

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Baljaffray Primary School
Headteacher:	Lesley Rodden
RRSA coordinator:	Lynn Parker
Local authority:	East Dunbartonshire
School context:	Baljaffray Primary School is a non-denominational state school, with on-site early years provision. The pupil roll of 278 includes less than 1 % who meet a measure of deprivation and fewer than 1 % who speak English as an additional language.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, RRSA Coordinator
Number of children and young people spoken with:	41 learners, across two focus groups plus two class visits during brief tour.
Adults spoken with:	2 teachers, early years practitioner, parent council chair
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: 18 November 2015 Bronze achieved: 20 May 2016 Silver achieved: 12 June 2017; 09 June 2021
Assessor:	Steven Kidd
Date:	20 May 2024

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Baljaffray Primary School has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessor would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, and staff 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 accreditation visit, the school completed a comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form and provided a good collection of digital evidence.

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

Strengths of the school include:

- Children who confidently discussed a range of rights and why they are important and relevant to their lives.
- Rights learning is fully embedded across the curriculum including the nursery using a wide range of age appropriate, creative approaches.
- A strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders at all levels tied into the vision and values of the school. Quality training and support for staff has been sustained.
- A common language of rights which is used across the school and supports children to explore and discuss a range of issues.
- Children's confidence and desire to help others to enjoy their rights, locally, nationally and globally.

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:

- Explore the possibility of using the CRC and your commitment to RRSA in the language used to communicate about who and what you are as a school.
- Continue to develop pupils' understanding of the lived experiences of children at home and abroad. Support them to challenge stereotypes and discrimination, and to think critically about the impact they can have on the world around them.
- As a Gold Rights Respecting School, develop your ambassadorial role, promoting the CRC and the benefits of embedding children's rights in education.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>1. Children, young people and the wider school community know about and understand the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and can describe how it impacts on their lives and on the lives of children everywhere.</p>	<p>An extensive selection of articles were discussed by pupils during the visit, including a number less commonly shared. They displayed a similarly strong understanding of important rights concepts, aided by exploration of the ABCDE of Rights, which had been shared by the Baljaffray Rights Respecting Bureau (BRRB) at fortnightly assemblies, along with other key rights topics. Assemblies are also used to mark topical events, whilst focus days/weeks provide an additional opportunity for rights-related learning. Feedback from the Silver visit has helped to inform an IDL curriculum redesign which has put rights and the Global Goals at the heart of 5 blocks: 'Exploring Sustainable Practices', 'Global Citizenship & International Education', 'Connect with Culture and Heritage (local to global)', 'Values and Attitudes', and 'Exercising Positive Activism'. The new curriculum is in its early stages, but feedback from pupils and adults alike was very positive; the headteacher explained: <i>"It's led to real quality discussions. We're quite passionate that 'this is us'. What's more powerful as a starting point than our rights?"</i> Staff agreed: <i>"It's the foundation of everything... it all links in, we're always bringing it back to rights."</i> Even the youngest children, those in the early years centre, are bringing rights to life, from storybooks through 'rights spoons' to stimulate discussion, to 'Rosie' the rights bear who is part of a home-link bag to encourage family engagement. <i>"There's a really consistent message in all of the correspondence. That gives it weight,"</i> reported the parent council chair, <i>"It's fantastic to get them thinking about being global citizens ... I think parents appreciate that."</i> The knowledge and understanding of adults is high on the agenda, too, with staff praising the quality of the support they had received. The RRSA lead has attended several UNICEF UK training sessions and cascaded this learning to colleagues during INSET days and staff meetings, where Spotlight resources have also helped to inform discussions; a teacher put it simply, <i>"It's become part of our culture."</i></p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>2. In school children enjoy the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>Conversations with adults throughout the visit consistently spoke of rights being embedded across policy and practice, often returning to the connection with the school's values: 'The Baljaffray Way'. Fulsome evidence demonstrated the many ways in which a commitment to rights is influencing school life and the children themselves were easily able to identify a range of ways in which school respected their rights. <i>"It's become the driver of what we do, that's the major change,"</i> said the headteacher.</p>
<p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights.</p>	<p>Alongside 'The Baljaffray Way', charters are used to support the development of positive, mutually respectful relationships. Children eagerly explained how they cooperatively create their class charter in August and that these are then referred to at times throughout the year. When situations arise, pupils described these being handled in a manner consistent with their dignity, focusing on reflection and repair. This echoed pre-visit evidence which outlined the influence of Pivotal Education on practice, including the use of restorative conversations. Initiatives such as the Peer Mediators and Positive Postcards also support relationships.</p>

4. Children are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.	Pupils were certain that they felt safe in school, citing the presence of trusted adults as the primary reason, though they also picked up on practical elements such as secure entry system and the Buddy Bench. They also offered several examples of learning about safety, including the work of the Internet Safety 'Beehive' group. Internet Safety is one of the policies which has been updated in recent times, as have those covering bullying and conflict resolution.
5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	Twice-yearly health and wellbeing self-assessments for all pupils help to inform delivery, supporting a comprehensive health and wellbeing curriculum. The mix of universal provision alongside more targeted intervention ensures consideration of the holistic needs of learners. Pupils believed that school helps to keep them healthy, noting nutritious lunches and regular PE as supports for physical health, whilst also recognising the value of PATHS strategies in building positive mental fitness. A wide range of pupil-identified after-school clubs also assist.
6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.	Equity was well understood by pupils, who reflected on seeing the principle in practice in their school and saw it as a critical aspect of inclusion, e.g., <i>"ff you have a disability, you have to be able to do things differently."</i> Staff spoke of how rights learning has helped children to better understand the differing lived experiences of children at home and abroad, <i>"ft builds empathy, it helps them to see outside their bubble... the equity aspect has changed, they get that instinctively now."</i> Again, the work of pupil groups has been important, with the Equality and Diversity and Special Days 'Beehive' groups sharing their learning with peers at assemblies.
7. Children value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.	In line with Curriculum for Excellence, personalisation and choice is part of the everyday experience, with pupils using a variety of methods to shape learning. The recent changes to the IDL curriculum mean each topic now starts with children identifying their BIG questions, outlining what they would like the learning to cover. Classes then share their learning with the school through assemblies.
STRAND C	Highlights and comments
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	Evidence outlined children's influence across all aspects of school life, which was then borne out in discussions, with examples from staff recruitment to extra-curricular clubs. Children have the opportunity to lead aspects of school life in a variety of ways, not least the 'Baljaffray Beehives', which cover an array of themes. Others, such as the BRRB/Pupil Council, have responsibility for areas like school improvement. <i>"They know they'll always be listened to,"</i> reported the RRSA lead, explaining why pupils feel an ownership of their school experience.
9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.	Conversations with children were lively and engaging and they were clear that they felt they could make a difference in the world. Pupils have been involved in fundraising and donation, identifying the causes to benefit, from the foodbank to the British Red Cross. The new IDL curriculum was often mentioned by staff, e.g., <i>"We've been doing our 'positive activism', helping them to learn about their voice and show what they can do... it terrified me, but it's been amazing."</i> As well as charitable activity and OutRight, the children have been actively engaging in their local community; they've taken part in community walks with Sustrans, and linking in with peers on the local authority Pupil Forum, where this year's focus has been the cost of the school day. <i>"They're so enthusiastic, they can see that their voice matters. They feel confident enough, they see themselves as global citizens,"</i> shared a teacher. Having seen the impact already realised, the school is keen to do more, as the RRSA coordinator explained: <i>"We can't just stay in our bubble, we have to go out there and try to change it for the better."</i>