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RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL ONE

School:	St Nicholas Primary School, Dorset
Headteacher:	Tracy Maley
RRSA coordinator:	Liz Gillet
Local authority:	Dorset
Assessors:	Jilly Hillier, Ayse Dervish
Date:	26th June 2013

We would like to thank the leadership team, staff and young people for their warm welcome and for organising a well structured programme for the day. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with adults and children 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 combined planning form and an impact evaluation form. It was clear to the assessors during the visit that everyone places a real importance on developing a rights respecting ethos.

It was particularly notable that the children interviewed from Reception through to Y6 had an impressive knowledge of rights including less well known articles and that they understood and modelled rights respecting language and behaviour. It was also clear that RRSA is strongly led by the Head and RRSA Lead and that the CRC is a key driver in the school's ongoing development.

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

THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

The school context

St Nicholas Primary School is a smaller than average, rural primary school with 138 children on roll aged 4-11 years. The majority of pupils are White British with 8% of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. 6 pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and 1 child has a statement of special educational needs.

The school registered to work towards becoming rights-respecting in July 2012.



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The last Ofsted inspection was in 2009 when the school was rated as ‘Good’ with some outstanding features particularly in the way pupils ‘behave, their enjoyment of learning and in the extent pupils feel safe in school.’ (Ofsted 2009). An interim assessment statement in January 2012 confirmed that the school’s performance had been sustained.

Assessment information

Self-evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher, Deputy Head
Number of children and young people interviewed	10 RRS Ambassadors 10 children in focus group 6 in lessons 4 classes visited (Reception – Y5/6)
Number of staff interviewed	4 teaching staff 2 support staff 2 parents 1 governor
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence 4 lessons visited Displays Playground



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Standard A: Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

Standard A has been achieved.

School leaders are committed to the values and principles of RRSA and the UNCRC and see this as a key driver in their school.

The Headteacher described the school's vision in terms of rights respecting values and explained how the school's statement 'To be the best you can be' was an accessible way of interpreting and understanding Article 29. She explained how it applied to everyone in the school community – both adults and children. The Head described the staff as 'forward thinking' and 'outward looking' and how they contributed to creating a curriculum and an approach that fitted the needs of children in the 21st Century. This included a strong sense of the importance of being globally aware and developing as global citizens. It was felt that RRSA provided the framework they wanted for the school. The Head described RRSA as helping children to, 'begin to see beyond their own world and reflect on how they can make a difference in the world.'

RRSA is a priority in the SDP and is a key driver for the school alongside a focus on the environment and spiritual and cultural awareness. The school has a specific RRS policy and the intention is to revise other policies as they come up for renewal so that they are underpinned by the UNCRC.

The Headteacher and Deputy demonstrate a good understanding of the UNCRC and have taken steps to ensure the whole school community learns about it. This includes: staff inset, regular staff updates by the RRSA lead, individual staff training including with Lunchtime Supervisors. Parents are informed about RRSA through newsletters, the website, in assemblies, at school events, at the Parents' Forum and through home-school competitions and learning activities. UNCRC booklets have also been given to parents. Displays throughout the school raise awareness of rights and the Convention.

The school uses the Convention to inform its work and there are examples of planning and actions that connect the school with the wider community. Some examples include: writing for the community magazine, visiting the local home for the elderly and inviting the local community to the carol service. On a national and global level work includes taking part in UNICEF's Day for Change; learning about Fairtrade - and children interviewed could explain its importance and its link with rights and fundraising for a school in Pakistan to have an air cooler. RRSA ambassadors have visited another RRSA school with a governor to share ideas.

The school leadership promotes the importance of children having a world view and an interest in current affairs. High priority is placed on children understanding environmental issues and members of the Eco group felt their role was important. They could describe their many jobs in school. Children interviewed had an impressive knowledge of rights and this has been developed more through assemblies, competitions, games and home-school activities rather than through the formal curriculum, although teachers do make links with topic work when appropriate. Rights are taught through PSHE but a more planned approach to linking rights with specific areas of learning within the creative curriculum is intended as the schools moves forward with the RRSA journey.



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Standard B: The whole school community learns about the CRC

Summary **Standard B has been achieved.**

The majority of children interviewed could describe an impressively wide range of rights from the UNCRC including the right to learn, clean water, food, not to be abducted, to be with your parents and not to be forced to be in the army. Some children knew some article numbers. Children knew that the UNCRC was for all children everywhere and that no one could take their rights away. They could also explain situations in which children might not enjoy their rights for example in 'poor countries' where children do not always have clean water or nutritious food. One Y3 girls explained that war, for example between North and South Korea, could affect children's rights. They were aware that a denial of rights also occurred in the UK and made the link between poverty and a denial of rights. Some children explained the difference that being a RRS had made with one Y1 girl saying it meant that they didn't just 'look at themselves' but they 'go global'. Staff had received training on RRSA and the Convention and those interviewed said they felt confident working with the Convention and felt it had had a positive impact on their practice.

The assessors saw evidence of how the school has informed parents and governors of the RRSA and the UNCRC, including newsletters, the school website, UNCRC booklets and through school events. A governor visited another RRSA school with the RRS ambassadors early on in their journey and reported back to the other governors. Children have also presented to the governors about RRSA.

Some assemblies focus on key rights and there are many displays around the school that celebrate RRSA work and highlight work on rights. For example, one display showed a home-school activity which involved children making a poster with members of their family illustrating a right of their choice. Another display linked fair trade with rights showing the connection between Christian values, rights and global citizenship. Rights are also taught in PSHE and through specific, discrete activities (e.g. making and sharing rights based games) rather than in a cross-curricular way. This appears to be an effective approach as children are well informed, but the intention is to further develop the teaching of rights and the creative curriculum in next year's planning.

Children have a developing awareness of what it means to be a global citizen. One child talked about learning about the G8 by reading First News and could name most G8 countries. Another child said that being a global citizen was about 'learning about what was wrong with the world and trying to make it better.' The school also draws on the diversity of languages and ethnicities that exist within the school community in order to develop children's social and cultural awareness. The RRSA Lead explained that "children are much more open about asking questions (about other countries and cultures)...are increasingly able to think and talk about the national and international issues of the day rather than simply ignoring them.'

Standard C: The school has a rights-respecting ethos



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Summary

Standard C has been met.

Charters were present in all classrooms. Children participated in creating the charters and described how teachers and children regularly referred to them. Older children had increasingly more involvement in selecting the key rights that made up their charters.

Children from Reception through to Y6 could talk about how they used rights respecting language and behaviour to help them learn and explained that this included listening to others, being kind, working well in groups, not disturbing other children and praising other children's work. One Y6 child explained how peer mediators help to resolve problems by talking with pupils in a rights respecting way and allowing each child to express their view about what they would like to happen 'if they had a magic wand.' Reception children also showed an understanding of wants, needs and rights. Staff said that using rights respecting language had had a positive impact on their teaching with one teacher commenting that she is more aware of how everything is linked and another said that she feels she gives children a reason for doing something and that reason is often linked to rights. Children were credited with having taken on greater responsibility at lunchtimes, including tidying up after themselves. This was seen as an indication of children applying their learning about rights in the classroom into other aspects of school life.

All children interviewed said they felt safe in school and could give examples of how adults kept them safe. These included 'keeping anyone bad from coming in', taking care of them when they are hurt, making the drop-off area outside safer using signs and talking with parents. They were also clear about what to do if they were concerned about safety issues.

The assessors saw evidence of the way in which pupils are guided by the principles of right and respect particularly in relation to behaviour and the way children look after each other. A 'buddy' system and family groups in collective worships make sure no one is left out. The strong emphasis the leadership places on linking rights with global citizenship comes through when talking with the children. The assessors agreed that what the Head feels is happening in school, actually is.

Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

Summary

Standard D has been achieved.

The Headteacher said "We think it is important for every child to have the experience of being involved in decision-making because that will help to prepare them for later life". Children and staff were able to give examples of this in practice. These included a child-friendly School Development Plan, helping to improve lunchtimes, a WOW board and a pupil notice board on which children posted their thoughts and questions about school issues.

Children interviewed talked about the many ways they accessed information to help their learning and wellbeing. The 'Bright Ideas Box' enabled children to make suggestions about how to improve aspects of the school, including school dinners. The school has a school council elected by students, an Eco group and RRS ambassadors. Some children were



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clear about how they gave their ideas to the council reps to take forward. The adults we spoke to were positive about the contribution of rights-based learning is having on developing children's voice and participation. A teacher explained that children were "able to give their view...it's not just the teacher telling children what to do".

Children have been involved in some activities to promote children's rights locally and globally. At a local level children have worked with their families on Home School homework projects, reported back to governors, have contributed to the local community magazine and supported a cancer charity. Nationally and globally children have been involved in activities that include raising money for Children in Need, Day for Change, supporting fair trade and supporting a school in Pakistan.

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:

- ❖ RRSA lead to undertake further training to help lead the staff to L2 (in-school or central training)
- ❖ move to the language of rights and rights respecting actions/behaviour when charters are next reviewed, making sure that the children have the opportunity to be fully involved in the selection of key rights in an age appropriate way. Parents could also be included in the new key messages around rights and right respecting behaviour.
- ❖ continue to include the UNCRC as a key driver in planning the creative curriculum. Children could be involved in making links with rights.
- ❖ underpin policies with the UNCRC as they come up for renewal
- ❖ strengthen the role of peer-mediators by clarifying and raising awareness about their role and implementing the new training programme.
- ❖ further develop rights and global citizenship across the school, undertaking staff training if necessary. This could include developing campaigning skills for children.

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