

UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL TWO (GOLD)

School:	Pentrehafod Secondary
Headteacher:	Jenifer Ford
RRSA coordinator:	Matthew Thomas
Local authority:	Swansea
Assessors:	Sarah Hooke and Bob Mattingly
Date:	25 th June 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a reaccreditation visit.

The assessors would like to thank pupils, the leadership team, staff, parents and governors for the warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with adults and pupils during the assessment, and for the detailed evidence provided to support the school's RRS journey. Prior to the assessment visit, the school provided a comprehensive self-evaluation form and impact evaluation form.

It was clear that during the visit everyone placed a real importance on respect for rights and promoting the school's rights respecting ethos, which was both inclusive and participatory.

Particular strengths of the school are:

- Confident learners who enjoy and are proud of their school
- Commitment from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), staff and pupils to respect their own and others' rights
- Consistent and rich opportunities for cross curricular teaching and learning about the Convention
- Meaningful opportunities for pupils to engage with pupil voice and influence school development both in policy and practice.

All standards have 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:

- Build on the good charity work already undertaken by enabling and empowering the young people to become advocates and campaigners for the rights of all children locally and globally.
- Continue excellent practice ensuring the UNCRC remains a strong and prominent feature in school both in policy and practice

4. THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

4.1. The school context

Pentrehafod School is an 11-16 English medium mixed comprehensive school serving the eastern side of Swansea. The pupil population currently stands at 946 with a rising number of pupils residing outside the catchment area and attending the school as a preferred placement. Approximately 27.5% in receipt of free school meals. This is significantly above both the local and national average of around 17% for secondary schools in Wales.

Pupils at the school represent the full range of ability and the school has a Special Teaching Facility (STF) for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. The percentage of the school population subject to special educational needs (SEN) provision is 22.9% with those on school action plus with 5.3% of pupils having a formal statement of educational needs.

No pupils speak Welsh at home and approximately 82% of pupils are from a White British ethnic background. 9.9% of the school population receive additional support.

The school registered to become rights respecting in 2013 and achieved the RRSA Level 2 Award in June 2015.

4.2. Assessment information

Self-evaluation form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, RRS Lead Teacher
Number of children and young people interviewed	40 (cross phase selection) + classroom visits 4 pupils who led the RRS accreditation visit
Number of staff interviewed	8 teaching staff 3 governors 2 parents
Evidence provided	Portfolios, learning walk, class visit, focus group session

Standard A:

Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

Standard A has been achieved

There has been a change in headship since the school successfully gained level 2 in 2015 and RRS has continued to develop with the school implementing the recommendations advised. The UNCRC continues to underpin the ethos at Pentrehafod and this is encapsulated through their mission being driven by the values of best interest, non-discrimination and participation. The Headteacher and SLT have sound knowledge of the Convention and use it as a framework to drive policy and practice; *“we have aspirations for all our learners to be supported to reach their potential. We are innovative and are continually looking for ways to ensure we provide a curriculum and learning environment that caters for the need of every pupil”*. RRS is recognised as a contributing factor to the school’s continued success and improvements. This is noted on the impact evaluation with exemplified statements noting significant impact in the reduction of exclusions and bullying, increasing percentages of pupils liking school and educational achievement. Attendance is on an upward trend rising from 92.7% to 94.2% over the last 3 years with the school using article 28 among other strategies to engage pupils and families in the importance of coming to school.

RRS is referenced in the School Development Plan (SDP) and the UNCRC is a continuous thread in the school’s Self Evaluation Report (SER). Additionally, RRS and explicit articles are clearly referenced throughout wider documentation including the school’s transition work with their feeder primaries and rights remain a focus in ESGGC planning. Furthermore, adhering to the school’s RRS ethos and having knowledge of the Convention is included in job descriptions, new staff inductions and forms the basis for the role of the Health and Wellbeing Coordinator. This approach of including links throughout all documentation

beyond the SDP evidences a sustained focus on referring to the Convention. Policies carry the RRS logo and are linked to relevant articles with Safe Guarding (article 19) and Home Learning (article 1/28) as examples seen. This will continue as policies are updated on a rolling programme.

Inclusivity and participation truly enshrine the ethos at Pentrehafod Comprehensive. Pupils and staff are treated as equal human beings whom are valued, respected and demonstrate tolerance and understanding to all which encompasses a truly rights respecting environment. SLT are constantly reviewing their work and a recent example of this is the school moving away from the traditional key stage model and moving towards a continuum of learning approach where pupils in year 8 will now be given options to tailor their learning to better support them in reaching their potential. Pentrehafod have in house STF and alternative curriculum provisions and opportunities are continuously provided to ensure that pupils are able to access onsite facilities, integrate with mainstream pupils and care is taken to tailor their curriculum to best suit their needs. Staff shared examples such as pupils partaking in skills based learning aimed to teach skills such as sewing buttons and ironing. Staff described *“we want to help our pupils be active citizens so provide practical experiences to help them to be able to navigate around society”*.

Pentrehafod continue to be active ambassadors for the UNCRC and RRS. This ambassadorial role has continued to be a key theme since achieving level 2 in June 2015. The school has evidence of supporting other schools across Wales through learning visits and twilight pupil and staff training sessions. Most recently, the school presented their RRS journey and impact at a Headteacher’s conference in a neighbouring local authority where feedback showed that schools’ were inspired by the pupil’s presentation. Furthermore, the school participates in termly LA pupil voice forums to help inform and advise on the work of the LA. Their most recent session being to consult on budget proposals and the LA’s action planning around child wellbeing. The school has also hosted visits for high profile visitors to showcase their RRS work including Welsh Government Ministers and Unicef Ambassador, Michael Sheen.

There is evidence of a systematic approach to curriculum development, planning and actions taken by SLT to ensure coverage of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) linked to the UNCRC. The impact of RRS in this area is noted as significant with pupils displaying more positive attitudes towards diversity and children feeling more empowered to act as global citizens. Pupils were able to talk about the extensive opportunities that they have had to learn about the global world through curriculum work, taking part in campaigns and whole school initiatives such as Eco and Healthy Schools. Pupils could articulate global inequalities and provided examples of where children face rights denial; *“human rights denial happens all around the world. We should all help make the world a better place no matter how big or small our actions are”*.

Standard B:

The whole school community learns about the CRC

Standard B has been achieved

Pupils spoken to were knowledgeable of the Convention in its entirety and could share the different ways they learn about articles both through their curriculum work and various whole school projects and practices. Pupils shared examples such as pupil voice linked to article 12 and engagement in their learning to article 28. Pupils spoke with passion and were competent in citing a whole range of articles and how they apply to school life and beyond. Examples among many included articles 14 to religion and celebrating diversity, article 15 to sport and extra-curricular clubs and article 19 to keeping safe in their community. Pupils were aware of the concept of duty bearers and could articulate how all adults share responsibly to respect and protect the rights enshrined in the Convention; *“rights belong to us, we are born with them and adults have a duty to help us learn about them”*. Pupils were keen to share their thoughts on government responsibility citing *“government needs to do more to help people learn about rights, it shouldn’t just be a choice for adults to tell us”*.

Parents and families continue to have opportunities to learn about rights through newsletters, specific letters home and a copy of the UNCRC is included in pupil planners along with the whole school charter. Additionally, information on RRS is prominent on the school website and information included in the prospectus. Pentrehafod has an open door policy for parents and regular activities and sessions are held to enable parents to be included in their child’s education which are often linked to specific rights. Governors are fully supportive of RRS and agenda items to share its progress are included in governing body meetings and sub-committee meetings. Comments from governors and parents include *“children are treated with importance, their views are taken seriously, I have seen a tremendous change over the last 33 years”* and *“my child will always quote rights at home, she is able to use them and we discuss them with her sisters”*. Assemblies are seen as an important way to cascade the message of the Convention to whole year groups which are often linked with national events and celebrations. Pupils often lead assemblies and the portfolio of evidence supports this. Rights are displayed around school through posters, in pupil planners and underpin the learning environment. Pentrehafod is currently a ‘live build’ meaning that the school is in the midst of a substantial refurbishment which will see the school become a state-of-the-art school once completed. Pupils have initiated designs for corridors, classrooms and public areas to creatively display rights once the build is completed.

The curriculum framework is supported by the UNCRC and both the accreditation visit and the portfolios of evidence provide extensive examples to validate this. Schemes of work and curriculum planning provide rich opportunities for high quality teaching about the Convention; *“children’s words are powerful and they can make a difference. As teachers, we need to extend and exploit our teaching and learning to enhance their knowledge of not just children’s rights but human rights”* noted one teacher. Many examples were shared including food tasting and learning about healthy eating and portion sizes in Food Technology linked to articles 6 and 24, researching the life of Syrian refugees in Geography linked to article 2 and 22 and pupils learning about stereotyping and racism in RE linked to article 14. The Convention supports the PSHE curriculum and pupils naturally linked learning about topics such as substance misuse, mental health, relationships and internet safety to the Convention; *“we have a moral obligation to uphold human rights as adults”*

articulated a staff member who spoke about the introduction of a young Amnesty group which is being introduced in the English department from September. This was initiated by pupils wanting to *“become activists to protect children and adults experiencing rights violation”*.

The Convention underpins the school's actions to promote ESDGC and Pentrehafod has achieved Eco School and Healthy School status and pupils have been creative with their work on Fairtrade by introducing a popup Fairtrade café. Pupils shared the opportunities that they have to learn about other countries and ESDGC across the curriculum. Pupils learn about countries such as Zambia across the curriculum and celebrate both similarities and differences of lives for children. Pentrehafod is linked with Connecting Classrooms for their international work which is an established partnership. The partnership in Zambia is focused on rights and aims to promote rights based education in their partner school. Pentrehafod has supported pupils to visit Zambia and experience first-hand the difference they are making in supporting the children at Siavonga High; *“children across the world are not lucky enough to live in a developed country which means they don't have opportunities such as having their right to a quality education or accessing healthy meals, we want to help children to know their rights”*.

Standard C: The school has a rights-respecting ethos

Standard C has been achieved

Previous school council members worked with SLT and the wider pupil population to create a whole school charter which was agreed and signed off by SLT and governors. The whole school charter is displayed in and around school and identifies the rights of children and the actions that both adults and pupils need to adhere to, to ensure children's rights are respected. A UNCRC poster and a copy of the charter are included in pupil planners. As respect for rights has been a longstanding feature at Pentrehafod, pupils reported that referencing the charter was now incidental and not a regular occurrence; *“we know that rights should be respected, this is all we have known since coming here”* and *“our charter is constantly with us but not needed because pupils do respect each other”*. When discussing the pupil actions on the charter, there was a clear understanding that rights are unconditional and the actions imply a moral responsibility for pupils to respect the rights of others.

It was clearly evident throughout the visit that respectful relationships are fostered and mutually respectful relationships exist between staff, pupils and staff and pupils with their peers. All classrooms were calm and purposeful and pupils were noticeably respectful and polite to one another. *“We have found that through pupils learning about rights, they are making more of a conscious choice to show respect and understanding towards each other”* noted SLT. Children are *“valued members of the school community”* explained a governor. The impact assessment form notes an impact in pupils developing positive relationships and behaviour and pupils were able to recognise how RRS continues to play a part in creating a positive learning environment.

It was clear that pupils are confident in having a voice and are increasingly involved in shaping their own learning. Pupils shared various strategies to express their opinions

including self-assessment, peer assessing and pupils working with their subject teachers to identify individual learning targets which are understood by all. These strategies, among others, provide clear evidence that pupils are involved in the evaluation of their own learning and understand their targets for improvement and how to achieve them, asking for help when needed. Additionally, staff note on lesson plans the amount of time each lesson is given for pupil led work/discussion which is implicit within a rights based approach. Pupils feel passionate about engaging in their learning and could recognise how respect for rights can contribute to a positive learning environment; *“we all have a right to an education which means disrupting others is not respectful of that right”* and *“teachers support our learning, we have loads of clubs and support sessions to help us to be the best we can be”*.

There is a nurturing environment at Pentrehafod and pupil wellbeing is a notable feature at the school. Pupils confirmed they feel safe at school and could identify a number of places and people who support their health, wellbeing and safety. The in house ‘Pawb’ service was particularly valued by pupils who recognised their invaluable support in aiding pupil wellbeing and being a place of safety to visit. Pupils have the opportunity to ‘check-in’ each morning to express their feelings and allow staff members to note/discuss problems and feelings as they arise. Furthermore, the school’s PLANT (Pentrehafod Learning and Nurturing Team) are available to provide intervention for pupils identified as having social and emotional difficulties. Practices such as these demonstrate Pentrehafod’s whole hearted commitment to support every child to overcome barriers to learning.

Pupils interviewed reported feeling confident in resolving conflict in a rights respecting way which includes recognising fairness and democracy. One of the initiatives that support this is Restorative Practice (RP) which is a strong feature in the school. Pupils are trained to work restoratively with each other to resolve moral dilemmas and are encouraged to respect each other’s thoughts and feelings in order to resolve conflict. RRS has enhanced this initiative and pupils and staff recognised that *“rights fits perfectly with RP. Problems are sorted with fairness and we are treated with dignity”* and *“if pupils understand how their actions affect rights, they are more likely to work restoratively moving forward”*.

Staff reported that they are finding that through rights discussions, pupils are exhibiting a greater understanding of differences and showing more empathy and tolerance of each other and using the UNCRC to recognise themselves as both local and global citizens. Pupils provided examples of countries where children are not able to enjoy their rights and linked it back to projects that they have undertaken in school such as their work with their partner school Zambia and national campaigns such as WaterAid linked to article 24.

Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

Standard D has been achieved

Pentrehafod has moved beyond the traditional school council model for pupil voice and have created a pupil parliament. The pupil parliament captures a wider range and number of pupils involved in shaping and supporting school development and pupils can be democratically voted onto the pupil parliament groups through an election process each academic year. Pupil parliament groups each take responsibility for an area of school improvement and the cabinet (two members from each of the parliament groups) meet

regularly with the Headteacher and SLT to present their ideas and action plans. During the accreditation visit, each of the parliament groups presented their most recent research projects and described how they have been trained by Swansea University on research and been supported to carry out meaningful research that has captured the voices of the wider pupil population. On election, all pupil parliament members participate in leadership training in preparation for their work and equip them with the skills they need.

The Teaching and Learning parliament group have been researching how teachers can be more interactive during lessons. After seeking the views of over 400 pupils, they have put forward recommendations to SLT such as teachers stopping the more traditional methods such as the 'lollipop system' for choosing pupils to answer questions in class and introducing stress clubs for pupils. The Community, Ethos and Wellbeing parliament group have looked at pupil voice and sought the opinions of over 350 pupils to determine how effective the pupil parliament is. Recommendations to SLT include introducing a cabinet office for the pupil parliament to be more accessible to pupils, having designated display boards for pupils to keep up to date with parliament group action plans and engaging parents with the work of pupil parliament groups. The Standards and Provision parliament group have recently changed the school uniform which is being rolled out to all pupils from September 2018. Pupils have designed the uniform, consulted with pupils and through their research project are going to campaign to the Welsh Government to support parents and families with uniform grants if costs are a barrier. The Business and Resource parliament group are working with the whole school community to change the fire and evacuation procedures by implementing a silent fire drill. The group have looked at the scientific evidence of emotions and brain responses and tried and tested different approaches to ensure pupils and staff could evacuate the school buildings in a calm manner in the event of a fire.

Apart from the research projects, other pupil voice achievements include interviewing for new staff appointments, supporting policy reviews, being consulted on the refurbishment of the school building and presenting to governors at sub-committee and full governing body meetings. With the support of the Food Technology department, pupils also campaigned and successfully stopped selling milkshakes at school after learning about their high sugar content linked to articles 6 and 24.

Pupils have access to information to help them make informed choices about their learning, health and wellbeing. The school has made good use of partnership working through inviting external organisations/professionals into school to share information with pupils on issues that affect them e.g. internet safety and anti-bullying. Pupils have had the opportunity to engage and make good use of such visitors through class activities and whole school assemblies and workshops. An example of Pentrehafod working effectively with external partners is the recognition of Pentrehafod School being the first in Wales to be awarded 'School of Sanctuary' status. This award reaffirms the school's reputation for care and support in their immediate and extended community. Pupils can access counselling services if required and have extensive opportunities to take part in clubs and activities that range from sports clubs, computing club, curriculum clubs and community clubs.

Pupils reported that they have had opportunities to take action to uphold the rights of children locally, nationally and globally and could articulate countless examples. Likewise, staff interviewed were very clear on the importance of their role in ensuring that global citizenship and sustainability in the curriculum makes provision for challenging stereotypes and extending the understanding of interdependence which is conducive with being rights



respecting. Pupils have supported food poverty in the local community through working with the local Foodbank and have taken part in local events to support Race for Life. Likewise, the school have supported national charities and causes including Unicef's Outright campaign, Save the Children and Children in Need. Pupils were passionate about their advocacy work and understand the impact that their actions have on their local and global communities.