



Rights Respecting School Gold Award

Jordanhill School has been awarded the UNICEF RRS Gold Award.



Particular strengths of the school identified by the assessors are

- A mature understanding of rights amongst children, particularly in linking to their lives and those of other children whose circumstances may be different.
- Senior managers and staff team with a clear understanding of the value of a child rights based approach in achieving the best outcomes for learners.
- A wide range of pupil voice opportunities for children and young people, supporting them to make a difference to school life.
- An excellent practical example of rights learning across the curriculum: the Jordanhill Big Lesson.

Children had an impressive understanding of key rights concepts and were confident in linking this to practical examples of real life situations. Even in Primary 1, the youngest children were able to explain that “*children in other parts of the world*” don’t always have their rights respected, with older pupils expanding this to talk of children closer to home who face barriers.

“You can go to any adult if you are unhappy or worried not just your own teacher”

Primary 4 Pupil

Evidence demonstrated how rights based learning was a feature across the curriculum from P1 through to S6; rights learning was especially prominent in Health and Wellbeing and PSHE, but examples were provided for many other subject areas.

The Jordanhill Big Lesson had been a particularly successful example of this cross-curricular approach, with the whole school undertaking rights-related lessons on the identified child poverty theme across a single day in March. In the same week, the school hosted a practice sharing conference with four other RRS schools, for both pupils and teachers.

The Rector was clear that rights had an important part to play in the school’s ongoing development: *“It’s part of a natural journey that fits with the ethos of the school... it gives an explicit set of criteria to articulate pupils’ understanding... it brings us together as a community.”*

This was echoed by the Chair of the school’s Board of Managers: *“We talk about it frequently and have had pupils presenting... we’re proud because it grows the pupils.”*

The RRSA co-ordinator, and Depute Rector, explained that appreciating difference and diversity had been a driving force, crediting *“everyone having respect and treating each other with dignity”*.

“All notes to parents about events or extra lessons have a small sentence that says if there is any problem about paying for this let us know. My family did have a problem and a confidential meeting sorted it out.”

S6 Pupil

Pupils were unanimous in their belief that their school was a safe place to be. A P5 pupil told the assessors that the adults in the playground made sure they were safe. A more sophisticated response came from an S5 pupil who told the assessors,

“You can’t have people running around like headless chickens, you need to respect the rights of others to be safe and keep each other safe.”

An atmosphere of respect for diversity and difference has been engendered through rights education.

Pupils accept that some of their peers may need different support: *“They’re totally fine with it, there’s no interrogation... even things like exam concessions, there’s no stigma.”*

In focus groups pupils were clear that they learned in a supportive atmosphere. There are a range of strategies in place including: pastoral care teachers, pupil support assistants, support for learning staff and a school counsellor.

One pupil highlighted their ability to self-refer to extra support:

“We know we are very privileged to live in this catchment and come to this school but sometimes you need a bit of help... anyone can go to the Friday Lunchtime Homework Club for extra support, that’s a right we are entitled to”.

All the pupils interviewed in the focus groups were able to explain the way in which they were encouraged to play an active role in their own learning, noting that in the senior school they could even choose classes at other schools or college, if appropriate.

One primary pupil put it simply:

“They look after us very well, so helping to run the school is the least that we can do!”

A senior pupil echoed this response when he said,

“We all, staff and pupils, work together to run the school.”

Pupils were able to give numerous examples of where their involvement had made a difference

It was readily apparent to assessors that pupils across the school understood and appreciated their place in the world, as well as considering what actions they could take to make it a better place.

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“The language of rights is embedded within the school and pupils will complain if another pupil was talking inappropriately and interfering with their right to an education.”

Teacher

“We have an award for the way dyslexia is treated in the school. I myself am dyslexic and no-one makes fun of me when I need extra support, it’s as it should be.”

Pupil