



UNICEF UK RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT LEVEL ONE

School:	Newman Catholic College
Headteacher:	Daniel Coyle
RRSA coordinator:	Andrew Dunne
Local authority:	Brent
Assessors:	James Welsh and Maura Hayes
Date:	24 November 2014

1. INTRODUCTION

We would like to thank the leadership team, staff and young people for their warm welcome to the school, for the opportunity to speak with staff and young people during the assessment and for the evidence detailing the work towards becoming a Level 1 Rights Respecting School. Prior to the assessment you provided a comprehensive combined planning sheet and an impact evaluation form.

It was notable that Newman Catholic College is becoming an effective hub for the whole local community, recognising and supporting the rights of children and young people who have recently arrived in the UK. This has been accomplished by providing English language courses open to girls as well as boys and by making buildings available to the Brazilian and Romanian communities.
Standards A, B, C and D have all met the necessary criteria

2. THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL

2.1. The school context

This urban secondary school is situated in the most ethnically diverse borough in the country with one of the highest levels of in-migration. The main catchment area of the college is Harlesden and this is also the area with the highest number of children living in poverty. There are 707 students on roll. Key stages 3 and 4 are all boys with 50 girls in the mixed sixth form. This Roman Catholic college has an inclusive and culturally diverse intake of pupils from a range of ethnic and religious backgrounds including e.g. 11% Hindu, 11% Muslim. 42% of students have EAL, 6% have SEN, 23% are entitled to free school meals and 28% qualify for pupil premium.
In September 2011 Ofsted judged the school to be Good..



2.2. Assessment information

Combined Planning form received	Yes
Impact evaluation form received	Yes
Attendees at SLT meeting	Headteacher / RRSA coordinator / Lead teacher for Citizenship and Student Voice
Number of children and young people interviewed	34 students in focus groups and tour 125 students through class discussions on rights issues
Number of staff interviewed	8 teaching staff 2 support staff 1 parent 1 parent governor
Evidence provided	Learning walk Written evidence Assembly Visits to classrooms

Standard A:

Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

Standard A has been achieved

The Head Teacher and Senior Leaders of Newman College have a clear vision of a Catholic school fulfilling a mission to the poor in 21st century London. The school warmly embraces the new migrant communities in the area around the school and sees the UNCRC as providing a complimentary framework to support the work of the college in all aspects, academic, spiritual, moral, cultural and social. Education can “transform the lives of the poor people who come”. The school is working hard to encourage aspiration and the new communities are ambitious to succeed. This in turn is having a positive effect upon the traditional cohort of students. RRSA underpins the school improvement plan as it permeates ALL areas thus dovetailing the RRSA journey with whole school improvement.

The college is using the CRC to help inform policy development in sensitive areas such areas as protection from violence; (including FGM) and respect for culture. The school has adopted good practice by incorporating student views into the ongoing review process. The assessors saw several examples of this in the Anti-bullying, Disability Equality, Health and Safety and Child Protection policies.

In order to ensure that the whole college learnt about the Convention in a systematic way individual articles were allocated to appropriate subject areas so that they could be



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embedded into schemes of work and lesson plans. The school held a one day conference on Just Living to introduce the Convention to the students who became the steering group. INSET for all the staff has been followed up through regular staff meetings.

The College is highly regarded for active citizenship work. Parents and school leaders worked to establish one of the largest “City Safe Zones” in London. 64 businesses will provide sanctuary for young people who feel they are in danger. This process has improved relationships with the community both ways. Young people are being supported outside school and the stereotypes that are often attached to groups of young people are diminishing.

Essential to the school’s mission is being proactive with regard to social justice. The school campaigns with London Citizens for a living wage – but also pays a living wage. It is hoped that young people and adults will grow in confidence to embrace their political and democratic rights.

A key part of the school improvement plan is that young people get a chance to have contact with people from around the world. Embracing the local community has led to strong links with the Education Department in Bucharest. The school has 40 Romanian students, one teacher and two TA s. There are plans to establish links with a school in Uganda and the leadership team are currently looking for further meaningful opportunities to enhance global learning.

Standard B:

The whole school community learns about the CRC

Standard B has been achieved

Most students are aware of some articles naming for example, the right to clean water, safety, education, identity and freedom from torture. With guidance students could elaborate upon the universality of rights and that they are unconditional and inherent. Because articles are listed in planners and easily accessible students had not always internalised the knowledge. Teachers explained confidently that articles had been embedded in schemes of work. Boys in Year 9 English were studying “Wild Child” and they explained which rights were being denied in the story. The assessors visited Art classes where students were using symbols within self-portraits to express and celebrate culture and identity.

A variety of communication channels are employed to keep parents, carers and governors informed about the progress towards RRSA and also to gradually deepen understanding of the articles. In addition to the web site, the “NewMan” magazine and newsletters; each PTA, Governors, Staff and School Council meeting starts with an examination of one article and the implications for the rights holders and duty bearers at the school. In addition the parents explained that they learnt a lot from the young people at home and were frequently involved in rights based school events such as Community Day. The PTA is working across the parent body to help parents, including those considered “hard to reach” to understand their roles as Duty Bearers. The Improvement plan and policies are reviewed at Governors meetings in the light of the CRC. The Foundation Governor is spends time in school and actively liaises with the local community on behalf of the school.



There is an annual assembly plan with a weekly focus on an article. In addition, each assembly has to reference citizenship and Christian teaching. Assessors witnessed a key stage 5 assembly celebrating diversity at the school and recognising the challenges faced by young people who are new to the country. One student said, “Everyone at school really gets along”. Another said; “It is important to respect everyone’s culture because we all have a right to enjoy this”. From time to time there are special assemblies on the CRC.

There are some displays dedicated to the CRC in the entrance hall and a variety of photographs illustrating students from the college enjoying various rights.

Citizenship is taught across the school through all subject areas in the summer term. In one science class the assessor discussed issues around climate change and sustainability. Students gave reasons for concerns but also posed solutions including developing new technologies, renewable energy, the importance of education, awareness raising and changing our own behaviours to conserve sparse resources. Students also identified the need to win the support of policy makers, politicians and the most difficult of stake holders – business leaders

Students study global issues as part of RE and Geography. During the World Cup students studied the juxtaposition of money spent on stadia compared with the poverty of the favelas. The school has an annual Black History Month which matters to the young people who appreciate the opportunity to address the balance.

Standard C: The school has a rights-respecting ethos

Standard C has been achieved

The school has developed a Learning and Behaviour agreement which is implicitly underpinned by articles. This is displayed prominently throughout the school and is embraced by everyone. There is a very high level of ownership among the students who feel that the sanctions are fair. The school is beginning to develop charters for the dining room and for the new Peace Garden.

The assessors visited a wide range of lessons covering age ability and subjects. It was clear that everyone is learning in a rights respecting environment. A member of the focus group said, “The teachers and the children are very close in this school”. The governor supported this saying; “We are all one, we are the same”. When asked what it would be like if there was no RRSA at the school a student replied; “We wouldn’t have the good relationships we have with our teachers”. Another in the same group said; “Learning would not be so much fun...it would be like being forced”. A third student said...“our relationships would not be so good”. The Head of English explained that the; “CRC brings everyone together in a cohesive way”, while a parent said; respecting the rights “helps to make nice people”.

All the young people interviewed felt safe and cared for. They gave numerous examples of how staff created this environment. They were particularly appreciative of the staff presence outside as they travelled to and from school. There is no doubt that students feel that they are listened to as individuals and the strong pastoral system ensures access to appropriate help.

Staff and Governors explained that there has been noticeable progress in developing positive behaviours and that RRS has been a catalyst for this. Young people are more confident in themselves now, they try to resolve issues but also defer to staff in a spirit of



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trust – that resolution will be fair and equitable. There is much less low level disruption, name calling and general teasing. Students gave examples from RE and Philosophy lessons where rights provided a natural reference point in moral dilemmas. They were learning to tease out contemporary issues and make judgements in an objective and even handed way.

Knowledge and understanding of rights has led students to identify charities to support including CAFOD, the Shoebox appeal and Samaritan's Purse.

At the time of the assessment the school had just had the official opening of a new Rights Respecting Peace Garden. This is situated in a courtyard, designed with students and built with the help of former students. This new space provides an oasis of calm in an inner courtyard. Mature olive trees are dedicated to inspirational figures from the human rights movement including Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi.

Standard D:

Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners

Standard D has been achieved

Articles 12 to 17 have found a home at Newman College where participation is interpreted as active citizenship. There is a strong focus on student voice with numerous forums for students to develop and initiate change driven via a robust school and class council system. Student views are welcomed on every issue. Students pointed out that the ICT curriculum would better serve routes to university if it were Computer Science – and this is now established at Key Stage 4 and 5. Students worked with teachers to transform the internal exclusion facilities and processes so that they supported students in isolation while demonstrating that they need to address their behaviour and attitude. One student explained that he had been involved in an enterprise project outside school and that the Head Teacher had responded immediately and positively to facilitate an extension of this with in school even though this required some special organisation.

Students at Newman College have access to information and resources that will support their learning and encourage initiative. There is a well-developed system of target setting and many in the focus group confirmed that they were able to have a genuine discussion about their aspirations and targets with teachers and parents on Academic Review Day. There is a consistent marking policy which gives students time to respond to the feedback from their teachers. Homework is often independent research but this is set in such a way that students have to engage with their findings. PSHCE includes work on healthy lifestyle, education on harmful substances and transport safety.

A group of students took part in the launch of "Work Ready" at the Houses of Parliament and one of the Sixth Form Students was a speaker. This programme provides 4 week work placements which are providing a good route into employment and further education, so the timetables of students have been adapted to allow for this.

The school is closely allied with London Citizens and Citizens UK – this network campaigns at a grass roots level. Students are working to improve road safety around the school and in particular to move a zebra crossing closer to the school entrance.

The school has student representatives on Brent Anti – bullying Alliance, as sports leaders at a local primary school, travel ambassadors, and link with Harlesden Young Voices.

On the 25th anniversary of the CRC, the Catholic Children's Society led assemblies to consider the needs of young people who are looked after. Students took part in an activity



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called Ribbons for Change and sent photographs to UNICEF as part of the OUTRIGHT campaign.

2.3. The future

The assessor would like to encourage the school to continue work on becoming rights respecting and work towards the award at Level Two.

The following recommendations are made to support the journey based on those that have proven valuable in other schools and settings in helping them to develop their practice at Level 2. The recommendations made by the assessors are listed below:

Attend training at UNICEF called "Moving from Level 1 to Level 2"

Deepen understanding of the UNCRC across the whole school community

Develop a whole school Charter in the recommended style to sit alongside your existing behaviour agreement. This will support the development of explicit reference to rights

Invest in large scale displays to support the rights based ethos

Investigate the Global Learning Programme to support further development in this area

