

# What Is a Rights Respecting School?

Information for Parents and Carers



# What Is a Rights Respecting School?

Rights Respecting Schools is an initiative run by UNICEF UK based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

It is a series of three levels of award that schools work towards achieving:

Bronze: Rights Committed

Silver: Rights Aware

Gold: Rights Respecting

# What Is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Every child has rights, no matter what their gender, religion, language, abilities or ethnicity.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a statement of children's rights. It has 54 articles that cover all areas of a child's life and it sets out the political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights that all children are entitled to.

The Convention also explains how governments and adults must work together to ensure children enjoy these rights.

Within the Convention, no single right is more important than the other and all rights are linked. The Convention came into force in the UK in 1992.

# Children's Rights

In child friendly language, some of the rights stated in the 54 articles within the Convention are as follows:

## **Article 12:**

Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

## **Article 14:**

Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children information about this right.

## **Article 28:**

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

# The Rights at School

What do schools have to do to become a Rights Respecting School?

Achieving any of the Rights Respecting School awards is not just about proving that as a school we have completed a task or covered set criteria, it is about a commitment to placing the rights of the child at the centre of everything we do throughout the school and in all areas of school life.

Together, adults, children and the school community learn about children's rights and put them into practice every day.

In Rights Respecting Schools, children's rights are promoted and realised. Adults and children work towards this goal together.



# Rights Respecting Schools

What do schools have to do to become a Rights Respecting School?

The journey to receiving the Gold award can take three to four years.

UNICEF UK works with schools as they work towards becoming Rights Respecting. They help teachers work with children throughout the school on issues facing the world today. Topics include the plight of refugees, the environment and climate change.

UNICEF UK will also assess the school when it is ready for each award.

When we achieve Rights Respecting status, what next?

Once a school has been awarded Silver and Gold accreditations, these have to be reviewed after three years to ensure schools are still putting children and young people's rights first in their school's practice and ethos.

# Why Become a Rights Respecting School?

A Rights Respecting School means better relationships.

In a Rights Respecting School, relationships are based on mutual respect; everyone is equal and everyone's opinion is valued. Relationships are better between pupils and their peers and between pupils and adults.

A Rights Respecting School means happier children.

A child who has knowledge and understanding of their rights also knows how they should be treated and how they shouldn't be treated. This means they have a stronger sense of self-worth. By actively promoting the values of respect, dignity and non-discrimination, the heart of the UNCRC, children's self-esteem and wellbeing is strengthened.

# Why Become a Rights Respecting School?

A Rights Respecting School means children feel safe.

Through knowing about the UNCRC, children are able to think about how they and others are treated and are able to challenge what they see as unfair.

A Rights Respecting School means children play an active part in school life.

Throughout the reward journey, children and young people are involved in decisions being made about their learning and their well-being. This will build their confidence in making informed decisions.



# Why Become a Rights Respecting School?

A Rights Respecting School means promoting global citizenship.

Through the areas studied, children and young people are involved in raising awareness about social justice issues, at home and abroad. They become ambassadors for equity and rights and take part in campaigns and activities to help to bring about change.

There are so many great reasons for us to become a Rights Respecting School!



# Why Become a Rights Respecting School?

Please support us in our journey to becoming a Rights Respecting School.

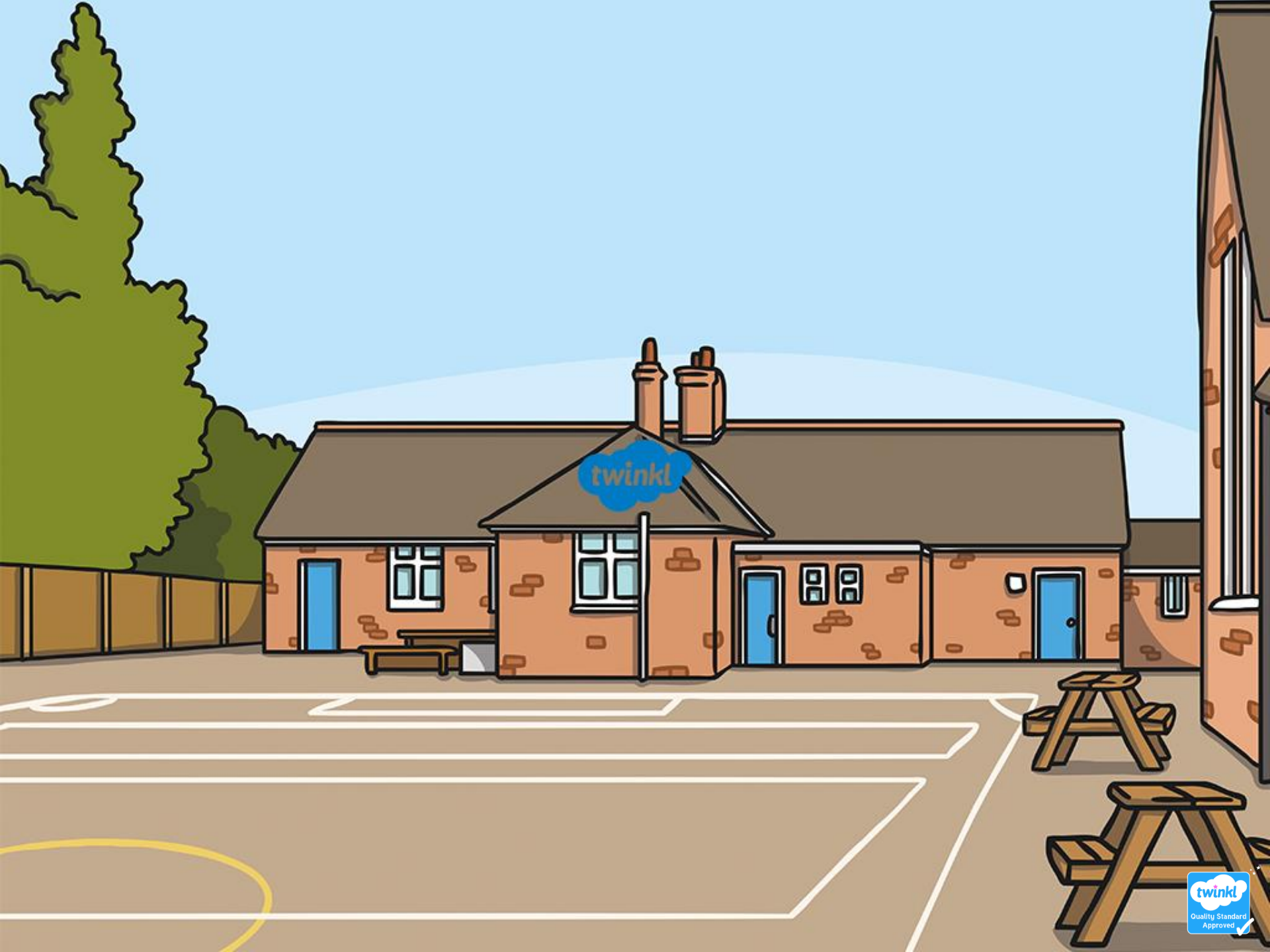
Talk to your children about what they know and are learning about the UNCRC.

Ask how you can help and be part of our school community as we work together to achieve our Gold Rights Respecting Award.

Further information can be found on UNICEF UK's website:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/the-rrsa/>





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