

St Bridget's Church of England (Controlled) Primary School



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18th September 2012

Rights Respecting Schools

This year, St. Bridget's is to embark upon an inspiring new initiative: to become a '**Rights Respecting School**'. The concept was created by the charity **UNICEF**. Children's rights are central to all aspects of UNICEF's work, including education, and they use the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** as a framework for their activities.

The **CRC** is a comprehensive human rights treaty that enshrines specific children's rights in international law. These rights define universal principles and standards for the status and treatment of children worldwide. The CRC consists of 54 articles. A 'child' is defined as every human being below the age of 18. The key provisions are:

- The right to a childhood (including protection from harm)
- The right to be educated (including all girls and boys completing primary school)
- The right to be healthy (including having clean water, nutritious food and medical care)
- The right to be treated fairly (which includes changing laws and practices that discriminate against children)
- The right to be heard (which includes considering children's views)

At St. Bridget's, we believe that it is vital to teach children about their rights, and that the children understand that with rights, come responsibilities. Teaching children and young people about the CRC means that they can find out about the legal and human rights and responsibilities that underpin society. By learning about the Convention, children and young people in the UK can discover that:

- They have rights
- They should be informed about their rights
- They should be helped to exercise their rights
- They should be able to enforce their rights
- There should be a community of interest to advocate young people's rights

An important aspect of the CRC is that, in understanding their rights, children will learn to understand and appreciate their responsibilities.

These tenets of the CRC are true for children and young people worldwide, making the Convention an excellent starting point for understanding global citizenship.

Our hope is that becoming a Rights Respecting School will have a positive impact in a number of ways:

- Improved self-esteem and well-being
- Improved relationships and behaviour (reductions in bullying and exclusions and improved attendance)

- Improved engagement in learning
- Positive attitudes towards diversity in society and the reduction of prejudice
- Children and young people's enhanced moral understanding
- Children and young people's support for global justice
- Children and young people become more involved in decision-making in schools

We have a detailed action plan which lists the methods by which we plan to embed the CRC.

Much of the plan involves ensuring that all staff, parents, carers, and members of the wider community are informed and have a good understanding of what we are aiming to achieve. The plan includes:

- Informing governors
- Steering committee meetings (with representatives from every aspect of school life)
- Rights Respecting Schools Assemblies
- Special Rights Respecting Schools Days
- Embedding Rights Respecting School into the curriculum and school policies
- Keeping parents informed via newsletters, VLE, displays, visits to school
- Relating special occasions to Rights Respecting Schools

Rights Respecting School Day One:

This will take place on Wednesday 3rd October . It will begin with a special assembly delivered by Mrs McCarthy and Miss Smith, the Rights Respecting Schools Coordinators. The rest of the day will involve class activities based on helping the children understand the difference between 'wants' and 'needs'; devising a 'class charter' (an agreement for a rights respecting classroom); and designing a poster which depicts one of the articles or rights (one poster will be chosen to go on display in school, one to go on display at church, and the rest will be sent home to help spread the news about Rights Respecting Schools).

Harvest Festival: This will be based on a number of articles related to celebrating harvest. It will take place in church on Thursday 4th October and is led by the Year Three children.

We are eager to embrace the values of the CRC and hope that before long, you and your children will share our vision of, not only being a happy and successful school, but a Rights Respecting School too. We look forward to hearing your views in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

T McCarthy

N Smith

If you would like further information about Rights Respecting Schools and the CRC, you can go to the UNICEF website: www.unicef.org.uk