



# Rights, Respect & Responsibility

Tavistock Infant School was one of the first schools in the UK to be awarded Level 2 for Rights, Respect & Responsibility.

We aim to be a Rights, Respecting school and the children begin to learn about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in a way that is appropriate for young children. We have been engaged since 2004 in working with UNICEF to develop their Rights Respecting Schools award and we were the second infant school in the UK to achieve Level 2. Here at Tavistock we begin a journey where children learn to be 'rights-respecting global citizens', as described in the bullet points below. This is a journey that will lead them through their junior and secondary school years and beyond.

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides young people and everyone working with them a common moral framework of values and a common language to support their developments as 'rights-respecting global citizens'. One of the key strengths of this is the way the same moral framework of rights and the language of rights, respect and responsibilities can be used to engage with the full range of moral and social issues, from those arising in the immediate context of the classroom or the playground to far wider issues of global justice such as global climate deterioration. Through learning about their rights and the responsibilities these rights imply, young people acquire a moral framework to help them reflect on and consider the consequences of their actions with regard to their own rights and the rights of others. Rights-Respecting Schools are places where young people are encouraged to 'think global and act local' to feel solidarity with young people all over the world and empowered and determined to work for justice for all. Therefore, Rights-Respecting Schools are places where:

- Children are empowered to participate actively in decision-making, reviewing what happens in school from the classroom to the whole school and initiating new practice and change.
- Children come to interpret much of human behaviour as acts of rights-support or rights-denial.
- Children develop the confidence and attitudes to want to take action to make a difference.

- Children learn about some of the main injustices in the way today's world 'works', e.g. through learning about fair and unfair trade, including issues such as child labour.
- Children engage effectively in debate about controversial issues.
- Children learn how to live in a way that is sustainable for the planet and come to see that actions they can take such as re-using, recycling and repairing are strategies for supporting their own and each other's rights.
- Children learn that to bring about change and to address the underlying causes of poverty and inequality their voices must be heard in the chambers and offices of those with power and influence.
- Children are helped to develop the ability to engage with their own feelings and the feelings of others and to empathise with others on rights issues.
- Children develop as critical thinkers able to question assumptions.
- Children develop a critical media literacy which enables them to question images and all forms of representation of people and places; they recognise and challenge stereotypes and myths.
- Children are encouraged to see the future as not pre-determined and to imagine a sustainable future in which the rights of all are fulfilled.
- Children are disposed to recognise and challenge injustice and all forms of rights abuse.
- Children are encouraged to recognise the similarities shared by all humanity as amounting to more than differences within humanity and to respect and, at times, celebrate differences so long as they do not infringe people's rights.
- Children have opportunities to explore issues of equality, justice and sustainability through learning about these issues within countries as well as differences between countries, focusing on rich, Minority World countries and not just on Majority World countries.