



**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
29 MAY 2019**

SUBJECT: RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD

**BY: ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
CARE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award which is being promoted across Moray to ensure children and young people in our educational establishments are learning about their rights and it is embedded in the culture and ethos of our schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee considers and notes the contents of this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Unicef UK Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) is based on the principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. The RRSA seeks to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) at the heart of a school's ethos and culture to improve wellbeing and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. A rights respecting school is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted.
- 3.2 In December 2015 the Moray Council entered into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with UNICEF to promote children's rights within Moray. As Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is rooted in the UNCRC and is about improving outcomes for our children and young people, the RRSA is an excellent vehicle for embedding children's rights into the ethos and culture of our schools whilst empowering our children and young people in Moray. The RRSA supports Moray's vision that 'We want Moray to be the best place in Scotland to grow up in' and in realising our three priorities of ambitious and confident, healthier and safer children. It provides a well structured framework for teaching children and young people about the UNCRC and encouraging

meaningful pupil participation, which is heavily promoted as very good practice in *'How Good is our School 4,'* a self-evaluation tool for school improvement, and integral to *'How good is OUR school?,'* a resource to support learner participation in self-evaluation and school improvement.

- 3.3 Identifying children's rights and participation as a key improvement area, the Northern Alliance, as of this year, has entered into a single Service Level Agreement with UNICEF. There are many benefits to this including reduction in overall costs and more accessible locations for training and Strategic Lead's meetings.
- 3.4 Schools involved in the Rights Respecting Schools Award work towards the recognition that they have embedded children and young people's rights in their school's practice and ethos. Schools are required to implement three evidence-based strands that cover the leadership of the school, knowledge and understanding of children's rights, ethos and relationships and the empowerment of children and young people. There are three levels to the award: bronze – rights committed; silver – rights aware; gold – rights respecting. The journey to Gold: Rights Respecting, the highest stage of the Award granted by UNICEF UK, can take three to four years to achieve.
- 3.5 Since December 2015 there has been strong engagement of schools with this award. We currently have 41 schools registered with the Unicef RRSA, which constitutes 77% of our schools. This is the highest number in the Northern Alliance. Although there remain a number of schools who have chosen not to pursue the award, they are all still very committed to promoting and embedding children's rights into the ethos and culture of their schools.
- 3.6 In the primary sector we have 7 schools that have registered but have not achieved bronze level yet; 16 schools have achieved bronze; 8 have achieved silver, and 3 schools have achieved gold. Aberlour Primary, Anderson's Primary and Logie Primary have been recognised by UNICEF as being schools that have truly embraced children's human rights in their ethos and culture. These schools are now acting as RRSA Ambassadors within the authority.
- 3.7 In the secondary sector, Moray is the first authority to have all their secondary schools engaged with RRSA. We currently have one school that has registered but not yet achieved bronze level; 6 schools have achieved bronze, and one school has achieved silver. This is a great achievement as it is acknowledged nationally the challenge secondaries face in achieving this award.
- 3.8 The Moray UNICEF RRSA Strategic Lead role has been undertaken by the Education Officer (Pastoral Care). We currently have two accredited assessors in Moray – the Education Officer and a Quality Improvement Officer. In order to build capacity and expertise within the authority a small group of volunteers attended training in September 2018 so they could become assessors. Re-establishing the Moray RRSA Steering Group, with representation from each Associated Schools Group (ASG), is a priority in the next year so further support can be provided to schools within each ASG, good practice can be shared and training needs identified. Most of the co-

ordination of this work will be executed by the forthcoming appointment of an Education Support Officer.

- 3.9 Research has shown that engagement with the RRSA has a positive impact on all areas of the school community. Schools who have measured the impact of RRSA have reported: children feel safer in school and in their community; children feel more valued as individuals; improvements in pupil wellbeing and emotional resilience; improvement in pupil engagement and attainment, and an increase in active responsible global citizenship. All our Gold: Rights Respecting schools would fully endorse this research.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The contents of this report relate to Moray Children's Services Plan 2017-2020. Priority 1 – 'Ambitious and confident children.'

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no policy or legal implications arising directly from this report.

(c) Financial implications

There are no additional costs associated with the promotion of children's rights through the Rights Respecting School Award or general curriculum as the delivery is funded through schools Devolved School Management budget.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee.

(h) Consultations

Senior Officers in Education and Social Care, Nicky Gosling, Accountant, Senior Solicitor (Litigation and Social Care), Equal Opportunities Officer, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards the respective responsibilities.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Committee notes the contents of this report

Author of Report: Lynne Riddoch, Education Officer (Pastoral Care)
Background Papers: None
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