

## UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL TWO

<b>School:</b>	Parkhill Junior School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Denise Hughes-Mulhall
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Louise Taylor
<b>Local authority:</b>	Redbridge
<b>Assessors:</b>	Frances Bestley & Rebecca Nkata
<b>Date:</b>	17 July 2017

### 1. INTRODUCTION

We would like to thank the headteacher, all the staff and other adults and young people for their warm welcome to the school and the opportunity to speak with so many staff and pupils during the assessment. Prior to the assessment visit you provided a very comprehensive self-evaluation form and impact evaluation form. It was evident to the assessors during the visit that everyone, all staff, children and parents had a passion for rights and being rights respecting.

Key strengths of the school are:

- Very articulate children who are proud of and enjoy school.
- Children and adults who are very knowledgeable about rights and understand their application within the school context and beyond.
- Children who are empowered to take action.
- Participation is extremely strong; all pupil groups have real jobs and action plans.

Standards A, B, C and D have all been met.

## 2. REQUIREMENTS BEFORE ATTAINING LEVEL 2

No requirements noted.

## 3. MAINTAINING LEVEL 2

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 Level 2. Here are our recommendations for your school:

- Continue with all the excellent practice observed during the visit.
- Continue to develop the RRSA ambassadorial role within the wider community, supporting other schools with their RRSA journey and sharing good practice.

## 4. THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

### 4.1. The school context

Parkhill Junior School situated in Redbridge is a larger than average junior school with just under 400 pupils on roll. A smaller proportion of pupils than average are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Much higher proportions of pupils than average are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. Over 65% of pupils are Asian or Asian British heritage.

In December 2012 Ofsted judged the school as good. The school holds a Fair Trade Award and has a Platinum Safety Mark for 'excellent safety standards.'

Parkhill Junior School registered for RRSA in May 2014 and achieved Level 1 in June 2016.

## 4.2. Assessment information

Self-evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher, assistant headteacher, RRSA coordinator
Number of children and young people interviewed	50+ children during learning walk, Year 4 class visit and focus group
Number of staff interviewed	4 teaching staff 2 support staff 1 midday supervisor 1 parent 1 governor
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence file RRSA film Year 4 class visit

### Standard A:

#### Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

#### Standard A has been achieved

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is clearly very committed to becoming Rights Respecting. The headteacher explained that RRSA was *'the next logical step after the Parkhill Way which is about looking after myself and others and it fed into the school vision of 'Enjoy Learning and Growing Together'*. She described the increased impact since achieving Level 1; *'It's much more embedded in language; it's part of everything we do. Parents are beginning to talk in the same way. Children don't rely on adults as much to resolve issues. They are fearless about asking for help.'* The Impact Evaluation form identified significant impact across all eight criteria. Analysis of pupil, staff and parent questionnaires in the portfolio also provided evidence of increasing impact over several years.

RRSA is within Priority 2 of the school's development plan: develop learner's understanding of rights and achieve Level 2. Policies have been reviewed to refer explicitly to the Convention; appropriate articles are referenced within the text: the Teaching and Learning Policy makes explicit reference to the text of Article 2; the Behaviour Policy to Articles 3, 12 and 29 – the Learning Behaviours (the 6Rs) referenced within the policy include rights respecting and resilience; the Anti Bullying Policy refers to Articles 28, 12, 31 and 14. Succession planning is in place; a new RRSA lead has been identified and different staff members facilitate pupil groups which widens expertise. RRS is a fixed agenda item at senior leader and management team and staff meetings.

It is evident that inclusion and participation are valued across the school. The Personalisation team supports intervention and nurture groups and a school counsellor is employed for one day a week. Termly reflection days are allocated for teachers and personalisation staff to conduct pupil interviews to review pupil progress and support provided. Attainment gaps between groups are narrowing. Children are no longer grouped by ability in classes and the children take responsibility for choosing appropriate tasks. *'They want to challenge themselves'* explained a teacher linking this approach to Article 29 and the opportunity to develop their full potential. The school encourages parents to be involved in learning activities inviting them for 'Hot chocolate and cookies' and to read with children. This has enhanced *'a sense of togetherness.'* Children, staff and parent views are regularly gathered through surveys and a very wide range of pupil groups and an obvious 'open door' policy provide opportunities for pupils to influence decisions.

Parkhill Junior School works within a soft federation sharing good practice including the impact of RRSA – some but not all of the schools are rights respecting. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) project with Year 5 girls across the schools encouraged girls' engagement in science and Parkhill linked this explicitly to gender equality, sharing this perspective across the group. They work closely with their Infant school (currently working towards Level 2) and shared facilities such as the dining room have a charter agreed by both schools. The school holds termly Breakfast for the Community meetings and Generation celebrations where local residents are invited in to the school.

Global citizenship and learning about sustainable development is very strong with children evidencing a very good understanding of world events. A school aim described on the website states clearly 'To be at the heart of the local community, curriculum suited to the twenty-first century. Preparing everyone to become responsible and pro-active national and global citizens.' Global citizenship and sustainability are planned for systematically through topics and focus weeks or days, such as: Culture month, Waste week, Cycle to school, Fair Trade fairs, No Pens Day, World Water Day and Glow Day. The school holds the International Schools Award with link schools in Nigeria, St Lucia and Sri Lanka.

**Standard B:**

**The whole school community learns about the CRC**

**Standard B has been achieved**

All pupils we spoke to in the focus groups and the class visits could confidently name a wide range of articles: the right to have rights and the right to know about them, to non-discrimination, the right for decisions to be made in children's best interests, right to life, name and nationality, to education, to relax and play, the right to be protected from war, the right to information, to be heard, to practise their own religion and celebrate their culture, to juvenile justice, to clean water, to health care, and to privacy. It was clear to the assessors that children understood the universality and unconditionality of rights. *'Rights are for everybody under the age of 18 everywhere'* stated a Year 3 child. Children were also very knowledgeable about the origins of the Convention and Unicef – Year 4 pupils talked about when the Convention was ratified and when Unicef started. Throughout the learning walk children confidently referenced articles and described why they were important for their own

and other children’s lives. *‘As children we’re at the heart of everything the school does; teachers make sure we have our rights’* stated a Year 6 boy.

Parkhill Junior School provides a wide range of opportunities for parents and carers to be informed about rights: regular newsletters, lots of information on the website, the home-school agreement is linked to the Convention, homework, the article of the week, parents/families are invited to assemblies – the Christmas concert PPT was about rights. One parent stated *‘I know quite a lot about rights from my children. It’s so prominent [when you visit] that it’s a rights respecting school.’* She described how her child had developed *‘a wider understanding of the world.’* Governors are kept informed through regular meetings and RRS ambassadors meet with governors once a term.

Children explained that they learned about rights through the Article of the week, announced each Monday morning by one of the RRS ambassadors and then discussed and reflected on throughout the week; through displays, in assemblies, in PSHE and in other lessons, from their charters and through special events such as Fair Trade and Red Nose Days. *‘Everyone really tries their hardest to make sure you know about rights’* explained a Year 5 girl. Displays about rights were prominent throughout the school; the school reception had cut out figures of schoolchildren linked to Articles 28, 29, 13, 17, 24, 14, 17 and 12 emphasising the links between school values and the Convention. Articles were linked to displays throughout all corridors; all 42 Articles were displayed around the notice board outside the school office; and Articles 3, 29 and 31 on pelmets in the hall. The assembly plan referenced Articles throughout the school year. Short medium and long term planning referenced Articles across all year groups for example: in Year 3 Volcanos and Earthquakes linked to Articles 12, 19 and 27; Year 4 topic on North America linked to Articles 24, 25 and 30; the topic on ‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’ linked to Articles 19, 35 and 38. Discussions with staff and children provided further rich examples particularly from class books: ‘Bill’s New Frock’ and ‘The Firework Maker’s Daughter’ linked to Article 2, The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’ linked to Article 14. The headteacher stated *‘Literacy texts build and promote understanding – encourages emotional response and empathy.’*

There is a clear understanding amongst children and adults in the school of the link between global citizenship and sustainable development and children’s rights. Teachers explained that their focus is on *‘Deepening international perspective’* and *‘comparing and contrasting life in the UK and [for example] Indonesia.’* All themed events such as Red Nose Day, Fair Trade Fortnight, Switch Off Fortnight are followed up by classroom learning about issues in different countries. Children have learned about Global goals and could link them to specific Articles. Year 4 children described learning about water, seeing a video and linking it to Article 24

**Standard C:**  
**The school has a rights-respecting ethos**

**Standard C has been achieved**

All classrooms visited had individual charters covering a range of articles. A Year 4 boy explained that in September you think about different rights and as a class agree the ones that are most relevant to school and then create a display where everyone shows their

agreement. The charter was used by the teacher and the pupils to talk about respecting rights in lessons. Children stated *'It does help a lot because when you walk past you can see what rights you've met and which ones you need to respect'; 'Since the charter I understand what to do.'* Another child in the focus group explained that *'you look at the charter and remember the articles.'* An RRS ambassador suggested creating a lunchtime charter because they had identified behaviour and respect there as not being so positive. Pupils from the Infant and Junior schools worked together with the Midday Supervisors to create a lunchtime charter. *'Attitudes are completely different, noise level and cleanliness – it really does work'* stated the Midday Supervisor.

Throughout the visit there was evidence to support mutual rights-respecting behaviours and very good relationships between both pupils and pupils as well as pupils and staff. Teachers described how they *'model and talk about rights respecting behaviours.'* Rights Respecting Ambassadors choose a Rights Respecting Star each day identifying those children who model rights respecting language and attitudes. Children who have been a star three times receive a golden letter from the headteacher. Although the assessment visit took place during the last week of term it was very quiet, calm and focused. During class visits, the learning walk and the focus group, pupils listened carefully to one another.

Children we spoke to take their education very seriously. *'Enjoy learning'* was the greeting between staff and pupils. *'We realise how lucky we are to get an education – so you take your own seriously'* stated a Year 5 girl and were very proud of their school. Teachers identified that children are *'a lot more responsible for their learning and so much more engaged in their learning.'* Teachers explained that they talk less in class and that children choose the activity they undertake. Children set targets in conjunction with their teachers; reflection time at the end of each day supports children to reflect on their learning.

All children we talked to unanimously said that they felt safe in school; the results from the recent survey supported this as does the Platinum Safety Mark. The Children's Concerns flowchart was very well understood by pupils who could explain exactly how it worked and how to resolve issues. They were confident that they could speak to a teacher or someone that they trusted if something was going wrong. *'If we've got any worries we tell the teacher and they would sort it out'* said one child. Quiet areas, the Reading Den, the Oliver Club where you could play games and peer mediators all contributed to the playground being safe. The school parents' questionnaire identified: 98% of parents agree that the school provides a safe environment.

When we asked pupils how they sorted things out when there was an argument children explained that any conflicts are treated fairly: *'you tell the teacher and they will discuss with both people in private.'* Peer mediators are also available to support children to resolve conflicts. One child stated *'If it's a minor problem you sort it out by yourself.'* The Midday Supervisor corroborated this *'There's a whole difference in children's attitudes towards one another.'* All children and staff we spoke to agreed that rights were used appropriately to help solve conflicts.

Parkhill Junior School has a strong focus on celebrating and valuing diversity. Pupils had a very good understanding of the world around them. Children watch and discuss Newsround during fruit time. They were able to explain that all children have rights regardless of where they live but may sometimes not be able to access them. They talked about mosquitos making children very ill in some parts of Africa; discussed the war in Syria and how children might not have access to education or shelter or have to fight in the war. They also had a



good understanding that because of poverty or because they are a carer children might not be able to access Articles 29 or 31. *'Some children don't get a say'* explained a P6 girl.

### **Standard D:**

**Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners**

#### **Standard D has been achieved**

This is a strength of the school. All pupils we spoke to feel listened to, valued and confident in expressing their views. *'Everyone works really hard to listen to us and our opinions.'* was the response to asking whether they felt they were listened to. Over 95% of children feel they have a say in making the way they learn in school better. There are over 13 child-led pupil groups providing a wide range of opportunities to be involved in decisions about school life for example: Parkhill Parliament, Eco Schools, Rights Respecting Ambassadors, Lunchtime Quality Team, Junior Travel Ambassadors. All pupil groups are clearly linked to article 12. All groups have their own action plans. Pupils explained that they had been involved in choosing the playground equipment, installing a water fountain, having a scooter park, creating the Reading Den and the outdoor gym. Children described many additional ways of having their views heard such as suggestion boxes in every classroom and pupil surveys. The portfolio of evidence included numerous letters that children had written to the headteacher, often citing articles, about things that should happen to improve the school exemplifying how children felt empowered to make decisions. Throughout the visit there was evidence of children confidently coming to talk about things with the headteacher and other staff.

Pupils are taught to make informed choices predominately through PSHE, PE, science and computing. The IT Smart code is linked to Articles, particularly focuses on the right to accurate information and an assembly in September reminds everyone how to keep safe on line. Attendance at extracurricular clubs is monitored to ensure all children are accessing opportunities; children frequently suggest additional clubs that they would like. High attendance at the Breakfast club means that children get off to a good start each morning. The Lunchtime Quality Team talks about and encourages healthy eating at lunchtime

Children spoke very enthusiastically about the activities they had undertaken to uphold the rights of children locally and globally. They described how they had fundraised for Red Nose Day and how this linked with the right to good nutrition and education. A Year 6 boy described work they had done to support Fair Trade and could confidently explain how supporting Fair Trade helped children access their rights in other countries, including attending school and not working to provide chocolate. The school also supports the local foodbank and is planning a school sleepover based on homelessness. The Junior Travel Ambassadors campaign with banners outside school to stop people parking on the zig-zags and pupils have written to the local MP about street lighting. Parkhill Junior School supported Unicef UK's Human Rights campaign.