

A GUIDE TO CREATING CHARTERS

In a Rights Respecting School a charter can support a positive learning environment for children and young people whether this be in the classroom, across the whole school, or other areas in the school context. Every school setting is different, and you can choose the best way to use charters in your setting.

In settings where children and young people spend most of their time in one space and with the same adults, then creating a class charter, is most effective. Where children and young people move around their school for their learning, (e.g. secondary schools) a whole-school or department/faculty charter is likely to be more effective. You may also consider developing charters for communal areas such as playground or dining hall.

Charters make rights real and provide a framework for a positive environment where rights are respected, protected and promoted.

Getting Started

Before creating a charter children, young people and adults should:

1. Be familiar with a range of articles from the CRC.
2. Have an understanding of the nature of rights as being universal and unconditional. The ABCDE of rights is a useful resource to support adults and children explore these concepts.
3. Understand that children and young people are 'rights holders' and adults are 'duty bearers.'

Key Point: Although rights are *indivisible* (the entire Convention should apply to all children, all the time) in some learning activities, including charter development, it is reasonable to focus on particular articles. Many schools display a summary copy of the full CRC next to their class charters to show the wider context of the articles.

How to Guide

When creating charters, it is important that adults and children work together to create a shared understanding of rights and respect for rights. In classes this will be all adults and children. If a whole school or playground charter you may wish to

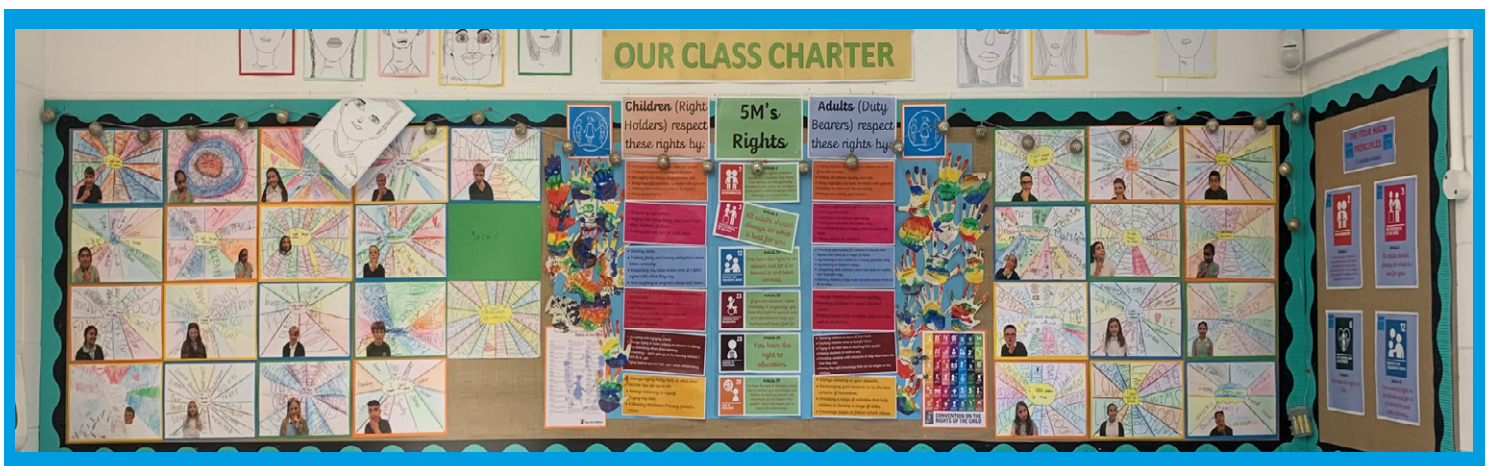
work with your Rights Respecting Group or School Council.

1. Support children to explore which articles are the most **relevant** to them in their chosen context.
2. Choose a set of articles on which to base your charter. This may be between 2-5 depending on the age and stage of your children.
 - To select the final set you may wish to have a democratic vote or choose an alternative method such as diamond nine.
3. For each article chosen agree actions that children, as 'rights holders,' and adults, as 'duty bearers,' will take to ensure that rights are realised and respected.
 - This may begin with a long list of suggested 'actions' which will need to be streamlined or whittled down through discussion, agreement and, perhaps, more voting.
4. Group members demonstrate their agreement to the charter by signing it or including images to represent themselves.
5. Your charter is a working document that will be referred to by adults and children and should be reviewed and updated regularly. For a class charter this may be at the beginning of every term or if a new pupil joins. For a whole school or playground charters this may be every year.

Key Point: The language of the Convention can be complicated; however, it is important not to lose the accuracy in the meaning. One way to simplify an article is to use fewer words, so for example, Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities can, in a nursery setting become 'The right to play (31)' but not 'The right to toys.' Using the article number (at all ages) shows that rights are not just a nice idea but actually belong to part of something bigger. See [Myths & Misconceptions](#).

Designing Charters





The aim of your charter is to create a shared understanding of how rights will be respected, protected and promoted and therefore the content is the most important element. We encourage you to display your charter in a prominent position, alongside a summary of the CRC, where it can be referred to regularly. For class charters you may wish to create an attractive display linking your charter to current learning themes, or particular interests of children and young people.





Middleton RRS Playground Charter



Children (Rights holders) respect these rights by...	Our rights at playtimes	Adults (Duty Bearers) respect these rights by...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking after each other, using kind words and including everyone in games 	 We have the right to play and rest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and understanding all children's views and resolve issues fairly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing any problems with adults who will help 	 We have the right to give our opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking to check that everyone is happy and helping anyone hurt or upset.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treating everyone equally and respectfully 	 At school we should learn to live peacefully and respect other people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminding children to follow rotas to ensure that everyone gets a fair turn.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being a 'defender' of others and reporting bullying 	 You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the group dynamics of bullying and being vigilant and challenging ringleaders, reinforcers and assistants



We believe that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

At Middleton we are committed to keeping our children safe from harm. Our designated safeguarding leads have overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. If any concerns are reported to us, we will always take action to protect a child and inform the relevant agencies where necessary.

