

# RRSA REACCREDITATION REPORT

## GOLD: RIGHTS RESPECTING

<b>School:</b>	Newman Catholic College
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Andrew Dunne
<b>RRSA coordinator:</b>	Susan Grace
<b>Local authority:</b>	Brent
<b>School context:</b>	709 pupils on roll, 77% speak English as an Additional Language, 110 pupils are refugees or asylum seekers and 30% receive pupil premium/FSM.
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting:</b>	Headteacher, assistant headteacher/RRSA lead
<b>Number of children and young people spoken with:</b>	16 in focus group, 38 in classes
<b>Adults spoken with:</b>	7 teachers, a LSA, an assistant headteacher, a refugee co-ordinator and the pupil premium/looked after children co-ordinator.
<b>Key RRSA accreditations:</b>	Registered for RRSA: 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 Silver achieved: 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2014 Gold achieved: 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2018
<b>Assessor:</b>	Isobel Mitchell
<b>Date:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> March 2024

## REACCREDITATION OUTCOME

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

Newman Catholic College continues to meet 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 range 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:

- Passionate and confident pupils who are knowledgeable and clear on the importance of rights and equality and are empowered to drive change.
- Rights learning is embedded across all areas, ensuring all students receive a rich curriculum linked to articles of the CRC.
- A strong commitment to children's rights and to RRSA from leaders at all levels tied into the catholic vision and values of the school.
- The school has a strong culture of inclusivity which is understood and articulated by young people and adults alike.
- An ethos that places positive relationships based on mutual respect and trust at the heart of school life creating a nurturing family atmosphere and strong community partnerships.
- Pupils are listened to and involved in decision making at all levels.

**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 embed the RRSA [Charter Guidance](#) and focus on the language of 'rights and respect' rather than 'rights and responsibilities.' Use the [Myths and Misconceptions](#) resource with staff to ensure accuracy of rights language.
- Continue to act as ambassadors for the CRC and the RRSA through being part of the secondary schools London steering group and through networking with other heads of Catholic schools.
- Continue to put the CRC at the heart of all new initiatives and ensure that there is an explicit reference to the CRC in the new school mission statement.
- Continue to provide opportunities for young people to campaign and advocate for their rights and the rights of others, consider expanding the London Citizens programme to include other year groups and/or develop campaigns with younger age groups in curriculum time through PSHE or equivalent. Unicef UK's [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#) may be useful in this regard.
- Further develop content on the CRC in staff induction and CPD using Unicef UK's [Spotlight CPD](#) resources.

## 2. VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

STRAND A	Highlights and comments
<p>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.</p>	<p>Young people spoken with during the visit discussed a wide variety of rights and were clear on the key concepts. One pupil said "...you do not have to earn them," and another added, "Rights can never be taken from you, and they are with you for life." They were particularly knowledgeable and passionate about equality and Article 2 – non-discrimination. One pupil defined discrimination as "...when people treat others unfairly because of their race, religion or anything else about them." Pupils explained that they have PSHE lessons every week linking rights to world events. Rights are built into the assembly programme, explicitly linked to the Newman Values and embedded across all subjects in the curriculum. Religious Education lessons provide many opportunities for learning about and discussing rights. For example, Y13 and Y10 recently took part in a workshop on the Israel/Palestine conflict from 'Solutions not Sides' with speakers from both communities, relating to Article 19 protection from violence and Article 38, protection in war. Since the last accreditation visit, the school have been taking part in the Model United Nations programme which has proved fertile ground for debating rights related issues with other schools and from different perspectives. Staff spoken with during the visit and those providing comments for the evidence prior to the visit are knowledgeable and passionate about rights. One teacher said that the work on rights is "...very important to us as it enables students to live happier lives," another member of staff added, "...students become more involved in their school and local community." The school is at the heart of the community and provides vital support for families, particularly refugee families and other vulnerable communities through support workers and specific projects such as the school foodbank. Parents and the wider community learn about the CRC through these projects and through excellent coverage of rights in the school newsletter and on the website.</p>
STRAND B	Highlights and comments
<p>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</p>	<p>There are more than 50 different languages spoken in school and 110 refugees/asylum seekers. 70% of students arrive at the school with little or no English. The headteacher explained how the framework of rights helps assimilate new students and create an inclusive environment where every person feels supported and valued. The school was recently reaccredited as a 'school of sanctuary' recognising the work they do to support refugees and asylum seekers. Comments from pupils make it clear that the school ethos is based on inclusion and respect; "There is a great relationship between staff and pupils – students feel comfortable to express their concerns." "It is a good learning environment and a safe space for people to relate and have fun together." The school have been recognised as a beacon school for their partnership work with Brent Police - two Safer Schools Officers are regular visitors and run workshops, Police Cadets and holiday camps. Young people spoken with emphasised how approachable staff are and said they would speak to the safeguarding team if they had any concerns. Staff comments supported this view, one member of staff said, "Kids feel comfortable to come to me as a tutor and share their concerns. I have worked in a few other schools where it is not like that." The focus on children's rights is clearly affecting</p>

learners and promotes wellbeing	<p>relationships in a positive way. The young people spoken with were adamant that their staff treat them with dignity which they linked to 'respect' described as a "core Newman value." They shared examples of how their staff treat them with dignity, "...teachers listen to our ideas, I wanted a debate club and now there is a debate club – it makes me feel a sense of immense pride." The Diocesan Inspection in March 2024 designated the school as 'outstanding' and highlighted a 'deep sense of respect' and cohesion in the school as well as noting that 'The behaviour policy is grounded upon the principles of the rights of the child; students show respect and recognise individual dignity.' Health and wellbeing are very well supported in school, there are many enrichment opportunities, particularly for 6<sup>th</sup> form, ranging from podcasting to gardening. A varied programme of clubs is available for younger years. The young people spoken with talked about how their mental health and wellbeing is supported, one pupil said, "...we learn about mental health in PSHE, and students can talk to a therapist who comes into school if they need to." They went on to say that the school also offers financial support to families who need it through the school foodbank. Inclusion is a strength of the school, one example of this is how all pupils are given space to enjoy their right to practice their own religion. Although they are a catholic school, they celebrate the end of Ramadan every year with a whole community Iftar event, the last event included speakers from the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities talking about what they have in common. Comments from young people spoken with during the visit illustrate the inclusive environment, "Because the school is so multi-cultural – it is not a discriminatory environment." "Teachers are really good when it comes to teaching about discrimination." Visiting professionals have noted how supportive the pupils are towards their peers with SEND, for example, trainers from Kings College noted how patient and respectful the pupils are towards those struggling with language. One member of staff said, "The other pupils are lovely towards students with SEND, one boy struggles with PE and they always pick him first."</p>
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<b>STRAND C</b>	<b>Highlights and comments</b>
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<p>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 children experience their rights.</p>	<p>The student council are involved in strategic decision making and have a positive impact on school life. For example, they fed into the newly revised mission statement and behaviour policy, and they have widened the GCSE choices available. Young people across the school are taking the lead on many projects in school and in the community. The Anti-Bullying Council have planned and delivered a series of assemblies and created posters and content for a student information webpage. Most young people are involved in some capacity in projects to support rights in the community and wider world, for example, pupils are part of forums with the local police discussing stop and search, refugee children are travelling to the House of Lords to express their views during refugee week and many pupils are involved as volunteers with the school food bank. Pupils have recently supported Soccer Aid for UNICEF and raised money for those affected by war in Ukraine and Gaza. Advocacy and campaigning work have been particularly effective through the 'London Citizens' programme. Recent successes include establishing the Brent City Safe Haven, installation of floodlights in the local park, establishing the Newman school food bank and a sleepout for the homeless. They are currently advocating on issues such as housing and a living wage to influence the candidates in the forthcoming election for London Mayor.</p>
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