

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	The Wenlock School
Headteacher:	Simon Smith
RRSA coordinator:	Raelene Austin
Local authority:	Dudley LEA
Number of pupils on roll:	97
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher and RRSA coordinator
Number of children and young people spoken with:	6
Adults spoken with:	2 teachers and 3 parents
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: October 2021 Bronze achieved: January 2022
Assessor:	Kathy Allan
Date of visit:	20 April 2023

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

The Wenlock 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.

- Pupils at The Wenlock School are exposed to rights through the curriculum, school values, assemblies, and the wider school's environment with rights visible across the school showing how rights are being taught and experienced. As an SEN school with pupils from age 7 to 18 links are made with human rights. *"Knowing about rights is empowering young people into adult hood,"* explained a member of staff.
- There has been an evolving process of integrating rights through the curriculum. Starting with a focus on 6 articles and PSHE rights are now embedded into English, History and Art.
- Pupils engage with current affairs through platforms such as First News and use their knowledge of rights to explore what is happening and the links with their own lives and experiences. They understand that rights are for all children from birth but that not all children get to enjoy all their rights. Examples shared by pupils included the conflict in the Ukraine and *"In North Korea there is a dictator in control meaning that people can't choose what to say or think."*
- A parent explained how *"A weekly newsletter highlights rights and of course we hear about them at home."* The coordinator shared how rights were also discussed as part of a parents coffee mornings and often come into conversations with families.

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

- Continue to develop knowledge and understanding of the CRC, its origins, values and principles and, for older pupils, its place within the wider framework of Human Rights. **Ensure the school community understand the role of UNICEF and it's relationship to the UNCRC.**
- Continue to support staff and young people to have an understanding that rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional, using language appropriate to children and young people's age and ability.
- Continue to support staff (including new colleagues) to have the knowledge and confidence to effectively teach about the CRC and model rights respecting language and attitudes. For example, consider staff CDP at the beginning of each school year to refresh knowledge and understanding of the CRC and consider ways for the pupils to help with this.
- Consider further CPD on global citizenship and sustainable development perhaps through engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals and [The World's Largest Lesson](https://www.unicef.org/uk/rights-respecting-schools) to help develop an understanding of global issues and how they impact on children's rights and the wellbeing of the planet.

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.

- The school's values have been linked to articles and each half term an article is promoted alongside a value. The ethos and culture of the school is supported and strengthened by understanding of the CRC and language such as 'duty bearers' is bringing the whole school community on the journey.
- A rights respecting environment has been developed where the language of rights is prevalent and embedded into restorative conversations. It is reported mutual respect is developing with pupils "*... increasingly aware of others and now have a wider understanding of difference and need.*"
- Safeguarding, wellbeing and personal development are key priorities for all pupils, and each have a named member of staff that they can talk to in school and shared how spaces such as 'sensory pods' help them to feel safe when their feelings escalate. Charters are supporting pupils to understand the impact of their own and other's actions and when concerns were raised about safety when playing football a charter was created with those involved. "*People who usually get angry are calming down,*" explained a pupil.
- A member of staff described how the rights to a voice and an opinion are supporting classroom discussions where pupils take the lead and develop their understanding of topics and issues that are pertinent to them through respectful debate and active listening. Pupils shared how The Wenlock School was an inclusive place where they feel included. "*In my last school they would teach everyone the same way,*" a pupil explained. Others talked about the importance of their friends in school and the how they can make choices, are supported and respected.

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

- Look for ways to incorporate an explicit commitment to rights through referencing relevant articles explicitly across school policies and documents such as the SIP.
- Ensure that children and young people are clear about how adults, as duty bearers in school, should uphold their rights and help facilitate their access to rights.
- Create opportunities to explore the concepts of fairness and equity and ensure children and young people can describe how school promotes these concepts.
- Continue to promote an ethos of inclusion, where all feel supported and valued, relating this explicitly to non-discrimination.
- Develop the role children and young people have in engaging with their right to learn. Consider, with them, how they can be more active participants in deciding what and how they learn and what they need to do to progress.

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.

- The right to a voice and be listened to is integral to all aspects of The Wenlock School. Pupils are engaged in their support plans, learning and personal development opportunities. Structures such as the school council and Rights Respecting steering group also provide mechanisms for young people to influence change and share their views with senior leaders.
- When pupils reported they were bored with the Friday enrichment activities on offer these were reviewed and updated to include options such as 'fashion' and 'dungeons and dragons' chosen by children and young people. Another example shared by pupils was the soap in the dispensers which they were concerned wasn't nice to use. This was changed to reflect the feedback having a positive impact on pupil's health and wellbeing.
- Children and young people are committed fundraisers and staff reported how their increasingly bring opportunities into school to support charities that are meaningful to them. Staff shared how "*Pupils are starting to look and show a greater interest in the wider world.*" Whole school engagement in raising funds for local charity 'Edwards Trust' was one example and others included collecting donations for the local food bank and for families in the Ukraine. One pupil shared how they "*... donated food and towels, things people needed.*"

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

- Continue to provide opportunities for children and young people to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school. This could include explicit involvement in school improvement planning, policy review processes, the evaluation of learning and teaching etc.
- Consider closing the feedback loop by creating a 'You Said, We Did' display to share with pupils the impact of their ideas.
- When exploring a range of local and global issues from the perspective of rights continue to include regular discussion of news events so that children and young people develop a heightened sense of justice and equity for all children. This may provide stimulus for child led campaigning or other action. For example, when pupils are litter picking help them to think about how the litter can be prevented in the first place. They could write to the local council requesting more bins or raise awareness of the impact with the local community.
- Continue to support children and young people to engage in a range of advocacy, campaigning and fundraising activities that promote children's rights locally and globally. Consider using UNICEF's [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#) to support exploration of campaigning. For fundraising, consider involvement with the [Soccer Aid Schools Challenge](#).