



RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL ONE

School:	West Melton Primary School
Headteacher:	Madelaine Burkett
RRSA coordinator:	Zowie Norris
Local authority:	Rotherham
Assessors:	Kathy Kirsopp-Reed
Date:	10 th June 2013

We would like to thank the Headteacher, RRSA Coordinator, staff and young people for their warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with staff and pupils during the assessment and for the evidence detailing the work towards becoming a Level 1 rights respecting school. Prior to the assessment visit you provided a comprehensive self-evaluation form and impact evaluation form. It was clear to the assessor during the visit that everyone places a real importance on developing a rights respecting ethos.

It was particularly notable that the children have embraced global citizenship and as they increase in confidence are bringing news stories and rights based issues into school to discuss.

Standards A, B, C and D have all met the necessary criteria.

THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

The school context

West Melton Junior and Infant School is a smaller than average school with 126 pupils. Opened in 1973 it is currently expanding with new classrooms being built on-site. There are 41 pupils on the SEN register: 30.15% and 1.47% with a statement. Pupils eligible for free school meals and in receipt of pupil premium are higher than average at over 51%. The school has recently become part of Wath Learning Community Co-operative Trust with two local primaries and the comprehensive school.



The school registered to work towards becoming rights-respecting in December 2011, achieving Recognition of Commitment in September 2012.

In October 2012 Ofsted inspected the school and identified the pupils support and care for one another as a strength.

Assessment information

Self-evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher / RRSA coordinator
Number of children and young people interviewed	6 children from the steering group + 20 others
Number of staff interviewed	4 teaching staff (2 x NQT started in September) 1 inclusion support worker
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence Lesson observation Discussion with pupils and staff

Standard A: Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

Summary Standard A has been met.

It was evident from the visit that West Melton Primary place a strong emphasis on global citizenship and Children Rights. Conversations with the Headteacher and RRSA lead confirmed that being rights respecting was a natural step for the school. The Headteacher described it as 'fitting exactly the aims of the school and the aim to focus on global citizenship', 'providing a purpose for what we already do' and 'tying everything together'.

The school reports that placing the CRC at the centre of the schools culture and ethos has made a significant impact on educational engagement, achievement and children's respect for themselves and others. Staff comment that learning about rights has brought a relevance to the curriculum and allowed children to reflect on their role in the local and global community with one member of staff explaining that RRSA had 'focussed the curriculum' and another that it had 'strengthened why we do things'.



During the assessment the assessor saw draft copies of policies which are to be reviewed with regard to the CRC and it was explained that this will be completed next term. Both assembly and lesson plans make reference to the CRC and the assessor had the privilege of taking part in a rights focussed lesson while in school.

Registering for the RRSA coincided with an influx of African pupils from asylum seeking families in the area and the Headteacher explained how learning about rights supported the schools inclusive approach and allowed staff and pupils to discuss sensitive topics with respect and empathy. The school has started to use the Convention to add value to its work within the school and has plans to expand this to the local community. In September there was a Learning Awareness week which looked at how children learn and creating a positive learning environment. All pupils and staff focussed on the 5R's, each of which was linked to an article of the UNCRC: relationships (article 7); resourceful (29); resilient (28); risk taking (31) and; reflective (28). The week was a huge success and raised awareness and experience of relating rights to activities and topics with both pupils and staff benefitting, particularly new staff to the school.

Meeting with the schools Inclusion support Worker showed how a child rights approach is undertaken across the school. Her role has evolved to support children and their families in the community ensuring children are accessing their rights and that parents are engaged with their child's education.

Standard B: The whole school community learns about the CRC

Summary **Standard B has been met.**

Staff and children involved in the assessment were all able to describe articles from the convention and explain how they affect children's lives. Staff and Governors have received training and articles were initially introduced to children through a series of focussed assemblies and currently through assemblies and lessons. As part of the assessment visit I was invited into a Yr5/6 lesson where children were learning the 'Every Child has Rights' song and took part in a rights auction. The pupils had previously explored and discussed the UNCRC and displayed excellent emotional literacy skills when negotiating the rights they felt were most important, listening to conflicting views and using a voting system to prioritise rights.

Rights are taught across the curriculum and this year have been taught explicitly as well as within broader topics. Global citizenship is a topic for every class and rights are seen to feature within all of this work. Teachers report that children are now much more globally aware and regularly bring up rights violations they have seen on the news or heard about at home. They are also talking about rights at home and involving parents in their discussions. Parents have been informed of the schools work towards the RRSA through letters and topic narratives. Additionally when charity days take place information is sent to parents explaining why the school are involved.



The children involved in the assessment described a wide range of rights and eloquently debated whether every child around the world had 'rights'. The two children who weren't sure initially were sensitively involved in a discussion about 'having rights but not always getting them'. The older children were extremely confident expressing their views and consciously listened to what others had to say. When asked why children may not be able to access their rights pupils explained that they may have to work, walk a long way to school, look after younger brothers and sisters or there might not be facilities such as schools or hospitals near where they live and explained that in Africa, Syria and America this could happen but didn't always.. An awareness that rights are not always accessible in the UK was also understood and children identified raising money and buying Fairtrade products as one ways of supporting children in other countries. Recently the school had taken part in a Fairtrade art competition and proudly showed off the abundant certificates they had received.

Standard C: The school has a rights-respecting ethos

Summary

Standard C has been met.

In every classroom there is a prominent and age appropriate charter which children and staff have developed in partnership. These have recently been updated to incorporate the new guidance on rights and responsibilities and it was commented by one member of staff that the change in language to 'respecting rights' is 'very positive and supports managing behaviour'. When talking to two newly qualified teachers who joined the school in September it was clear that for them working in a RR school had a positive impact on behaviour. They explained their surprise that there weren't schools rules in classrooms but charters that are positive and deal with behaviour through respecting rights of everyone.

The school council have recently developed a playground charter which is due to be introduced formally to the school by pupils. There are now also Rights Respecting Role Models in school, a role that pupils are particularly proud of undertaking. These pupils will lead RRSA moving forward and model RR behaviour and values in and around school. In one class 20 out of 28 pupils put their name forward to become an RR Role Model much to the surprise and their teacher. Staff explained that pupils are more willing to get involved and feel that they can make a difference. She described the change as 'pupils are more willing to speak up as they feel listened to and that their opinion is valued even if it is not agreed with'.

Improved behaviour in school has been noted and is attributed to pupils taking 'greater personal responsibility' and 'celebrating difference'. Supported by pupils own feedback that since learning about rights behaviour has improved one girl explained that 'rights and respecting has taken over'. With another clarifying that 'there has been a rights invasion – in a good way!'

The school provides a welcoming and safe environment with children agreeing that the adults in schools listen to them and that their friends are always helpful. Playground



leaders, charters and worry boxes were also identified as contributing to feeling safe. Staff explained that there is a 'real sense of empathy' in school and in the recent Ofsted report (2012) pupils were described as '...supportive and encourage one another. For example, older pupils are particularly caring and willing to look after younger pupils at break and lunchtime'.

Standard D: Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

Summary Standard D has been met.

Children explained how they are actively involved in their own learning through working in groups, peer marking and discussing what they already know and would like to know about a topic. One child explained that 'If we get our work finished we help others complete their task'. In the centre of the school is a child friendly display showing learning topics for each year group which allows children an insight into what they are going to learn and as one child explained 'we can see what good stuff we are going to learn'. As well as helping each other children described ways of accessing help and keeping safe by talking to family, the police, Childline and learning bike safety and joining clubs. It was clear to the assessor that children are well informed and supported to make decisions about their own learning and health and well being.

Pupil voice, participation and celebrating success are all given a high profile in school, with a wonderful display in the school entrance. The school council are actively involved in school developments and each year choose a local and an international charity to support and then plan events and activities throughout the year. Pupils have also recently been involved in the recruitment of new staff designing questions and interviewing candidates. Children also played an active role in consultation around the move to be part of a Co-operative Trust.

Staff in school all agreed that children have become much more aware of what is happening in the world and what they can do to support others less fortunate than themselves. An example of this is the Oklahoma tornado which happened after a weather topic had been completed in school. Pupils having seen the tornado on the news discussed the event in school and wanting to support the children on Oklahoma that had lost their school wrote to the Governor and school children offering support. Another member of staff explained that 'children are now interested to know what governments are doing about situations'.



The future

The assessor would like to encourage the school to continue work on becoming rights respecting and work towards the award at Level Two.

The following recommendations are made to support the journey based on those that have proven valuable in other schools and settings in helping them to develop their practice at Level 2. The recommendations made by the assessors are listed below:

- *Attend Moving L1-L2 training*
- *Continue to embed RRSA and the CRC into policy documents, including the School Prospectus, and while updating consider working with RR Role Models and Student Council to transfer into child friendly language*
- *Add reference to children's rights in job descriptions and panel questions at interview*
- *Develop adult steering group with representatives from the community*
- *Promote Children's Rights locally through display in the local library, shops etc*
- *Work with partner Trust schools (particularly Comprehensive) to promote RRSA – develop an ambassadorial role*
- *Utilise the knowledge and enthusiasm of RR Role models to develop workshops or training for adults in school, parents and children in other schools.*