

We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School- what does this mean?

Our UNICEF approach supports our work on fundamental British Values so that they are seen as part of our Rights Respecting approach. For example, In 2017, following a visit from our local MP, our UNICEF Rights Ambassadors were invited to visit the Houses of Parliament to present a petition to 10 Downing Street calling for the government to allow more Syrian Refugee children into the country. Every child from year 1 to year 6 had written a letter to the Home Secretary and the whole school was involved in fundraising raising for Syria. The subsequent publicity and interest in their petition helped the children to see how democracy works; that they have a powerful voice and that their views count.

Why are children learning about their rights in school and what are 'rights'?

In signing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**CRC**) all Governments have a responsibility to make both children and adults aware of these rights. Schools are the best place to reach the majority of children.

Children are taught that 'rights' are not the same as 'wants'. Rights are the basic human needs and values that apply or should apply to everyone, for example:

- The right to clean water
- The right to an education
- The right to nutritious food
- The right to be heard
- The right to express an opinion
- The right to shelter

The UNICEF website outlines the articles in more detail and can be found at:

www.rrsa.unicef.org.uk

How do these rights fit into teaching the curriculum?

The teaching of rights links in to all subject areas and every aspect of school life from the Early Years to year 6. It is part of our Spiritual Moral, Social and Cultural approach, our PSHE curriculum, Inclusion, our safeguarding vision and our behaviour policy.

All our teaching and support staff receive regular training and support on how to incorporate rights based lessons into their planning.

Does the UNCRC talk about responsibilities?

The children are taught that they have the responsibility to respect the rights of others. These matching rights and responsibility statements are created by the children in their PSHE lessons and then displayed in each class as their 'Class Charter.' Children are taught that their rights are UNCONDITIONAL; they are not a reward and not dependant on them performing an action to get them.

What about children's respect for the rights of others?

UNICEF has shown that when children are taught about their rights under the CRC, they are more respectful of the rights of others and this has been increasingly evident at Havelock.

Children who know about their rights show:

- A better understanding of what it means to have rights
- Improved behaviour and attendance
- Better relationships with their class
- Sharper focus in lessons

There is also a Whole School Charter in place which was written in collaboration with our Rights Ambassadors. It includes the following Rights and Responsibilities:

- **Article 12** – Every child has the right be heard and have their views taken seriously.
- **Article 19** – Every child has the right to be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment.
- **Article 23** – Every child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence.
- **Article 24** – Every child has the right to health care, nutritious food, clean water and a clean environment.
- **Article 31** – Every child has the right to play.

As we are a school we will uphold Articles 28 & 29; giving children the right to an education and developing every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

What key vocabulary helps children understand about rights and what it means to be rights-respecting?

Children are taught 5 key words that will help them develop a sound understanding of rights and what it means to be rights-respecting. These are the 2 U's and the 3 I's:

- **Inherent** – Rights are **inherent** meaning they are yours because you are born a human.
- **Indivisible** – Rights are **indivisible** meaning no right is more important than another one. They are equal and linked.
- **Inalienable** – Rights are **inalienable** meaning you cannot give them away or sell them and no one can take them away from you.
- **Universal** – Rights are **universal** meaning they are for all children (under 18), everywhere, all the time.
- **Unconditional** – Rights are **unconditional** meaning they are not a reward and not dependent on a responsibility or performing an action to get them.

What can adults do to help children realise their rights?

- All adults (parents/ carers, teachers, governors etc..) are known as Duty Bearers. It is their responsibility to make children aware of their rights and to act if their rights are not being met.
- UNICEF workshops are held for parents so that they are familiar with the approach
- Governors are updated with our UNICEF journey on a regular basis. We have appointed a UNICEF governor who attends steering group meetings
- Our UNICEF Lead is Mrs Rupra, the deputy head teacher.