

# RRSA ACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	St Mungo's Academy
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Angela Milton
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Mark Ruddy
<b>Local authority:</b>	Glasgow
<b>School context:</b>	St Mungo's Academy is a Roman Catholic state secondary school, with a pupil roll of 962. 84% of pupils are in SIMD deciles 1 or 2, with 61% entitled to Free School Meals. 150 pupils receive support for additional needs, whilst 40% of pupils speak English as an additional language (approximately 50 languages spoken).
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting:</b>	Headteacher, RRSA Coordinator
<b>Number of children and young people spoken with:</b>	19, across 2 focus groups
<b>Adults spoken with:</b>	10 (7 teaching staff, parent, librarian, family liaison officer)
<b>Key RRSA accreditations:</b>	Registered for RRSA: 04 November 2014 Bronze achieved: 06 June 2016 Silver achieved: 31 March 2017 Silver reaccreditation: 08 June 2021
<b>Assessor:</b>	Steven Kidd
<b>Date:</b>	27 September 2022

## ACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

**St Mungo's Academy has met the standard for UNICEF  
UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award  
at Gold: Rights Respecting.**

# 1. STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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 collection of digital evidence.

It was evident that children's rights are embedded across the school and underpin every facet of school life.

## Strengths of the school include:

- Pupils understand how their rights are connected within school life, to Catholic values, and to their local and global community.
- A strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders at all levels tied into the vision and values of the school. Quality training and support for staff has been sustained.
- The caring and nurturing ethos of the school, where the values of dignity and respect are lived and valued by students and their parents/carers. The holistic needs of pupils are driving decision-making.
- Strong pupil participation. There are several different mechanisms for students to feed into decision-making and leadership in different areas of school life. Pupils felt listened to, that their views matter and that they could make a positive difference, particularly in relation to learning and teaching.

## 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 Gold level. Here are our recommendations for your school:

- Continue to make rights visible across the curriculum and in projects and initiatives, particularly for senior pupils.
- Help young people to build familiarity with the meaning of key concepts underpinning a child rights-based approach, for example dignity and equity, and how these are enacted in school practice.
- Support pupils to challenge injustice and create further opportunities for all year groups to be involved in campaigning and advocacy work on children's rights. Consider using the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development as a framework for this and/or the UNICEF UK [Youth Advocacy toolkit](#).

## 2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>1. Children, young people and the wider school community know about and understand the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and can describe how it impacts on their lives and on the lives of children everywhere</p>	<p>Pupils spoke naturally and confidently about rights, displaying a good knowledge of a wide range of articles and assured in discussing key rights concepts. The Steering Group explained how they were working to “<i>share rights with everyone</i>”, chatting enthusiastically about making posters, presentations and videos to spread the message to peers. Pupils readily connected their knowledge of rights to practical examples of their school experience, especially to topical events and their charitable activities. “<i>Now that we’ve moved up a level [to Gold], we’re all doing things,</i>” said one teacher, offering examples from their own subject to illustrate how this included those where connections to rights may seem less obvious. “<i>I heard about rights probably within the first 20 minutes,</i>” shared one teacher, “<i>RRSA was part of the induction... and the observations, too. We were given really helpful handouts to explain how to have certain conversations [with pupils].</i>” Another colleague shared how there had been a question about rights at their interview: “<i>there’s an expectation that practice will be rights respecting.</i>” Credit was given to the training and support received, including the ‘Mungofax’ newsletter, but it was clear that rights were now recognised as “<i>a shared endeavour</i>” across the school. Newsletters and other regular communications to parents feature rights information, though the school continues to explore new opportunities to build knowledge in the school community; one such example was the very successful presentation by the RRSA group to the parents of the incoming S1 year group during a transition event.</p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>“<i>We’re embedding it, looking at our values and asking how we marry it up with rights,</i>” explained the RRSA lead, “<i>Yes, we’ve built it into the curriculum, but it’s about how we act.</i>” Adults across the visit demonstrated a passion and enthusiasm for a child rights-based approach, clear on the impact it was having far beyond rights teaching. The role of duty bearers was well understood and embraced, as was the importance of equity, with a real sense that the needs of pupils are paramount. The headteacher summed it up, “<i>If the rights agenda isn’t underpinning everything, there’d be no point... it has to be implicit in our actions. It’s a way of being now.</i>”</p>
<p>3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights</p>	<p>Several people spoke of valuing inherent dignity, making the connection to the school’s Catholic ethos, pupils noting that, “<i>everyone has equal dignity no matter what.</i>” They described a restorative approach when incidents occur and were confident that it was fair and respectful. “<i>Will you still see the occasional argument?</i>” questioned the headteacher, “<i>Yes, but you’ll also see lovely things, teachers taking their time to de-escalate things</i>”; one relatively new teacher picked up that point: “<i>It’s the language staff use when dealing with issues, dignity is so important. I wasn’t expecting everybody to have that language.</i>”</p>
<p>4. Pupils are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.</p>	<p>“<i>There’s always someone there to speak to, helping you with things,</i>” shared one focus group participant, evidence highlighting the extensive work of the Key Adult programme. The role of adults was the main reason identified by pupils as why they felt safe in school, though one participant highlighted that “<i>being taught about what our rights are</i>” was another contributing factor.</p>

<p>5. Children’s social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.</p>	<p>A strong focus on meeting the holistic needs of children was outlined by the headteacher and RRSA lead, indeed by all of the staff, explaining how they seek to be responsive to the needs of the community they serve, including during Covid lockdowns. <i>“Our school turned into a ‘mini ASDA’, we became a hub for food parcels,”</i> shared the headteacher, stressing how the pandemic continues to impact, with pressure on schools to resolve post-Covid issues, <i>“We’ve cushioned that with our own partnership team, dealing with reduced access to other services like youth work and social work.”</i> Pupils, staff and pre-visit evidence offered numerous examples of support provided by the school, including the impressive work of a dedicated Inclusion Team (funding through PEF).</p>
<p>6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.</p>	<p><i>“Although we’re a Catholic school, we have a very diverse population; things like reciting the school prayer are not mandatory,”</i> offered one focus group participant, as an example of respect for everyone’s beliefs. Other pupils spoke of how the school <i>“involves everyone”</i> through the provision of a wide range of activities to suit all interests and through specific support, such as EAL tutoring. The school’s librarian spoke of work, alongside pupils, to audit the diversity of their collection, the goal being to ensure it, <i>“reflects the community.”</i> Just outside the library, a ‘diversity mosaic’ celebrates almost 50 languages spoken in the school and the pupils who speak them – pupils worked for months to create the impressive tiled artwork. An Equity and Equality Group will no doubt be looking for further opportunities to celebrate that diversity through initiatives and projects.</p>
<p>7. Children and young people value education and are involved in making decisions about their education.</p>	<p><i>“There’s an expectation that you ask, and hear, student voice,”</i> explained one teacher, keen to highlight extent to which pupils are shaping their learning. Pupils supported the assertion, noting how teachers are <i>“open to new ideas”</i> in subjects; they spoke also of being involved in setting targets and evaluating their learning. The ‘7 Golden Rules for Participation’, developed by Scotland’s Children’s Commissioner, are used to guide engagement in ‘planning change and improvement in [pupils’] learning and the whole school’, with an annual Participation Report produced to share their progress.</p>
<p><b>STRAND C</b></p>	<p><b>Highlights and comments</b></p>
<p>8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.</p>	<p>Participation is a focus in the School Improvement Plan, so it is no surprise that there were numerous examples of the ways in which pupils’ voices are affecting change within the school. Pupils spoke of leadership opportunities and engagement with the Pupil Parliament as ways they could make their views heard, though they noted that the school’s active approach meant that they generally don’t have to persuade teachers to listen: <i>“We don’t have to bring it up, the school’s thinking about it already.”</i> As well as positions such as captains, senior pupils are benefitting from engagement in leadership programmes such as the ‘Marist Leadership Programme’, the SPARQs ‘Leaders of Learning’ initiative and the Glasgow Schools Forum.</p>
<p>9. All children and young people have taken action to uphold their rights and the rights of others, locally and globally.</p>	<p>Students discussed the importance of charitable work, linked to the Catholic ethos, with much of it done through the House system and led by pupils. Local causes such as Refuweege had benefitted, as had those further afield, such as SCIAF. COP26 had proven to be an inspiration for activism, with young people engaged in everything from awareness raising to art projects, as well as taking direct action in their locality, through recycling and litter picking. Other areas of campaigning interest had been addressing period poverty and supporting positive mental health, responding to community need.</p>