



RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School	Rossie School (Young People's Trust)
Local Authority	Registered Charity (Angus Council)
Number of pupils on roll	29 (32 maximum – 18 secure; 14 residential)
Headteacher	Paul Gray
RRSA Coordinator	Robyn Anderson
RRSA Assessor	Jenny Price
Date of visit	29/05/19
Attendees at SLT meeting	Paul Gray and Robyn Anderson (PT)
Number of pupils interviewed	7
Number of adults interviewed	9
Evidence provided	School tour, displays, evidence file, 2 class discussions
Date registered for RRSA	14/09/17
Bronze achieved	06/12/18

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

Rossie School has met the standard for Unicef UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver: Rights Aware.



EVIDENCE FROM THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

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 living.

- The young people in both the secure school and residential school of Rossie spoke with some confidence about a range of articles from the CRC that they are familiar with such as the right to: education; identity; privacy; financial support for families; be listened to; nutritious food; clean water; and to be protected from drugs/alcohol, being sold or trafficked. A pupil said, “We get our rights here on a day to day basis”. The young people spoken with demonstrated their understanding that rights are universal and unconditional, saying, “We all have the same rights but not everyone is supported to access them”. Some young people also identified circumstances whereby children around the world and locally may not be able to access their rights, such as war, poverty and abuse. A pupil said, “Some children in countries like Afghanistan don’t have enough drinking water or enough money because of war”.
- The adults spoken with showed extensive knowledge of a range of articles and the nature of rights as well as an unequivocal enthusiasm for embedding a child rights-based approach (CRBA) into their practice and ensuring that the children and young people are empowered with knowledge of their rights. The RRSA lead for the school said, “Everyone talks about rights. It is at the forefront of everything we do”. The CEO stated, “Our whole board is committed to the rights and welfare of all our children and young people”. Passion for RRSA and the impact on the school also exuded from the board of governors who shared their positive experiences of working with the school on their RRSA journey. A governor said, “This school and RRSA is giving the young people opportunities to do things in this setting that they couldn’t do in mainstream school”. Some examples of how children’s rights have been linked into learning were given, such as: PSE discussions; in history and modern studies (democracy/politics, poverty, suffragettes, Anne Frank); and, in geography/science (sustainability).

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Deepen and widen the knowledge and understanding of articles from the CRC across the whole school community and develop awareness of rights being: Inherent, Inalienable, Indivisible, Universal and Unconditional.
- Work towards an increased knowledge of the origins of the CRC, its global impact and its place within the wider framework of Human Rights
- Embed a focus on the planned learning about children’s rights throughout most aspects of the curriculum.
- Enable the young people to look at global issues from the perspective of rights so that they develop a heightened sense of justice and equity. Consider engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals through The World’s Largest Lesson



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.

- Relationships observed between young people and adults was based on mutual respect for rights and dignity. A member of the Special Intervention Services (SIS) team explained, “Rights is part of our common language, so respect is permeated throughout the school”. The young people have been involved in developing the school’s behaviour policy and it is clear that they are referring to their rights and increasingly using rights language to resolve any conflict and to discuss moral dilemmas and difficult situations that they are facing. The RRSA lead said, “Our young people are so unjudgmental. They don’t care if anyone is a bit different”.
- Safety within the school is of paramount importance in both the secure and residential areas of Rossie school. All charters and discussions are centred around the rights to safety. The RRSA Lead explained that “Because of the context of the school, liberty is restricted but for the purposes of keeping everyone safe”. The young people spoken with agreed that they feel safe in their school and also acknowledged that the actions of staff are “always based around keeping us safe”.
- The health & wellbeing of all young people in Rossie is evidently important across the school, with several examples of things in place to make them feel valued and included, such as: breakfast club; mental health awareness week; prominent mental health displays; involvement with WhoCares? Scotland. In addition, young people complete a weekly Outcomes Framework with their key teacher based on World Health Organisations indicators. The discussions provide insight to how the young people are feeling and ensures targeted supported is put in place as needed.
- Some of the young people spoken with explained how they are involved in decisions about their learning, saying, “We have such small classes, but everyone is different, so our needs are met to suit what we need”. All young people start Individualised Learning Pathways when they first join the school, which they contribute to every week, in discussion with their key teacher.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Ensure that young people, as rights holders, are clear about how adults, as duty bearers, should uphold their rights, and help to facilitate their access to rights.
- Continue to embed the Unicef RRSA Charter Guidance and focus on the language of ‘respect for rights’. In the next ‘review’ of class charters endeavour to include actions for adults (duty bearers) as well as for young people.
- Ensure that young people and adults are kept informed on the school’s provision to support their physical and mental health and wellbeing, and that information is accessible to all, and that they understand how this relates to their rights.
- Continue to explore the role young people play in engaging in their right to learn. Consider, with them, how this can be further enhanced.



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.

- There are a range of opportunities for young people to express their ideas and opinions in Rossie school, which have been taken seriously. RRS Ambassadors have delivered rights training to staff and governors which was very positively received. Governors said, “I was invited to a training session about rights which was a very positive experience. It made me think. The young people were enthusiastic, understanding and confident to share their views. I learnt a lot. I was very impressed”. Young people have been involved in the “1000 Voices” WhoCares? Scotland participation groups which gathered views on young people in care on behalf of the Scottish government. All young people have also been involved in the school’s self-evaluation using the HGIOS 4 tools. Prominent displays illustrate all young people’s views on teaching and learning. Everyone has been involved in making decisions about breakfast club activities, fun day activities and youth club. One young person explained, “We get a say in what things we want to change, like allowing some access to YouTube and other websites”. The SLT also pointed out that most young people now chair their own LAC (Looked After Child) meetings, because, “They have grown so much in confidence and we want to empower them to be their own advocates”. The young people have also played a role in the interview processes for selecting new staff.
- Some young people have been involved in projects such as making beeswax lip balm and creating a sensory garden (Jasmine’s garden) to acknowledge sustainable lifestyles that can help to protect the environment. Others have been involved in volunteering through Volunteer Action Angus whereby young people have helped at local care homes for the elderly and at a local soup kitchen.
- Rossie has been involved in some fundraising for charities chosen by the young people, such as Macmillan Cancer Support, their local hospital, foodbanks and guide dogs. Some young people were able to explain how fundraising can enhance children’s access to rights locally and globally.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Embed a systematic approach to providing access to relevant current news media for all young people, as appropriate, and facilitate their critical reflection in response so that their awareness may provide stimulus for campaigning or other action.
- Continue to develop ways in which young people can influence practice, such as incorporating the CRC into the LAC meetings that young people currently chair.
- Seek ways to further engage young people in making choices relating to charity work in school and empower them to recognise connections between actions locally and globally, linked to children’s rights.
- Facilitate more opportunities for young people to initiate powerful advocacy and campaigning work, particularly regarding children’s rights and also learning about the Sustainable Development Goals through The World’s Largest Lesson.