



UNICEF & SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Rights Respecting Schools Award Update Nov 2022

Since May 2022, the Scottish government has been supporting UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) initiative, with the aim of offering the programme to every state primary and secondary school in Scotland.

Through this partnership, the Scottish government is offering a grant which will help schools to register for the Award. This grant will also help schools access all training, support and accreditations related to RRSA until March 2025.

As a result, [this partnership is removing financial barriers for any school in Scotland](#) that wishes to pursue the RRSA, making a huge difference for children.

Through our partnership, we have made some incredible achievements, including:

- Since the start of our partnership, [335 new schools have registered for the RRSA](#), surpassing our March 2023 target almost five months ahead of schedule.
- During this partnership, [121 schools have achieved Bronze accreditation](#), while 71 schools have achieved Silver and 34 have achieved Gold accreditation.
- We have [developed good working relationships with 28 out of Scotland's 32 local authorities](#) – up from 20 local authorities before the partnership was launched.

Impacts of the RRSA

The RRSA is a key tool for integrating children's rights within schools, **enshrining the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as a guiding principle** within the school environment.

Our research shows that the RRSA helps children learn about their own rights, making pupils feel more protected, valued and respected.

The scheme also teaches children to recognise the rights of others, which helps to **create a culture of respect within schools**.

Children feel safe and cared for, and they feel that their voices are heard and valued.

This inclusive school community benefits both children and adults, as the scheme can improve the wellbeing of teachers and staff members too.

This scheme **creates a shared sense of community and belonging**, encouraging children to take their right to education seriously.

Finally, the RRSA scheme creates a sense of global citizenship. The award helps children believe that they can change the world for the better.

The partnership between UNICEF and the Scottish government is making a huge difference for children across the country. On the behalf of every child you have helped to support, Thank You.

Results to Date

Between May and December, we have enrolled an additional 335 schools within the RRSA programme in Scotland.

In total, 1,648 schools across the country are currently enrolled in the scheme. This includes 1,328 primary schools (66 % of all eligible schools) and 289 secondary schools (73 % of eligible schools).

Overall, **520,834 students are currently engaged through RRSA activities in schools across Scotland.**

Of the schools currently enrolled in the RRSA programme, 556 schools have reached Bronze accreditation, while 417 have reached Silver, and 196 have reached Gold accreditation.

A full breakdown of the results by authority area, as of November 2022, are listed below:

| Local Authority | Number of Schools Enrolled | Proportion of Schools Enrolled |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Aberdeen City Council | 43 | 65% |
| Aberdeenshire Council | 99 | 59% |
| Angus Council | 44 | 76% |
| Argyll and Bute Council | 50 | 58% |
| City of Edinburgh Council | 106 | 82% |
| Clackmannanshire Council | 6 | 27% |
| Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | 21 | 88% |
| Dumfries and Galloway Council | 76 | 71% |
| Dundee City Council | 32 | 71% |
| East Ayrshire Council | 48 | 89% |
| East Dunbartonshire Council | 28 | 60% |
| East Lothian Council | 34 | 83% |
| East Renfrewshire Council | 30 | 97% |
| Falkirk Council | 46 | 78% |
| Fife Council | 83 | 54% |
| Glasgow City Council | 117 | 62% |
| Inverclyde Council | 27 | 90% |
| Midlothian Council | 22 | 56% |
| North Ayrshire Council | 58 | 97% |
| North Lanarkshire Council | 121 | 85% |
| Orkney Islands Council | 9 | 41% |
| Perth and Kinross Council | 70 | 82% |
| Renfrewshire Council | 37 | 60% |
| Scottish Borders Council | 43 | 61% |
| Shetland Islands Council | 11 | 38% |
| South Ayrshire Council | 50 | 98% |
| South Lanarkshire Council | 60 | 41% |
| Stirling Council | 14 | 29% |
| The Highland Council | 124 | 62% |
| The Moray Council | 44 | 85% |
| West Dunbartonshire Council | 16 | 41% |
| West Lothian Council | 76 | 100% |
| Total | 1,617 | 67% |

Case Study:

Perth and Kinross

In Perth and Kinross Council (PKC), RRSA activities are coordinated by the Children's Rights Officer (CRO), who works to embed the CRC in schools across the local authority.

Over the course of this partnership, the CRO has **carried out extensive training** across the local authority. As momentum in PKC increased, the CRO trained two local headteachers to carry out Silver assessments across the district.

Alongside this, the CRO has been carrying out Collaborative Conversations training for schools twice a year. The training sessions are designed to help schools to navigate the award and develop action plans, while providing a space for participants to ask questions and form new connections between schools.

Finally, the CRO has helped to **coordinate RRSA activities across the region**. They are part of a Learner Participation working group, which brings together a diverse range of stakeholders from across the district. This working group is helping to encourage meaningful participation across PKC.

As a result of these interventions, facilitated by UNICEF's partnership with the Scottish government, more than **80 % of schools across PKC** are actively engaging with the RRSA.

Looking Ahead

Going forward, we will continue to work towards our aim of offering the RRSA initiative to every eligible school and embedding the CRC in schools across Scotland.

We will continue to support schools with guidance, training and accreditation, and we will continue to provide training for local authority (LA) assessors, expanding the assessors' reach within each LA.

Alongside this, we will continue to **build strong and effective relationships with LAs** across Scotland. Our Strategic Leads Network brings together key figures from 26 LAs, providing a forum to discuss vision, roll-out and potential problems.

We will also **strengthen our partnerships with key local stakeholders**. We will continue to work with local charities and organisations – such as Highland One World and WOSDEC – to discuss synergies, support implementation and build valuable connections within and between communities.

Testimonials

"RRSA is part of who we are. It's our vision and values, our approach to nurture... it's our ethos. It threads through everything we do and pulls everything together. The evidence is all around the school."

Headteacher at RRSA-accredited school

"As teachers we are much more confident in rights and modelling that language in our conversations with children. It's really rewarding to know you are making a difference... it gives you that feel good factor."

Teacher at RRSA-accredited school

"RRSA is sustainable here because everyone is involved and can see the impact it makes."

RRSA Lead at an accredited school

"The children respond to things they see on the news, like setting up bake sales to raise money. The children's levels of empathy is outstanding."

Parent of a pupil at an RRSA-accredited school

"Pupil voice is so important, as is supporting each other as staff to make sure we are doing what's right for the children. There is a real culture of respect here."

RRSA Lead at an accredited school

As a member of Education Scotland's Rights and Participation Network, we are **encouraging local and national stakeholders to embed the CRC within the school environment**, helping every child in Scotland to fully realise their rights.

Alongside this, we will continue to collaborate with key child rights and inclusion organisations across Scotland. This collaboration will offer invaluable insights into how we can expand, improve and scale up our programmes within schools in the future.

Finally, we will **continue to raise awareness of the scheme and encourage new schools across Scotland to enrol**.

For example, our RRSA newsletter is currently going out to all registered schools across the country. This newsletter provides valuable support and insights for schools, while also highlighting global events such as World Children's Day.

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