

UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL TWO

School:	Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre
Headteacher:	Ian Elliott
RRSA coordinator:	Anthony Rhys
Local authority:	Caerphilly
Assessors:	Sarah Hooke & Bev Harris
Date:	25 th January 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

Unicef would like to thank the Senior Leadership Team, staff, pupils, parents and Governors for the warm welcome afforded to the assessors during the assessment and for the opportunity to speak with a wide range of the school community. Prior to the assessment visit you provided both a progress and evaluation form and an impact assessment form noting the continued impact of RRS at Trinity Fields. It was clear to the assessors that everyone places a real importance on embedding a rights respecting ethos which has clearly been achieved.

It was particularly notable how pupils, who present with a range of learning difficulties and disabilities, are empowered through their time at Trinity Fields to take an active role in their school and wider community. Noticeably, article 29 is at the centre of everything at Trinity Fields and all practice emerges from a rights based approach.

Standards A, B, C and D have all met the necessary criteria. Standard A is a particular strength of the school and it was evident during the reassessment visit how SLT constantly strive to find new and innovative ways to embed RRS and include the Convention in all strategic planning.

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 to support and share RRS practices with schools at an all Wales level
- Consider how to move away from the terminology of golden rules towards rights based agreements.
- Continue to develop Global citizenship and Sustainable Development linked to articles and consider engagement with various campaigns including Unicef's Outright campaign.

4. THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

4.1. The school context

Trinity Fields is the only special school serving Caerphilly Local Authority. The school caters for a wide range of special educational needs and is oversubscribed with 147 pupils currently on role between the ages of 3 to 19 years. Admissions are arranged via a local authority panel and nearly all pupils of compulsory school age have statements of special educational needs.

Just over 40% of pupils have severe learning difficulties with almost 20% having profound and multiple learning difficulties and 20% of pupils have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). The remaining pupils have a range of other difficulties including social, emotional and behavioural and moderate learning difficulties, medical needs and multi-sensory impairments. Pupils are from predominantly English-speaking backgrounds, with 1.5% being from Welsh-speaking families. 41% of pupils receive free school meals which is above the local and all Wales average.

The Resource Centre based at Trinity Fields works in partnership with the local authority. Trinity Fields outreach service supports mainstream pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and links for its pupils within mainstream settings, as well as providing training for mainstream staff. Other functions of the Resource Centre include: health-based clinics, youth and leisure activities, respite and home support services, and peer mentoring.

First registered for RRSA: November 2013

Level 1 Assessment: September 2014

4.2. Assessment information

Progress and Evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher / RRS Lead Teacher / Deputy Headteacher
Number of children and young people interviewed	2 pupils during pupil led tour 6 pupils during School Council meeting 10+ pupils informally (and where applicable) during classroom visits
Number of staff interviewed	4 teaching staff 4 support staff 2 parents 2 Governor
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence School Council Meeting

Standard A:
Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management
Standard A has been achieved

Discussion with the Headteacher and SLT provides evidence of Trinity Fields strong and wholehearted commitment to embedding a school ethos which is underpinned by the principles and values of the UNCRC. Evidence was provided of the Convention being a consistent theme within all aspects of school life. The vision of the school is underpinned by 5 chosen Articles which are clear around the school and on all documentation including the school aims. The Headteacher noted *“first and foremost pupils are at the heart of all that we do at Trinity Fields. We have a long standing commitment to provide all pupils with the very best learning experience as well as empowering them to make important decisions about future developments within the school. We continue to work within the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in all that we do”*. The SLT could identify how a rights based approach continues to support other initiatives and school priorities as well as describe how RRS has contributed to impact in areas such as educational attainment and engagement in learning. The impact evaluation form highlights how the school’s ‘Routes for Learning’ and PIVATS data for each pupil recognises progress over time and similarly ‘Keys to Success’ data indicates pupil progress towards their Individual Educational Plans.

Articles in the Convention are visible throughout the School Development Plan (SDP) and RRS is placed at the centre of all key documentation. This was visible around school and in the portfolio of evidence. The Headteacher works with pupils on the School Council to produce a pupil friendly SDP (linked to Estyn’s key questions) to gain their thoughts and ideas for school priorities. Additionally, the wider pupil population are invited to engage in whole

school development through completing '2 stars and a wish' where pupils can note two things that are going well at school and one thing they think needs improving. Annually, staff are invited to sign their support for whole school development including their responsibility as duty bearers to promote and uphold the rights of children. There is a rolling programme of policy reviews with reference to UNCRC articles: examples seen include Safeguarding, Sex and Relationships, Teaching, Learning and Curriculum and Attendance policies. Succession planning is in place. An example shared was the pupils working with staff to create a visitor questionnaire which will gather the views of visitors to the school. Specific Articles will be linked to the questionnaire and pupils will analyse the results to look for areas of development.

Article 12 is at the heart of life at Trinity Fields. Pupils are enabled to fully participate in a meaningful and inclusive way. The assessors were able to see many examples of this during the assessment with the Headteacher stating *"RRS and listening to our pupils is natural and an expectation at school. My job is to support our pupils and make a difference. This can only be achieved by listening to them"*. Pupils have recently worked with the local Safeguarding Board to ask for a child friendly safeguarding policy which they could understand. On discovering there wasn't one, the Headteacher has worked with pupils to create a pupil friendly policy which includes symbols and photographs of designated safeguarding staff. This has been seen as excellent practice by the LA and is currently being shared with schools across Wales. All practices emerge from a rights based approach and are devised with the principles of dignity and best interest in mind.

Trinity Fields has a wide range of provision to enable pupils to become active citizens not only in their school but in society at large. The progress and evaluation form provides evidence of how the school has shared rights respecting practice with other schools including hosting visits for schools and recently working with the Children Commissioner for Wales to create and launch a UNCRC symbols resource. The Headteacher recognises that sharing good practice and being an Ambassador for RRS is a key theme post level 2 and continues to utilise every opportunity in network meetings to achieve this. Working with the mainstream satellite schools to embark on their RRS journey is highlighted as one of the actions post Level 2.

The school promotes Education for Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development (ESDGC) where pupils are taught about being local and global citizens as far as can be reasonably expected and achieved. There is evidence of a systematic approach to ESDGC. It is taught across the curriculum and also through engaging in whole school initiatives such as Eco Schools, Healthy Schools and Fairtrade, practices around ESDGC are being embedded into every day school life.

Standard B:

The whole school community learns about the CRC

Standard B has been achieved

The RRS steering group is predominately made up of adults including parents, with pupils being heavily supported to cognitively and conceptually understand their roles and the UNCRC. The school makes extensive provision for pupils to learn about and understand the Convention. Pupils spoken to have an understanding of the Convention and shared examples of how this translates into practice at Trinity Fields for example a pupil wish tree to Article 12 and healthy food to Article 24. Likewise, staff were able to relate their practices to the

Convention and understand their role as duty bearers. It was clearly evident that RRS has enriched the school's ethos and fundamental practices through including reference to the UNCRC. Staff shared a range of these practices: examples include PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) and Eye Gaze linked to Article 12, Individual Pupil Profiles linked to Article 3, Individual Educational Plans to Article 28 and Individual Behaviour Plans to Article 29. Staff talked about the importance of ensuring the enjoyment of rights by all pupils with one staff member noting *"rights are explicit in everything we do. It is important we work with our pupils to give them a voice and help them achieve their potential, whatever that may be"*.

Trinity Fields has adopted a right of the month approach and assemblies, calendar events, homework and curriculum work are linked to a different focus article each month. National and international calendar events are also linked to the focus article for example anti-bullying week and firework night links to Article 19. Displays linked to the Convention are consistent throughout school in all areas and the school has worked with pupils to photograph a variety of Articles which have been displayed bilingually on large boards and displayed around the school.

Governors are fully supportive of RRS and minutes of termly governing body meetings where RRS is discussed were available in the portfolio. Additionally, governors have met with pupils and completed learning walks to monitor RRS developments. During the assessment, a governor stated *"pupils feel safe and secure here and know they are listened to. RRS has given the school a language to validate this"*. Parents and carers are continually exposed to the UNCRC through bespoke presentations, letters home, a section on the school website and Articles are on all documentation including Individual Educational Plans and annual pupil reports. Parents interviewed appreciated the caring and nurturing ethos and when discussing Trinity Fields, one carer stated *"I have never been in a more welcoming school. X's behaviour has improved and he is settled here, rights has definitely helped with this"*.

Teaching staff ensure that curriculum and topic work are linked to Articles; lesson plans and schemes of work covering the Convention are evident for all curriculum areas. Examples were shown of Foundation Phase pupils linking their healthy eating topic to A24 and a cross curricular topic on Roald Dahl's, Gorge's Marvellous Medicine linked to Article 12. During this topic, pupils were able to make medicine in Science and linked their work to Article 6. Pupils have just completed New Year's Resolutions in Literacy and linked their rich task writing to Article 29.

Staff interviewed display a clear understanding of rights linked to ESDGC. Pupils have learnt about Fairtrade through their curriculum work and have introduced a Fairtrade café which is registered, in full operation and serves members of the school and wider community. Work on the environment and sustainable development has been taught across the curriculum linked to Article 27 and recently pupils have completed research on their heritage and learnt about life and local produce in Caerphilly linked to A7.

Standard C:

The school has a rights-respecting ethos

Standard C has been achieved.

Trinity Fields has worked collaboratively with pupils to agree golden rules which have all been linked explicitly to articles in the Convention. These golden rules are visual in all classrooms for reference to by staff and pupils (where appropriate). There is a prominent display of the



golden rules with reference to Articles outside the Headteacher's office. There was a consensus from staff that linking golden rules to Articles has enhanced their purpose and provided a meaning behind school rules. There was a clear understanding that rights are unconditional and that adults are responsible for providing rights however pupils are encouraged to respect the rights of others when behavioural issues arise. Standards of behaviour are generally excellent within the school and when low level behaviour occurs, pupils are helped to understand how their behaviour has impacted on the rights of others. During the learning walk, one pupil noted "*school is for everyone, not just grown ups*"!

Mutual respect is a strong feature of the school and this is supported through rights respecting language being consistently used by classroom practitioners and support staff.. Rights Respecting language is simplified in line with the cognitive ability of pupils and individual tailored support is provided to ensure that Article 12 can be enjoyed by all pupils. During a classroom visit, one pupil stated "*everyone at school makes me smile*" supporting the nurturing and respectful ethos at Trinity Fields.

Individual Pupil Profiles 'This is me' are on display in classrooms and visual timetables help pupils to understand their school day. Staff have worked with pupils to identify their likes and dislikes; what they are good at; what they are learning; things that are important to, and for them; and the best way to support them. All this information is linked to Article 3 and enables adults to act in the best interest of each individual child through knowing information about them. Staff are highly skilled in interpreting signals used by pupils with complex/profound needs to express their preferences. Pupils have the opportunity to plan some of their learning through pupil centered planning. Individual learning targets in collaboration with pupils, parents and/or carers are negotiated and set and link explicitly to Article 29. Wherever possible pupils' lead their own annual review meetings which start with a PowerPoint presentation of the pupils' achievements and progress since the last annual review. Additionally, assessment for learning has been developed and implemented in a way that accurately reflects pupils' abilities, needs and ages; these approaches encourage pupils wherever possible to evaluate their own learning. A reward system is in place to acknowledge pupil achievements which are celebrated through assemblies, celebration boards and special recognition by the Headteacher. Just recently, a pupil initiated '*strictly staff of the week*' where she recognises four members of staff who deserve a weekly award. This is now a standing item during Friday's celebration assembly and the pupil is supported to help present her weekly awards!

Questionnaires are completed annually by all stakeholders to ensure pupils feel safe at school and the School Council analyse results and identify areas of development with the Headteacher and Governing Body. The Safeguarding Governor undertakes regular learning walks and audits to ensure that health and safety protocols are being met. Pupil emotional health and wellbeing is of paramount importance and pupils have open access to the school Thrive Programme which has been introduced to support pupil wellbeing. The Thrive Officer is in post to aid pupil wellbeing and support individual pupils on a range of issues. Additionally, the school has a Parent Officer who liaises with families to support a range of issues which may have an impact on their time at school.

As noted in the impact assessment form, RRS has contributed to raised levels of respect and '*pupils see the child and not the disability. Pupils are very tolerant and appreciative of one another*'. Staff are trained to manage behaviour through a range of strategies whilst acknowledging that some pupils may have behavioural difficulties associated with their learning difficulties. A Positive Handling Policy is in place and all staff are trained to effectively

manage a range of situations. Positive behaviour is promoted and rewarded and Individual Behaviour Plans are adapted to suit the needs of all pupils.

Staff reported that they are finding that through RRS, the whole school community are exhibiting a greater understanding of differences and pupils are using the UNCRC to recognise themselves as both local and global citizens. Pupils are encouraged to discuss both local and global events and look at issues through reference to the Convention. One pupil recently learnt about cruelty to whales and initiated a campaign to stop the ill treatment of whales. Working with the School Council, a pyjama party was organised and posters designed. This is one example of Trinity Field supporting pupils to take part in campaigns.

Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

Standard D has been achieved

Pupil voice is at the heart of life at Trinity Fields. There are many opportunities for pupils to express their views and be involved in decision making across the school and pupils are taught that having their opinions listened to is an entitlement. The School Council is a representative group and has a high profile in all aspects of the school's work, "*we make sure we help the school*" explained a pupil during a meeting with the School Council. A new Head Girl and Head Boy are chosen each year by the Headteacher and they work closely with SLT on all matters that affect them. The School Council were integral in the recent development of a child friendly Safeguarding Policy and are currently working through all policies to create a child friendly version. Pupils are actively involved in the recruitment of new members of staff and work with SLT to review the SDP and set new school priorities. Additionally, pupils have recently completed a whole school survey on choosing what animals they would like in school and worked with an external organisation in assessing dogs for Pet Therapy. Pupils have chosen playground equipment and presented to PTA to request more money to purchase recycling bins.

An enriched curriculum helps pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles and making good choices. The school has successfully achieved all phases of the Healthy Schools Award and received a 5 star hygiene rating in their onsite cafe. A range of physical activities including swimming, hydrotherapy, trampolining and dance successfully promote a healthy lifestyle. Trinity Fields adopt a multi-agency approach and works very closely with external agencies and organisations to provide learning opportunities where pupils learn skills to prepare them for integration into the community after Trinity Fields via employment and/or training. Support is given to pupils and they are taught about healthy eating, cookery, personal hygiene and sexual health to aid their future development.

Examples were provided through the portfolio of the countless opportunities pupils are given to take action to uphold the rights of children locally, nationally and on a global scale including fundraising days which are linked to an explicit Article. Examples include taking part in the Shoebox Appeal, Children in Need and local charities such as the Foodbank. The school is linked to a school in Thailand where pupils have sent out educational resources linked to Article 28 and most recently the school sent equipment such as pupils' walkers to schools across the globe linked to Article 23. Staff interviewed were very clear on the importance of their role in ensuring that global citizenship in the curriculum and through whole school activities makes provision for challenging stereotypes and extending the understanding of interdependence which is implicit in being rights respecting.