



FURTHER INFORMATION

Find out more about the Rights Respecting Schools Award and how to register your participation:

🌐 unicef.org.uk/rrsa

✉ rrsa@unicef.org.uk

☎ 020 7375 6059

DAY FOR CHANGE

Day for Change is UNICEF's annual school fundraising initiative – for more than 20 years, schools have made a 'change' to their day, and raised money for our work to protect and promote child rights. Each year we focus on a different country and theme, and provide everything schools need to have a great day – posters, fundraising ideas, lesson plans, presentations and much more.

🌐 www.dayforchange.org.uk

TAGD

UNICEF UK Tagd is a network of young people aged 11–18 in the UK who are committed to children's rights. By fundraising, campaigning, and spreading the word they can make their voice heard on issues that concern them:

🌐 www.tagd.org.uk

UNICEF UK

RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS AWARD



ALL CHILDREN, EVERYWHERE

ABOUT UNICEF

All children have rights which guarantee them what they need to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their potential. Yet every day these rights are denied. UNICEF is the world's leading organisation working to protect and promote children's rights.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) guides everything we do, including our work on education. The Convention is a comprehensive human rights treaty that enshrines children's rights in international law. It defines universal principles and standards for the status and treatment of children worldwide.

UNICEF UK promotes children's rights in schools in two ways: by supporting schools to ensure that rights are embedded in their ethos and policy-making; and by offering resources and activities to ensure that children and young people can learn about rights in the classroom and beyond.



WHAT IS UNICEF UK'S RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS AWARD?

The RRSA recognises achievement in putting the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. By taking these steps a school community helps improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their potential. A rights-respecting school not only teaches about child rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationships: between teachers/adults and pupils, between adults, and between pupils.

Across the UK, the RRSA is being successfully implemented in early years settings, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, and pupil referral units.

THE RRSA STANDARDS

To be accredited as rights-respecting, a school must show evidence that it has reached all four of the standards:

1. Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management;
2. The whole-school community learns about the Convention;
3. There is a rights-respecting ethos;
4. Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners.

A school uses the standards and other guidance provided by UNICEF UK to plan and monitor progress.

HOW IS THE AWARD STRUCTURED?



To become rights-respecting, a school works through three stages:

RECOGNITION OF COMMITMENT (ROC)

The Head and senior leadership commit to becoming a rights-respecting school. A representative steering group of adults and pupils is formed to guide, promote and develop the initiative throughout the school. The steering group develops an action plan for implementing the RRSA standards and identifies procedures for monitoring the impact of the initiative.

Duration: Between 3 to 6 months.

LEVEL 1

A school achieving Level 1 has made good progress towards embedding the values and principles of the Convention into its ethos and curriculum. Schools must also be able to show how they plan to fully embed these values and principles as they work towards Level 2.

Duration: Between 12 to 18 months.

LEVEL 2

A school achieving Level 2 has fully embedded the values and principles of the Convention into its ethos and curriculum. Schools must also be able to show how they will maintain these rights-based values and principles.

Duration: Between 2 to 4 years.

ASSESSMENT

The school self-evaluates progress against the Level 1 and 2 standards and, when they believe they have met the standards, an external assessment takes place. Following this, a written report is provided and, where the standards have been met, the school is accredited.

From a school's initial commitment through to final assessment can take up to four years.

PARTICIPATION AND IMPACT

HOW ARE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED?

Children and young people play an active role in their school becoming rights-respecting. The RRSA provides a framework for pupil participation based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Adults are encouraged to work with children and young people to ensure their views are heard and valued in decision-making which affects them. There is recognition of the emerging capacities of children to play an increasingly informed and active role in the life of the school.

In a rights-respecting school, participation runs through all aspects of school life. For children and young people, knowing that they have the right to be heard in decisions which affect them boosts not only their sense of security but also their self-confidence. This opens the way to developing and applying the skills, language and concepts that allow them to realise their rights and to advocate for the rights of children everywhere.

“The RRSA has had a profound effect on the majority of the schools involved in the programme.”

Evaluation of RRSA by the Universities of Sussex and Brighton

“After 16 years as a headteacher I cannot think of anything else that we have introduced that has had such an impact.”

WHAT IMPACT DOES THE RRSA HAVE?

The pattern emerging since 2007 – from schools’ self-evaluation, UNICEF UK Education Officer visits, and by external researchers – is consistent for all types of schools and settings in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The main areas of impact are:

- improved self-esteem and well-being;
- improved behaviour and relationships (reductions in bullying and exclusions, and improved attendance);
- positive attitudes towards diversity;
- improved engagement in learning;
- children and young people’s support for global justice;
- children and young people become more engaged in discussing, planning and reviewing their own learning.

Parents have also reported support for the values and principles of the Convention. This is based on the beneficial impact they see when their children adopt rights-respecting language and behaviour.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

UNICEF UK provides support and guidance to individual schools, clusters of schools and local authorities to implement the RRSA.

Our experienced Education Officers have developed training and support options specifically designed to help schools progress through the award.

UNICEF UK Education Officers:

- deliver training/CPD courses;
- make in-school support visits;
- work jointly with local authorities to develop and accredit schools working towards becoming rights-respecting;
- assess schools.

Support is also provided through the RRSA Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) website which makes guidance materials and curriculum resources readily available to schools and local authorities. This guidance has been developed by UNICEF UK and rights-respecting schools.

COVERING THE COST

As a registered charity UNICEF UK rely entirely on voluntary donations to fund our vital work for children and their rights. Therefore we charge for regional courses, school visits, local authority support, assessments and other activities. Our RRSA programme does not make a profit – it simply aims to cover our running costs.

RESOURCES

UNICEF UK’s education team have developed rights-based assemblies and a wide range of curriculum resources to support teachers’ work on children’s rights and global citizenship. These resources are suitable both for teachers working in schools engaged in the Rights Respecting Schools Award and teachers who are generally interested in teaching about children’s rights and participation.

Resources are available for Early Years, Primary and Secondary School pupils. Some resources will overlap between age groups.

www.unicef.org.uk/resources

