.”* The safety check we saw during the assessment helped children to understand that gates should be locked and that children should all be inside at going home time. The NSPCC Pants resources is used, and children understand they have a right to privacy.

Social and emotional wellbeing is supported through the Key Person; the Key Person knows their children very well and establish strong relationships with their families. This was evidenced in the group sessions where the teacher knew lots of information about the child’s life outside school. There were opportunities for children to talk about issues that they were worried about and Sally and other dolls modelled the language to discuss emotions. During the Forest School session Sally explained that she was sad because her house had been damaged in a storm. Drama sessions and

## UNITED KINGDOM

Yoga Bugs support healthy lifestyles. Parents valued the healthy eating course and described how their children now ate a wider range of things. Family Support Workers run a weekly session for parents and carers to access support.

Inclusion is an important school value. Events and festivals from different cultures are celebrated. The take home bear booklet showed Star celebrating Eid and the child who had hosted Star was encouraged to talk about what he had done. The world map in the parents' room showed where grandparents and parents were born, and children were proud of their heritage. The headteacher explained that the nursery now celebrated Family Day rather than Mother's Day as one child had two fathers. *"Rights gave me the confidence to take on some of the anger of some parents who didn't like the change"* added the headteacher. Children in circle time are encouraged to talk about each other's strengths and are aware that some children have different needs.

Throughout the visit it was evident that children played an active role in their learning and respect each other's right to learn. The outdoor space was set up for multiple learning opportunities and children were all engaged purposefully. The nursery uses Planning in the Moment which facilitates child-initiated learning and children's interests are used as a starting point. Children we spoke to enjoyed nursery. *"We've got nice books we read after tidying up and we choose the book"* explained a child. One of the parents explained that her daughter told her 'But I've got a right to education' when she was kept at home because she was unwell.

### 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**

A nursery value is 'Empowerment – encouraging children to become confident and independent, equipping them to participate in decision making, resolve conflict and make positive choices.' Throughout the visit we observed children making choices about their learning. Staff observe children and make changes in response to their observations. For example, the reading area was moved closer to the tepee so that children could access books more easily. Each day children are allocated different leadership roles such as Rights Champion, Helper, Eco Warrior, Leader. The Rights Champions and Helpers led the learning walk – photos of the nursery had been pasted onto sheets and children decided what they wanted to show us. Children discuss and vote in making decisions about trips and activities and feedback from child surveys influences decisions. The headteacher identified that, *"Children are empowered because they know they will be listened to"* and a teacher added *"Children are much more aware of their rights, more empowered and more confident."*

Children are provided with a range of opportunities to act for local and global impact. The school supports local, national and global charitable organisations and links activities to curriculum learning within the context of the CRC and British Values, e.g. Black History Month, Children in Need, the local foodbank, Red Nose Day, World Water Day and Unicef's Outright campaign on air pollution. Staff and parents consider that this approach is developing empathy skills within the children and

one governor commented that they consider the school's rights-based approach is, "*Giving children an understanding of the world at large.*" They collect donations for the local Food Bank and have also visited the foodbank to deliver these. A representative from the Food Bank came to the nursery to talk to the children about the right to food. Through Forest Schools and Eco Schools children are learning to respect the environment and to recycle and compost food waste. Children learned about single use plastic straws as part of the school's decision to stop using milk cartons to reduce plastic waste. Children learned about the impact of pollution on air quality and wrote a letter to their parents asking them to walk to school during Walk to School week to reduce pollution. One parent commented that, "*I couldn't bring the car to school because my child told me we should walk... I didn't even know that he knew about air pollution!*"