

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Jakeman Nursery School
Executive Headteacher:	David Aldworth
RRSA coordinator:	Janine Maidment
Local authority:	Birmingham City Council
Assessor(s):	Hilary Alcock and Isobel Mitchell
Date:	30/06/2021

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a Gold virtual accreditation report. The assessors would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, staff, parents and governor for their warm welcome to the nursery 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 nursery and underpin every facet of school life.

Particular strengths of the nursery include:

- All children learning about their rights through discussion and play and older children sharing their knowledge with the younger children.
- Staff who are confident about rights and embedding the CRC as a natural part of their practice.
- Confidence and knowledge of rights has helped to open-up conversations with children and parents about issues which can be challenging and/or sensitive.
- Ambassadorial work to advocate for the child rights-based approach to the other nursery schools in the Federation and beyond.

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 to act as Ambassadors for children’s rights in the wider community and local schools.
- Ensure that children’s rights remain central to learning when the new Early Years and Foundation Stage Goals come into effect from September 2021.
- Continue to celebrate diversity in all its forms and challenge stereotypes, through visuals and stories.
- Consider including more visuals on the rights-based charters and in rights activities to further develop children’s understanding.
- Continue to link articles to policies as they are reviewed.
- Continue to develop staff and parents’ knowledge of global citizenship and sustainability in order to further support children’s understanding of the wider world and nursery community activism and campaigning, perhaps through a focus on the [UN Global Goals](#)

3. ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

School context	A Nursery School and Day Care Centre with 91 children between the ages of 2 and 5. There are a higher than average percentage of children needing additional support and 72% speak English as an Additional Language. The nursery was rated ‘good’ at their last Ofsted Inspection in 2016. They are one of nine nursery schools in the Birmingham Federation of Maintained Nursery Schools.
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher who is also Executive Headteacher of two other Nurseries in the Federation. RRSA Lead and member of SLT across the Federation.
Number of children and young people interviewed	1 in person via ‘Teams’ with his parent and 19 observed through video clips during the meeting.
Number of adults interviewed	SENDCO for cluster, 2 parents, 1 governor and 3 Teaching Assistants
Evidence provided	Focus groups on ‘Teams’, written evidence, evaluation form and video clips of children learning about rights.
Registered for RRSA: 19/09/2017	Silver achieved: 25/06/2018



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

A child spoken with during the virtual visit was able to tell us about the rights he knew – *“I have the right to a healthy snack, clean water and the right to play and rest.”* We also gathered evidence of children’s knowledge of rights through speaking to parents who are closely involved in the school’s work on rights. Information on the CRC is included in the school induction pack, on ‘Tapestry’, in curriculum reports, and through the newsletter where the right of the week is shared. The children also bring home a ‘Rights Respecting Bear’ which encourages them to talk about and record how the bear is enjoying his rights at home. One parent told us that when there is a conflict between her son and his brother, he says *“I have a right to an opinion.”* Another parent told us that her child talked to her at home about the right to an identity, asking; *“Mum, did you know we are all unique?” When I was born, did I get a certificate?” What does my name mean?”* Parents explained that this knowledge of rights was having a positive impact on children’s behaviour at home, with one explaining how her child was organising the recycling at home as an extension of his role in the rights group at school. She also told us that, *“He has learnt about the right to healthy food - before he was quite a fussy eater but now, he likes cress and mashed potatoes.”* Parents also talked about how their children were starting to understand that rights are for every child and they were demonstrating this by making sure everyone had a chance to play fairly in the park. *“At the park he has an understanding that every child has the right to play. This is the foundation and beginning of his journey in life.”*

Regular training has led to excellent staff knowledge of rights. They are using rights language with the children. *“We bring the rights in naturally starting with giving them a choice and explaining that they have a choice because they have a right to an opinion.”* Staff knowledge of rights has also been recognised by other visitors to the school, for example another local headteacher commented in an email *‘I was very impressed with all the links to the Rights Respecting Schools. The children were reminded that everyone has the right to a name and then asked me my name. There was a discussion with a child about hair colour and another member of staff supported her with, ‘we all have the right to an identity’. Finally, the children were asked to tidy the activity and were reminded of the right to safety.’*

Curriculum planning and content is very much determined by the children’s interests, the staff discuss with the children what they like doing and observe what activities are popular and use this knowledge to shape the curriculum. Staff identify which articles from the CRC can be brought into the activity. For example, activities in the growing area in the school garden are related to the right to healthy food and clean water. Building Dens enabled the children to learn about the right to shelter. Talking to the children when they were playing shooting games and making toy guns led to a useful discussion on the right to be safe. During observations, the staff record where links to rights have been made on ‘Tapestry’ – an on-line learning journal for every child. A short video showed a teacher running an activity with children where she talked through some of the rights on cards. To demonstrate that rights are inalienable, she took one of the rights cards away and asked them how they felt about that. One of the boys responded saying *‘Put that back! You can’t do that!’* Through digital evidence provided we could see that the nursery environment is promoting teaching and learning about rights. Staff explained how displays with lots of pictures are used to help children to understand about rights including that they are universal, unconditional, inherent, inalienable and indivisible.

The Governor spoken with is a member of the Rights Steering Group and reports back to the governor’s board. She explained how she discusses rights with the children as part of her ‘learning



walks,' sharing with us an example of how the children discussed the right to be safe whilst creating a building with blocks and how she encouraged them to talk about the right to religion by putting a cross on the building.

The Headteacher is clearly committed to the CRC and has led the school in influencing others commenting that, *"It is truly embedded, not a bolt on. We really believe in the impact it has made. We are influencing others - Primaries, Early Years Network, Academies - we are changing the mindset of others."*

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

The ethos of the nursery is very child-centred and inclusive as described on the website: 'A place where we believe every child is unique. At Jakeman Nursery School we are here to welcome, support and listen.' This ethos is underpinned by children's rights as indicated by the inside and outside whole school charters which focus on a selection of the most relevant rights and include actions for both children and staff. The charters are reviewed with the children at the start of each academic year. The Governor spoken with explained that rights are incorporated into the School Improvement Plan and into curriculum planning. She felt that the work on rights had given the staff a stronger sense of being part of a team - *"As duty bearers we all have the same aims for children,"* and she explained that she thought that using the rights framework had helped children feel, *"Safe, happier and healthier."* The school's understanding of fairness and equity is illustrated through their focus on inclusion of all children whatever their developmental stage and learning abilities. For example, the school has been teaching Makaton to all the children and parents' comments indicated that this was helping children to begin to grasp the concept of equity. One of the parents said in relation to her 3 year old, *"My son shows how he is feeling using sign language and he told me that sometimes we have to show a sign because some people can't hear."*

The staff and children use rights language to support positive relationships, for example, the older children are observed explaining to the younger children that taking their shoes off whilst climbing might not be safe. Children are involved in making the rules around behaviour, closely linked to children's rights and the school ethos. The concept of 'dignity' has been specifically discussed in Staff and Leadership meetings and those spoken with explained how their understanding of the concept has broadened since they first started on the Rights journey. *"The understanding of dignity used to be just about privacy, but we know now that it is much wider than that. We don't stereotype or single out one individual child."* The example provided was about one child who was upset by the other children touching his turban. Rather than addressing this by singling out that child and discussing his identity publicly, the staff shared images and discussed more generally with the children about diversity of religious identity and the importance of respecting how people express this.

Staff told us how the children's safety was of paramount importance and that learning about rights had enabled them to discuss challenging topics such as protecting children from sexual abuse with parents and children. We observed a film clip of lesson of a group of children learning about the importance of wearing underwear to keep themselves safe. The teacher used dolls to illustrate and explain this and asked the children what they would do if someone did something which made them



feel sad or hurt them. The children answered, 'Say Stop!' 'Tell Mummy or Daddy or your teachers.' A survey with children in May 2021 showed that they felt safe in school and could explain how the school helps keep them safe.

The school achieved the Health4Life Award in 2019. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through planting vegetables, learning about how to keep their bodies healthy and through provision of healthy snacks. There is a physical 'wake up, shake up' session for each child daily. In terms of mental health, there is a trained mental health first aider in school and the children can use Makaton signs, visuals and colours (based on the 'Colour Monster' book), to express how they are feeling.

At Jakeman Nursery, a high percentage of children have complex needs. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Report references articles from the CRC which highlight the importance of ensuring that all children no matter what their abilities or needs can access their rights. In order to put this inclusive approach into practice the school makes available additional support and puts in place adaptations; for example, the environment is open plan with disability access ramps, there is a sensory room and there are quiet teaching spaces and a variety of communication methods such as, Makaton and visuals timetables. The focus on inclusion, equity and dignity is also illustrated within comments made by an Educational Psychologist who observed the children in school: *'Children's rights are highly respected by staff at Jakeman Nursery. The nursery has a highly inclusive approach and all children are welcomed, with significant adaptations being made to cater for children with profound and complex needs. The nursery is diverse and there is always respect shown to family's cultural backgrounds. Children's rights to good physical care including support with their self-help skills is also carried out in a sensitive and respectful manner.'*

Learning at the nursery is guided by the children's interests and children have choice as to what they would like to do. Older children can often be observed helping the younger ones with their learning, for example, showing them how to pour properly to help them access their right to clean water.

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

Listening to the children's voice is central to life at Jakeman Nursery. The staff talked about how since becoming more aware of the importance of Article 12 within the CRC, they had changed their practice to ensure they were really taking time to listen to what the children were saying and how they were feeling. *"It has made me slow down a bit and not butt in when children are talking to me."* *"We are getting better and better at giving the children the time to tell us what they want to say."* Within school, children's responses to different areas and activities is closely observed and this information is used not only to determine the curriculum but also to make physical changes in school, for example, creating more quiet spaces. The rights charters were developed with the children, particularly those in the Rights Steering Group known as the 'Nursery Experts.'

The children are very much engaged in choosing which rights-based charities to support. The Governor spoken with explained how by using pictures as a stimulus the children are encouraged to talk about how they could help respect other children's rights. For example, whilst studying images of children playing on rubbish dumps the children started making suggestions on how to help them; "We



could buy them toys; we could give them shoes.’ *“When they do the research with you, they get so much from it,”* added the governor. Through this process the school community agreed to support Save the Children Fund with National Den Day and the Clarks Shoe Share scheme. As part of the UNICEF OutRight campaign, the children learnt about climate change and decided to support ‘Waste Aid’ which helps poorer communities to find ways to reduce and recycle waste.

Parents talked about how their children’s awareness of poverty and the wider world was increasing; *“His awareness has grown so much more about poverty and why we need to support people with the food bank.”* *“He talks about the need to save clean water after hearing about how some children have to walk a long way to get water.”*

Children and staff have acted as ambassadors for children’s rights. The children performed the song “We’ve All Got Rights” in the nursery choir as part of a celebration of Children’s Rights at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 2019. The school works in partnership with all nine nurseries in the Federation who are all working on the Rights Respecting Schools Award. They are also spreading the message of children’s rights and promoting RRSA to wider Early Years Networks and local Primary Schools.