

RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

School:	Castle Hill School
Headteacher:	Steve Perren
RRSA coordinator:	Dan Pearce
Local authority:	Kirklees
School context:	The school is for children and young people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and complex needs. There are 130 pupils on roll from ages 3-19. 21% of students are eligible for Pupil Premium Funding and 27% speak English as an Additional Language. The school maintained its Ofsted 'Outstanding' status in November 2024.
Attendees at SLT meeting:	Headteacher and RRSA Lead
Number of children and young people spoken with:	4 pupils from ages 9 to 16. The assessor was able to meet with more children and young people on a tour of the school.
Adults spoken with:	5 adults including members of the teaching staff, a parent and the chair of governors
Key RRSA accreditations:	Registered for RRSA: September 2016 Bronze achieved: November 2017 Silver achieved: March 2019 Gold: May 2022
Assessor:	Sarah Hodgkinson
Date:	09 May 2025

REACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Castle Hill School continues to meet the standard for UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award at Gold: Rights Respecting.

STRENGTHS OF CURRENT PRACTICE

This report is based on an in-person reaccreditation visit. The assessor would like to thank the children, the Senior Leadership Team, and staff for their warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with adults and children during the assessment and for the detailed evidence provided to support the process. Prior to the accreditation visit, the school completed a comprehensive School Evaluation: Gold form and provided a good range of digital evidence.

It was evident during the reaccreditation visit, and from the evidence, that children's rights continue to be embedded across the school and underpin every facet of school life.

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.

Strengths include:

- Rights learning that is embedded throughout the school, ensuring all pupils receive a rich learning experience, appropriate for their evolving abilities, and linked to articles of the CRC. Learning is tailored to meet the complex needs of individuals which means that rights learning can look different for different pupils throughout the school. All curriculum areas include articles of focus in their termly 'curriculum guides' and there is a school RRSA mascot that travels around the different classes to support with learning about rights. Rights are regularly discussed during staff training sessions and weekly briefing sessions to ensure consistency across the school.
- Duty bearers who are passionate advocates for ensuring all children access their rights. For example, the school uses a Total Communication Strategy to ensure that all students, many of whom are non-verbal or pre-verbal can access Article 12. A parent described how their child, who has significant barriers to communication, is part of the School Council and is supported by duty bearers to share their views by indicating a preference when given two options to choose from. A member of staff commented, *"It is a privilege to work with these pupils, and we want the very best for these children."* The headteacher described the school as 'restless' because they are constantly reviewing and adapting to meet the changing needs of students and ensure all pupils can enjoy their rights.
- Active and engaged governors, parents and carers who fully support embedding a child rights approach across the whole school community and beyond. In a recent parent and carer survey, 100% of responses indicated that pupils feel happy, safe, looked after and respected. The chair of governors commented, *"The effort made to acknowledge a child's right to education leaves me speechless. Often there are significant health issues concerning pupils and staff go over and above to ensure they get a good education."*

Strand B: Teaching and Learning through Rights

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.

Strengths include:

- The caring and nurturing ethos of the school, where the values of dignity and respect are lived and valued by the whole school community. This was evident in all interactions between staff and pupils observed as part of the school tour. Pupils use a 'Total Communication Approach' to establish relationships and communicate their wants and needs. Many of the pupils have significant barriers to communication, so a range of alternative and complimentary approaches are used, including: Intensive Interaction, Makaton sign, gesture, photographs, symbols and other reference items. This approach, combined with the values of dignity and respect, contributes to extremely positive relationships between staff and children. Staff are responsible for many aspects of personal care whilst pupils are in school and, to ensure the dignity and respect of all pupils, there is an agreed baseline of practice for many areas including feeding, use of touch, personal care, and safeguarding.
- A strong focus on the health and wellbeing of students within the context of rights so that young people are supported and protected. The school building is purpose-built, and it has been further developed to reflect the constantly evolving needs and abilities of pupils. There is a hydrotherapy pool, rebound therapy room, sensory regulation room and many other resources and spaces to support children's health and wellbeing. The headteacher explained that staff are, "...hypervigilant and in constant contact with families to ensure the best possible health and wellbeing for every student." Every week, the school assembly starts with a wellbeing slideshow showing pupils at school enjoying their rights.
- A caring and inclusive ethos where staff ensure that every child feels supported and fully involved in school life in a way that is meaningful and appropriate for every child. During COVID, the school established an Outreach offer where staff provided lessons at home for some of the most vulnerable pupils. Although now post-COVID, staff recognise that some pupils' medical needs are so significant that families can struggle to leave the home, so these weekly Outreach sessions continue to take place and are under constant review. The fully accessible play area ensures that all pupils, regardless of their physical capabilities, can enjoy the right to rest and play. There is a concealed track system built under the corridors so that pupils who use wheelchairs can move around the school independently.

Strand C: Teaching and Learning for Rights

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.

Strengths include:

- Pupil voice is valued by duty bearers who ensure, where appropriate, that children and young people are included in decisions about school life. The School Council have been involved creating a school charter, planning parties and supporting decisions on the new play areas.
- A strong desire to develop the school's building and grounds whilst considering the environmental implications and to embed a culture of sustainability and environmental awareness in the school. Since the previous Gold accreditation in 2022, a new building has been added to the grounds, the ReWorks hub, and this has been designed and constructed following the key principles of 'Passive Housing' ensuring benefits to the environment such as a reduced carbon footprint due to lower energy consumption. In the ReWorks hub, older pupils work on sustainability projects such as recycling clothing and repurposing melted plastic and old CDs. They have also invited pupils from other schools to work alongside students on these projects.
- Staff have been ambassadors for RRSA through networks with other schools, both in mainstream and SEND settings, some of whom are now working on RRSA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were discussed during the feedback meeting, to support the school to sustain its practice at Gold: Rights Respecting.

Recommendations:

- Create further opportunities for pupils (where appropriate) and staff to learn about rights in greater depth, including the origins and wider context of children's rights. Remember that the school has access to [RRSA training courses](#) and [RRSA Spotlight](#) staff training resources and the [Article of the Week](#) learning activities for pupils.
- Continue to support parents/carers and families to learn about and understand the [UNCRC](#) and engage further with the school's Rights Respecting journey.
- Continue to develop an ethos of inclusion and non-discrimination, providing opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity in all its forms including race, gender, belief and different kinds of families so that all people feel valued and included. You might find the [Global Dimension calendar](#) a helpful resource.
- Consider developing awareness, as appropriate, of global issues through work on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Use the [World's Largest Lesson resources](#) to support this.
- Continue to act as ambassadors for rights and the RRSA through your networks and in collaboration with the Local Authority and other schools.