

# RRSA Assessment Report: Level 1 (Silver)

## Assessment Details

<b>School</b>	Children's House Montessori (Birling, Kent)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Randa William
<b>RRSA Coordinator</b>	Randa William
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Assessors</b>	Frances Bestley and Paul Harris
<b>Date</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2018

## The School Context

Children's House Montessori (Birling, Kent) is a nursery for children aged two to five years. There are currently 30 pupils on roll with 11 pupils aged three years or older. The school is a member of the Montessori Schools Association. It also has 'Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board' accreditation.

**First registered for RRSA** July 2017

**RoC achieved** November 2017

## Assessment Information

<b>Progress and evaluation form received</b>	Yes	<b>Impact evaluation form received</b>	Yes
<b>Attendees at SLT meeting</b>	Headteacher.		
<b>Number of children and young people interviewed</b>	Observations of a 'circle time' activity (16 pupils) and an individual pupil activity, both led by the Headteacher.		
<b>Number of staff interviewed</b>	Deputy headteacher, trainee teacher (also a parent) and parent.		
<b>Evidence provided</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning walk and observations of learning activities</li> <li>▪ Written evidence</li> </ul>		

## The Assessment Judgement

**Children's House Montessori (Birling, Kent) has met the standard for the Unicef UK Rights Respecting Schools Award at Silver**

The following good practice evident at the assessment contributes to the school's success at Level 1.

### Standard A:

#### Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management

- There is clear strategic commitment to the principles and values of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which fully integrates with the school's ethos, aims and Montessori practice; as the headteacher explained it's '*not either or, but together*' with the Convention helping to provide a language and framework for the school's work. Similarly, the deputy headteacher described how it's '*in our heart, in our mind*'. All staff have received training about the Convention and are members of the school's steering group. Working towards RRSA Silver Award is part of the school development plan and the school's rights respecting work is a 'standing item' in team meetings.
- The headteacher has been very proactive in promoting the school's RRSA work within the wider Montessori school community, including in her role as Chair of the Montessori School's Association for Kent and East Sussex.
- Children's understanding of the wider world is promoted through 'world day' events during the course of the year such as 'International Mother Language Day' which was being celebrated on the day of the assessment visit.

### Standard B:

#### The whole school community learns about the CRC

- There is a whole school focus on seven rights from the Convention- Articles 7, 12, 19, 23, 24, 29 and 31. From observations of a 'circle time' activity and an individual child's learning activity it is clear that older children have a very good knowledge of these rights with one child commenting that other children in the world '*still have the same rights*'. Of particular note is the development of a wide range of resources to support children's learning about rights. For example, these include 'name the rights' game, 'voice' cards and 'rights dominoes'.
- An innovative way of involving parents and carers has been the creation of 'Polly Protection' and 'Eddie Education' activity bags. The bags are taken home by two of the children on a weekly basis and include a copy of the Convention, a book connected to rights and a book for comments and drawings related to the themes of education and protection. Parent comments about the school's rights respecting work were very positive and supportive.

### Standard C:

#### The school has a rights-respecting ethos

- Respect is an integral part of the school's ethos and a very positive and supportive learning environment was evident to the assessors throughout their visit. Children are nurtured to be aware of the needs of others. For example, there are sand timers to help support turn taking and mats to give pupils their own work space. Older children are also encouraged, as appropriate, to support younger children. If disagreements occur a 'peace table' is used to help resolve issues. At the peace table, children take it in turns to comment (when they are holding a toy rabbit) and through this process a resolution is found. As the headteacher explained, use of the peace table is '*always linked[ed] to the right to talk.*'
- Children's learning about health and well-being is supported with teacher led sessions and in a range of other ways such as with art therapy and pupils having access to 'worry

dolls'. The use of Articles 19 and 24 also helps to reinforce the importance of safety, health and well-being. For example, Article 24 is displayed near the fruit snack table.

#### **Standard D:**

#### **Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners**

- Children are able to choose the activities that they wish to engage with as part of the school's 'follow the child' philosophy in developing learning. Consequently, 'children's voice' is at the heart of everyday practice. The use of the peace table is a further example of this with Article 12 displayed nearby.
- Pupils learn about the principles of democracy. For example, after the 'circle time' activity pupils voted on choosing the next activity with one child explaining how the '*biggest number gets it*'.
- The school has participated in the Unicef and Clarks 'ShoeShare' scheme and has been active in raising funds for a range of Unicef humanitarian resources including 'A school in a box'. Children have also made a harvest display in the local church and as part of the local community contributed food to the harvest celebrations in support of the homeless. All of these activities are helping children develop their understanding of the wider world and as part of 'International Mother Language Day' pupils participated in an activity based in French and in their 'circle time' had the opportunity to share a few words in any languages they knew in addition to English.

## Moving to Gold

Level 1 (Silver) is an important milestone on the rights respecting journey. In the light of the assessment visit, the assessors have identified the following priorities for further progress. These recommendations, based on Unicef's experience with schools across the UK, will have been discussed in more detail during the assessment visit.

In order for the school to progress successfully to Gold (subject to confirmation that this stage will be available for 'nursery only' settings), the following steps and actions will be required:

### Strand A – Teaching and learning about rights

Embed a clear understanding of 'Rights Holders' and 'Duty Bearers'.

Work towards deepening and widening the knowledge and understanding of Articles across the whole school community - appropriate to age and ability - develop awareness of rights being: Inherent, Inalienable, Indivisible, Universal and Unconditional including appropriate CPD and staff induction.

Find creative ways of making Articles even more visible and high profile around the school and on the website.

### Strand B – Teaching and learning through rights

Explore ways to evidence a correlation between improved outcomes for children and the implementation of a rights-based approach across the school.

Consider developing the school's strategic documentation to link to and reflect relevant Articles of the CRC and ensure that leaders at all levels can articulate school improvement in terms of the CRC.

### Strand C – Teaching and learning for rights

Consider pupil involvement, as appropriate, in aspects of strategic review and development, policy review processes, improvement planning and development of resources.

Explore further ways of developing children's awareness of the global dimension, as appropriate, through themes such as fair trade and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (for example, by engagement with [The World's Largest Lesson](#)).