

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	St Martin's Primary School
Headteacher:	Cate Mason
RRSA coordinator:	Clare Giles
Local authority:	Guernsey
Assessor(s):	Jilly Hillier and Hilary Alcock
Date:	9 th March 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a Gold virtual accreditation report. The assessors 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 evidence.

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

Particular strengths of the school include:

- Happy, positive, resilient and outward looking children who believe and have demonstrated that they can be agents for change to help children access their rights.
- Strong RRSA leadership and a whole school passion and commitment for embedding a child rights based approach which is reflected within its vision, values and ethos.
- An impressive range of pupil voice groups meaning that, *"Children in the school all have a voice and are global citizens around the school, on the island and in the world"* (parent).

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 the school’s ambassadorial role for RRSA and involve the children in this. This could include developing a Y6 -Y7 transition project based on children’s rights.
- Explore ways to share more widely the success of the Active Travel Hubs project showing how the CRC empowers children to bring about change.
- Consider ways that children can continue to take an active role within school improvement, staff appointments and induction procedures for new families and staff.
- Continue to deepen children’s knowledge of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to further explore complex local and global issues.
- Ensure there is a clear plan in place to ensure the sustainability of the excellent rights respecting practice.

3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School context	St Martin’s Primary has 568 pupils on roll. 19.5% are supported with the Guernsey’s Uniform Grant and 1% of pupils speak English as an Additional Language. In May 2019, the school achieved Excellent in their inspection from Education Scotland.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher, three RRSA coordinators
Number of children and young people interviewed	10 children in virtual focus groups, 56 in virtual class visits (Y2 and 6)
Number of adults interviewed	8 staff including class teachers, SENCO, Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead, PPA, LSAs, 6 parents, States of Guernsey Inclusion Manager and SEND Officer
Evidence provided	Gold Evaluation form, comprehensive digital evidence focus groups, class visits
Registered for RRSA: October 2018	Silver achieved: March 2020



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 are familiar with a wide range of articles from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). They understand the concept of duty bearers commenting that they are, *“Adults who look after us and keep us safe,”* (Y2 child) and the concepts of rights being inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional. One child explained, *“Anyone and everyone has children’s rights all around the world, and they are all equally important.”* Children demonstrated how local and global issues and sustainable development are linked to rights. They led assemblies to highlight the impact of climate change on communities in the Philippines explaining that, *“Hurricanes mean that children can’t get Article 24 and 28 which is to do with them having access to education, food, clean water and medical supplies.”* They also explained how this links to Sustainable Development Goal 13 commenting that, *“Delhi, in India, is one of the most polluted cities in the world and so not a clean and safe environment for children to live in.”* The school’s pupil Rights Squad are very committed to their role explaining that, *“We help everyone in school to learn about rights and we organise the events that we run to raise money. We help children around the world, not just children in Guernsey... we’ve achieved so much.”*

Adults and the wider school community clearly demonstrate a commitment to the CRC. The school’s extensive digital evidence clearly demonstrates how children’s rights has a very high profile throughout the school, strategically, visually, in the curriculum and in day to day practice. The headteacher explained how embedding a child rights based approach is, *“Central to the school’s vision and culture; it fits beautifully with the direction we wanted the school to travel in. It’s now the heartbeat of our school; it threads through everything.”* She also noted that, *“The capacity, knowledge and leadership skills of the school’s RRSA Lead is a significant factor in enabling the school to achieve the Gold Award” in two years.* Staff explained how they continue to benefit from regular opportunities for professional development related to the CRC and that this has supported them to incorporate learning about the CRC across the curriculum. Examples given included how learning about the Victorians can relate to current child labour issues and a study about apartheid in South Africa links to learning about a range of articles from the CRC; *“Sometimes it’s pre planned and sometimes it arises from the children.”* Staff consistently commented that a child rights based approach is now, *“Part of everyday life in the classroom and around the school...it underpins everything.”*

Staff at all levels commented on the way that learning about the CRC has, *“Helped the children to appreciate the wider world.”* The RRSA coordinator explained, *“It’s helped us to push hard for diversity and global citizenship which is important because we are on such a small island. The focus on climate change has taken the CRC beyond the school and into the community.”* Parents commented that *“St Martin’s has always been a great school, but RRSA provides a framework to hang the mission and purpose of the school onto. It drives the energy and enthusiasm of everyone.”*, *“In school you will see every wall and every classroom with communications about the CRC; it runs seamlessly through the school; children’s engagement is incredible; they are always coming home and telling me all about their rights.”* and *“Children in the school all have a voice and are global citizens around the school, on the island and in the world. Their voice has gained momentum and become infectious; the children have grown with it. They are more respectful and more aware of their influence on the landscape in the future.”* The States of Guernsey Inclusion Lead commented that, *“The biggest difference is that RRSA at St Martin’s is not an add-on, but it is what the school is about; its whole ethos; the way it underpins learning and everyone is on the journey with the school.”*



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

Children interviewed were able to explain how school and duty bearers facilitate them to enjoy a wide range of their rights. The school's tagline 'Being different (Article 2), succeeding together (Article 29)' has a high profile around the school and staff explained that assemblies are regularly linked to this. Children commented, *"We know what our rights are, and we would feel comfortable talking about it if we felt we weren't getting them."* The terms right holders and duty bearers are used on class charters. Children explained that during the recent Covid-19 Lockdown as duty bearers, *"Teachers helped us to continue to learn at home. They made sure that we had a paper pack if our IT at home wasn't working."* Staff consider that knowing that they are duty bearers has, *"Uplifted our understanding of our duty of care. It's easier to talk with children about their right to education in terms of what it means for adults as well. We didn't explicitly discuss that with the children before, but now it feels like more of a partnership and working together towards a common goal."*

Relationships are positive and based on mutual respect. Children described how they and others act to ensure everyone is accessing their rights. Y2 children commented that, *"Everybody gets on really well."* PPA staff who work across the school commented that, *"We go into lots of different classrooms and the charters underpin every single one. It means that there is a shared language amongst adults and children for the lived experience in the classroom and it also really helps with any conflict situations."* Children could explain how dignity and rights explicitly inform life in school with one Y6 pupil commenting that, *"You would not be being treated with dignity if you were being shouted at."* Rights Respecting Buddies have training that focuses on Articles 2, 19, 31 and they help to mediate any incidents using rights respecting language. Children referred to the Behaviour Policy they have helped to create called The St Martin's 6 which they said, *"Helps us to make sure we have respectful behaviour."*

All children spoken with said they feel safe at school and can describe how becoming rights respecting contributes to this. Data from both a recent external inspection report and the school's own pupil surveys show that nearly all children feel safe in different spaces within the school environment and on their journey to and from school. A Y2 pupil explained, *"You can always ask a duty bearer for help; they will always look after you."* Children from different year groups were all clear about the Covid-19 safety measures they needed to adopt. Children described how duty bearers are, *"Always around or on duty to keep an eye,"* (Y6 pupil). They were also confident about telling a member of staff at school or *"a trusted adult like my mum or gran,"* if they or someone else did not feel safe or to use the school's 'worry box' system. One parent explained how it was, *"very reassuring that the school takes very seriously children's right to feel safe and protected when playing on the playground."* The school uses a wide range of safety education resources such as the NSPCC Safer online, SHARE, Tobacco Education and alcohol/ drug awareness visits so that children have a better understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.

All children spoken with described a school environment that supports their physical, mental, social and emotional needs. One Y2 pupil explained how they have, *"Nice outside areas to play in with our friends which means we are getting our right to play."* They spoke about and understood that healthy food options, worry boxes in class, buddies on the playground, The Studio support room, Guilbert the



therapy dog, the Daily Mile and 'pop up clubs' are all ways that the school supports them with their overall wellbeing. Pupils also appreciated the support that was provided during the recent Covid-19 lockdown commenting that, "*The teachers sent a video every day, sent work home, read us stories and sent us each messages of support and encouragement.*" The headteacher explained that during lockdown their approach was to, "*Put the wellbeing of the children first, always reflecting on Article 3 and considering if what we are doing is in the best interests of the child.*" The school's Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead explained how the school had provided bespoke learning packages and routines for children to lessen anxieties both during lockdown and in preparation for returning to school.

All children spoken with said they consider that everyone is included and valued within the school. They understood this within the context of all children having the right to non- discrimination and they described how their class charters, the St Martin's 6 policy, playground buddies, as well as appropriate support for their learning all contribute to each pupil feeling valued and that they have a contribution to make to the school. They described how anyone can be part of the Rights Squad and that there are nearly one hundred of them, all taking an active role within groups that focus on different rights.

All children spoken with consistently commented on how much they value their right to education and the role that they play in ensuring that all children are accessing this right within their school. One Y6 pupil pointed out that, "*We need to respect everyone's right to learn because if we stop them and they don't learn they might not be able to get a job and that will affect the rest of their life. In some countries children can't access Article 28 and so we should take better advantage of it.*" Children are actively engaged in their learning. They described how they have learning targets, can make choices within their learning with some curriculum content, can decide upon levels of differentiation "*to challenge ourselves*" (Y6 pupil), undertake their own research and take part in peer assessment. Staff explained how a child rights-based approach had changed their attitudes commenting that, "*Teaching was always something we did to the children; now it's more with the children.*"

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

Children spoken with during the visit were enthusiastic about how their participation has a significant impact on school improvement. They are very confident that their voices are heard, listened to and taken account of. They explained, "*It works at different levels; sometimes decisions are taken by the grown-ups and sometimes by the children.*" They described a range of pupil voice groups such as pupil forums, playground buddies, digital leaders, house captains, pupil club leaders and school councillors who are all involved in, "*Helping to make a difference in the school.*" (KS2 pupil) They spoke about how the Gardening Club had planted vegetables for healthy eating and wildflowers to help the environment. The Rights Squads' weekly meetings focus on specific articles. Sub-teams work on specific projects e.g. Years 2,3 and 4 focused on reducing single use plastic whilst Years 5 and 6 have engaged in a very proactive and high-profile active travel rights campaign. Suggestions from pupil led groups have also successfully resulted in improved PE changing areas and creating safer zoned areas on the playground.

All children spoken with were passionate about a range of local and global citizenship projects that they are involved with such as reducing the amount of single use plastic in lunch boxes, supporting a local foodbank, sending shoeboxes of gifts at Christmas, collecting crisp packets for recycling into key



rings and blankets, holding a Shoe Share to support education in developing countries and organising and running a Cyclathon that raised over £4,600 to support communities in Australia affected by bushfires. Within this project, the children contacted Unicef Australia to see how they could help children whose access to their rights had been affected by the bushfires. They led a local media campaign which resulted in 480 Cyclathon slots being filled. Children clearly see themselves as empowered to campaign for change. Parents explained how the Shoe Share collection points became spaces where parents would discuss the CRC.

One project that has had a very significant impact on the local community is the school's success in developing Active Travel Hubs. Year 6 classes spent more than a year organizing and running a public campaign in order to reduce pollution and improve safety outside the school. As one pupil explained, *"We made a video and leaflets so that we could tell people exactly what was happening; that all the children were breathing in the fumes from the cars which isn't good for them. We told them about Article 24 and Article 19. It was very successful. We stopped parents parking in our playground and have made travel hubs to park and walk. There are a lot less cars on the road now. What we learnt is that you can make a change."* One parent who is also the States of Guernsey President of the Committee for Environment and Infrastructure commented that the project's success is *"just enormous. There is such a strong culture for moving around the island by car, but this project is changing, has changed, the way people think. These children are trail blazers; they have done what others for decades have said couldn't be done!"*