

RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

SILVER: RIGHTS AWARE

School:	The Kings of Wessex Academy 'Kings Academy'
Headteacher:	Mr David Wiltshire
RRSA coordinator:	Mrs Louise Jory
Local authority:	Somerset (Wessex Learning Trust)
Number of pupils on roll:	1050 (aged 13- 18)
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher, deputy headteacher, RRSA lead
Number of children and young people spoken with:	15 students (Y10-13)
Adults spoken with:	6
RRSA key accreditations:	Date registered: 06/01/2022 Bronze achieved:29/03/2022
Assessor(s):	Jilly Hillier
Date of visit:	14 th September 2023

ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

The Kings of Wessex Academy has met the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver: Rights Aware.

EVIDENCE FROM THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

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 living.

- Students described a range of rights from the CRC including the right to be protected, to an identity, to privacy and freedom of thought and belief. They understood that the rights set out in the CRC are for all young people under the age of 18, all around the world. They discussed how rights gave them the “*space to be who you want to be*,” and were able to provide examples of where and when young people might be denied their rights such as during conflicts and natural disasters.
- Students explained that they learn about rights in assemblies, in tutor times, in PSHE and other subjects, for example when reading texts such as ‘A Change is Gonna Come.’ They also explained they learnt about rights through listening to the experiences of guest speakers and through extra-curricular experiences such as the Free and Equal Conference. The Article of the Week is adapted, and the deputy head described how “*good participatory student sessions*” allow for follow up discussions on rights issues. Links are also made to rights during focus days/weeks such as Holocaust Memorial Day and Anti-bullying Week. Evidence showed that the CRC is displayed around the school.
- Staff have received support from the RRSA Lead to become familiar with the CRC and RRSA. Each department has conducted an audit to see how learning about rights can be embedded and the CRC is mapped to the school calendar to support curriculum planning. Staff described how parents/carers are kept informed through the weekly bulletin and how they have started to “... *use the language and values of rights*” in discussions with them.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to deepen understanding of the CRC, its origins, values and principles and, for older pupils, its place within the wider framework of Human Rights. Ensure staff and young people have an understanding that rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional. Consider using the RRSA resource [ABCDE of Rights](#).
- Support staff (including new staff) to embed teaching and learning about rights in their planning and use the language of rights in their daily interactions with children and young people. See RRSA E Learning and courses available with RRSA membership. Consider involving students in staff induction.
- As discussed, consider how policies such as the Behaviour/ Relationships Policy reflects your rights approach and explicitly refers to the CRC. Consider including engagement with the CRC as part of the school’s interview process.

- Support governors/families/the wider community to learn about and understand the CRC. Consider working with the Trust to promote a rights approach and share your rights respecting journey.

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.

- The headteacher explained that the decision to embark on the rights respecting journey arose from the belief that it was important for the school's values, principles and culture to more explicitly "*drive strategy*." Consequently, the values were reviewed through a collaborative process and are being linked to the CRC. The headteacher went on to explain the importance of involving students more: "*It became very evident that the school was crying out for student leadership*."
- Respect is a core value and developing positive relationships is a key priority. One student said, "*School has made a lot of progress. I used to be picked on but now it's a nice environment to be in*." Another student described how school has supported him so that his "*confidence blossomed*." An identified next step is to develop a Respectful Relationships Policy.
- All staff receive safeguarding training and one student talked about the Safer Streets campaign explaining, "*For some people, school is their safe space*." He went on to say, "*Nearly every student feels safe in this school. We have a great pastoral team and staff presence*." Key topics in PSHE provide opportunities for students to explore rights issues such as consent and bullying. The 'Tell Someone Email' encourages students to report incidents and students know who to go to for support.
- Developing as a Rights Respecting School is part of the academy's wellbeing Improvement Plan which states: 'Improve, social, emotional and mental health delivery for learners, enhancing the well-being curriculum as a Rights Respecting School and through the embodiment of Kings Core Values (PRIDE).'
- Each faculty has an EDI representative and students understand that non-discrimination is a core principle of the CRC and life in school. One student spoke of the excellent support given to students from Ukraine while another talked about how different students' needs are catered for.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Make references to the CRC more explicitly in communications, for example in outlining the school's vision and values and explore with the school community the links between improved outcomes for children and a rights approach.
- As planned, involve students in leading training on promoting rights respecting language and challenging disrespectful language.

- Explore the concept of dignity – what it means and how it underpins policies, actions and interactions between everyone at school.
- Use the language of rights and respect to strengthen school systems for resolving conflict and in the promotion of positive attitudes.
- Continue to promote an ethos of inclusion, where all feel valued and where diversity is celebrated, relating this explicitly to non-discrimination.

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.

- The development of student leadership is an area that has been given priority and the deputy head said that students are now “... more able to speak out ... to say what they like and what they want to see done differently...RRSA has really added to that.” One student explained, “Democracy is at the heart of Kings” and another said, “We have lots of opportunity to have a say ... rights make it easier for students to get their voice heard.” An example of this is when students attended the Free and Equal Conference and were shocked to learn about the level of sexual harassment in society. One student described how they “... wanted to do something about it ... to put the power into the students’ hands so students can ‘See it, Say it’ ... and tackle it before it hits our school.” This led them to starting a Calling Out campaign which involved them presenting to both senior leaders and students about the importance of using respectful language and promoting a culture of respect.
- A range of student ambassadors lead on various aspects of school life such as anti-bullying, inclusion, student welfare and a new RRSA club. Students vote for charities to support such as Red Nose Day and Bristol Children’s Hospice. Students are also involved in supporting Cheddar foodbank and the uniform swap in school.

The following recommendations were discussed during the visit to help the school to progress to Gold.

- Continue to provide opportunities for young people to be at the heart of decision-making, influencing and shaping the life and work of the school. This could include explicit involvement in school improvement planning, policy review processes, training or the evaluation of learning and teaching.
- Develop students’ understanding of what it means to be rights respecting local and global citizens. See Introduction to Global Citizenship and Strengthening Global Citizenship courses <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/training-and-support/training-courses/> that could help with this.
- Consider how the role of Houses Captains could include being champions for rights and leading rights based campaigns and activities within school and within the Trust.