

RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Thomas Buxton Primary School
Headteacher:	Lorraine Flanagan
RRSA coordinator:	David Ash
Local authority:	Tower Hamlets
School context	Thomas Buxton Primary School has 442 children on roll, of which, 35% are eligible for Pupil Premium. 16% of the pupils have an IEP or Statement and 71% speak English as an additional language.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher and RRSA Coordinator
Number of children and young people interviewed	19 children
Number of adults interviewed	3 parents, 2 staff
RRSA accreditations	Registered for RRSA: August 2014 Gold previously achieved: June 2018
Assessor(s):	Helen Trivers and Kathy Allan
Date:	14 th September 2021

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

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

1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is based on a virtual reaccreditation visit. 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 range 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:

- A strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders at all levels which is tied into the vision and values of the school. As part of this, staff have received sustained training and support.
- A common language of rights which is used across the school and supports children to explore and discuss a range of issues in a safe, secure environment.
- A strong emphasis on activism and children who are confident using the language of campaigning and know how they can make a positive change locally and globally.
- An inclusive and supportive ethos where children feel valued and supported to be the best they can be.

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:

- As you develop work with families, explore the nature of rights including the idea that some rights are 'absolute' and how rights may need to be 'balanced' by duty bearers.
- Continue to deepen knowledge about the wider context of children's rights and human rights with every stage of the school. Consider linking with Elizabeth Selby Infant School to explore ways of developing rights work with children in Early Years and to support each other on your rights journey.
- As a Gold: Rights Respecting school, develop your ambassadorial role, promoting the positive impact you have seen from developing a child rights approach.
- Further develop opportunities for children to be at the heart of decision making and influencing the work of the school for example reviewing teaching and learning or developing their own school improvement plan.

2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights/Comments
<p>1. Children, young people and the wider school community know about and understand the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and can describe how it impacts on their lives and on the lives of children everywhere</p>	<p>Children confidently discussed the nature of rights saying, <i>"everyone has them no matter who you are," "there are 42 rights, and everyone should know them," "every right is important, without rights children wouldn't be able to grow up properly," "you are born with rights," "you can't take rights away" and "children all around the world under 18."</i> There is regular training and updates for staff and the RRSA lead explained <i>"We aim to re-establish and embed learning to ensure previous learning is not lost."</i> Rights are woven into planning, the delivery of lessons and assemblies, and rights are made visible around the school environment. Themed days last year explored the Global Goals, and these are increasingly linked to medium term plans. Children watch Newsround and are engaged in discussion and debates regarding rights. They have a good awareness of the wider world and the challenges some children face in accessing their rights: <i>"Some children don't have an education, safe places to live, a lack of money or clean water" and "climate change has led to wildfires and destroyed homes."</i> Another added that, <i>"in Afghanistan the Taliban are preventing girls from having an education, they are not getting their rights."</i></p>
STRAND B	Highlights/Comments
<p>2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>The headteacher explained that the CRC is a <i>"key vehicle to help children to articulate what our values mean, and we explore rights through everything we do."</i> She added, <i>"rights are at the heart of all policies and action around the school."</i> Children supported this, sharing their understanding of duty bearers having the responsibility to ensure all children can access their rights. Examples shared included governments and school staff who children recognised support their rights: <i>"they make sure our voice is heard," "we get our right to play," "not be discriminated against" and "teachers look after us and we all help keep a clean environment."</i></p>
<p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights</p>	<p>Children report that everyone is given the same opportunities in school and that if <i>"someone needs more help they get what they need."</i> A member of staff explained how knowing about rights <i>"gives children confidence in themselves and authority to challenge" going on to say, "they hold me accountable, and this is strengthened by the articles."</i></p>
<p>4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.</p>	<p>The headteacher pointed out <i>"rights run through all of our safeguarding principles."</i> Another member of staff discussed how understanding rights is ensuring that <i>"children increasingly feel safer in a changing world."</i> Children were confident that adults were able to support them if they felt unsafe. 'Wonders, Worries, Wishes' boxes in classrooms provide an alternative avenue to speaking out for children to share concerns.</p>
<p>5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They</p>	<p>During lockdown staff established google playtime after children reported that they felt their right to education was being met but that opportunities to relax and play were restricted. These online sessions allowed children to engage with peers through art, quizzes and chatting. The school also opened its playground to provide a safe space to play and distributed hot meals to</p>

learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	families. The school has a team of senior support staff who are trained as Mental Health First Aiders, with children explaining <i>"we can access extra help or someone to talk to if we need it."</i>
6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.	Older children were able to confidently explain 'non-discrimination' as <i>"you don't get treated differently because of skin colour or religion."</i> Staff described how P4C enquiry allows space to <i>"challenge stereotypes in a nurturing and supportive space"</i> and <i>"with younger children we use sentence stems to help ensure respectful challenge and enquiry."</i> The school nurtures individual's talents and interests and ensures that <i>"similarities and differences are embedded into learning through the SDG's, climate change and respect for different types of families."</i>
7. Children and young people value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.	Within lessons children are encouraged to make choices and consider their own progress. Through discussions with school ambassadors, changes to the learning environment have been implemented such as building independence through bringing in their own pencil cases and when children expressed their interest in learning about Bangladesh staff made it a whole school focus.
STRAND C	Highlights/Comments
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	Rights Ambassadors are recruited democratically through secret ballots in class, with older children presenting a speech to their peers. Recently, the Ambassadors have requested ownership over rights training for new staff and are looking to run a session for parents to help them understand the CRC. Ambassadors explained that <i>"we help represent the school and make good changes,"</i> and <i>"we have chosen 3 rights as a focus for change in school."</i> Children have planned a clothes exchange, increased recycling, and ran a bake sale. Each class has Council meetings where ideas can be shared and taken forward by Ambassadors who carry out surveys and ask pupils for their views. Recently Y5 children wrote to the headteacher raising concerns about girls' unfair treatment about football. Children were proud to share there is now a designated time for girls to play football allowing everyone to participate. The Ambassadors have a notice board where they share current projects, the progress that is being made and its impact.
9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.	Children at Thomas Buxton feel strongly they can make a difference saying, <i>"we can raise awareness of children's rights and ensure that everyone knows about their rights."</i> They regularly write to school staff raising issues regarding rights and children from Y4 spoke at a local event about equality in education. Last year there was a whole school focus on activism with each class being named after individuals such as Greta Thunberg and Martin Luther King. The children learnt about these activists and shared their learning through assemblies. All children in school took part in different campaigns, for example Early Years protested on the school yard about saving bees and KS2 presented their own poems about saving the planet. Each year group's action is represented in a fantastic video on the school's website. Staff report that rights are helping children have increased confidence in raising concerns and speaking out about what is important to them.