

Carmarthen Primary School

Children's Rights and Responsibilities



Welcome to Carmarthen Primary school's annual pamphlet. Our focus for this pamphlet will be children's Rights and Responsibilities. Here in Carmarthen Primary School we teach, your child learns, so in turn the world can benefit. We strongly believe in the philosophy that, 'Every student matters, every moment counts.' Our pupils are conscientious individuals who are also extremely considerate of one another. We apply an emphasis on collaborative research within our school, as we feel it is vital for all pupils to work effectively within a team. Here at Carmarthen Primary school we pride ourselves on being a rights respecting school, this is an initiative that really benefits teaching staff more importantly it largely benefits the pupils. UNICEF UK (2016).

The topics included within the pamphlet

Topic 1: Children's Rights within our School

Topic 2: The Right to a good standard of living

Topic 3: Anti - bullying policies

Topic 4: Internet safety classes

Topic 5: Safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.

Topic 6: The Right to use your own language

Topic 7: The History of Children's Rights

Topic 8: Welsh Language in Primary Schools

Topic 9: Sign Language in Primary Schools

Topic 10: Visually Impaired Pupils in Primary Schools.

Topic 11: Early intervention for pupils.

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Children's Rights within our School

Currently there are only 5,000 schools across the United Kingdom that are part of the Rights Respecting ethos. Out of a possible 32,770 schools within the United Kingdom. British Educational Suppliers (2020) As of January 2019, we at Carmarthen Primary School have been accredited a Gold Rights Respecting accreditation. There are only 473 schools who have been awarded this recognition, these are awarded by UNICEF UK, (no date).

There are over fifty rights that apply to children all of which are implemented within our schools' policy. Children's rights were set up by the United Nations, to protect children against harm and injustice. Children's rights uphold a different agenda to that of human rights. As a school we adhere to the following principles. "Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child". This is entirely accurate because within the school we value each child as an individual and centre our approach to accommodate each child's needs. Every child is entitled to have the "Right to say what you think should happen and be listened to" Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). This indicating that "every student matters" within our school and every concern voiced by them is of the utmost importance to us. Pupil voice is an extremely efficient indication as to what concerns a pupil has, therefore why as a school we push for this resource to be used efficiently. Methods such as "circle times, planning groups, or school councils, show the adults' good faith and concern" for the children's welfare, this is a few of the ways we encourage the children to engage in voicing their opinion. Moreover, there has been evidence proving that children can listen and take turns. This is typically done through mirroring adults' behaviour, adults typically chair or facilitate meetings, through this young children have a basic concept of the neutral chair. They could be compared to a

football referee, a referee does not psychically participate in the sport, but they ensure everyone else is listened to and are valued within the activity (Alderson, 2000, p.112).

The Right to a good standard of living

In addition, children have the right to article 27 "the right to a good standard of living" Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). It is vital that the school and parents uphold a positive link with one another in order to achieve the best outcome for the children. All children have a right to a good standard of living, although this is implemented through a pupil's education it should also be heavily supported by parents. We as teachers and parents all strive for the same thing, this is for the child to succeed within their academic life. There has often been a visible gap between those children who come from a low - income household and those that come from a high - salary home. Most pupils who are born into low income households typically are less likely to succeed academically, as a result of the resources accessible to them. Carmarthen Primary School has been striving to change this, with the support of you as parents we strive to close this gap. As an academic body we have a duty of care to your child/children, to ensure they are protected effectively from any harm or injustice. This duty of care comes under the umbrella of safeguarding, with this we adhere to the following principles. As a school we feel it is vital that each child we educate has a good standard of living Children's Commissioner for Wales (no date). As without this they will not feel comfortable within their environment and therefore they will not prosper academically or personally. Therefore, since 1994 we have been putting parents in touch with local resources that may be of use during your time of need. We understand that 1 in 5 of the UK population live below the poverty line. This equating to six children out of a class of thirty living below

the poverty line. One of the main issues we have been aiming to aid is putting parents/ carers in contact with local foodbanks. One which we work closely with is 'Carmarthen Foodbank, seeded by the Trussell Trust.' We strongly believe that food banks "prevent crime, housing loss, family breakdown and mental health problems." We as a school donate on a regular basis to food banks and all our teachers contribute within our personal lives. Carmarthen Foodbank, no date (<https://carmarthen.foodbank.org.uk/about/how-do-foodbanks-work/>).

Mental Health

In addition, we believe it is vital that children's mental health is nurtured throughout their childhood. Therefore, as a school we partake in the annual mental health week initiative. This is due to take place on the 18th until 24th May this year. This year's focus will centre around the connections between our sleep, or lack of it and our mental health. Mental Health Foundation (no date).

Our experiences of the world during childhood helps to shape who we become as adults. Therefore, we at Carmarthen primary school work closely with 'Place2Be' which the Duchess of Cambridge is patron of they believe that the community around a young person, whether this be the school, the parents or the wider community, is extremely important in shaping a child during their childhood.

We recognise that several children will be tackling tougher challenges than others while it is not always possible to change their circumstances at 'Place2Be' we offer support and guidance for these children so that we demonstrate the right 'to become the best you can be'. The Duchess of Cambridge supports Children's Mental Health Week (The Royal Family, 2018).

Anti-bullying policies

Both Article 19 "You should not be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe" and Article 29 "Your right to become the best that you can be" are incorporated within the anti-bullying policy. Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date

(<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>) . Here at Carmarthen Primary school we treat bullying with the utmost importance. Every year we participate in Anti Bullying Week, this is coordinated by the Anti Bullying Association to educate pupils on the damage of bullying. This has a large effect on children in schools. During the duration of this week is 'Odd Sock Day' this is implemented within our school on an annual basis one of the reasons why we as a school participate in this event is to present a visual of this issue, Nelson (2019).



Internet safety classes

Within our school we pride ourselves on providing hugely effective internet safety classes. These occur once a week for each year group and are provided according to age and ability. This is in accordance with article 13 "your right to have information" and Article 16 "your right to have privacy" Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). Both of which are equally as important, we feel it is important for our pupils, staff and parents to be informed so that we can effectively work together. The Children's Commissioner for

England, Anne Longfield OBE has suggested that children should study 'digital citizenship'. In short this requires students to be digitally competent, in order to engage in society, politics and government issues to an age appropriate level. 'Digital citizenship' allows students to become informed about their rights and responsibilities online. Moreover, we believe that social media companies should rewrite their terms and conditions in far simpler language.

At present children within schools are educated on internet safety as part of their ICT lessons. However, Ms Longfield wants to make internet safety for children a required part of the curriculum from the age of four. BBC News (2017).

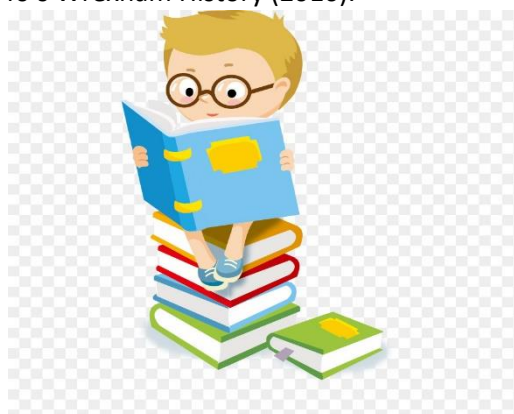
Safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

The safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers incorporates article 3 "Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child" and article 19 "You should not be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe". Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). "Safer recruitment is a set of practises to help make sure everybody working with children is suitable to do so." NSPCC Learning, 2019 (<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/safeguarding-concerns-practice-examples#parent-volunteers>). This is a vital process to undertake as it allows for a safe environment for children to learn and be protected within. It also allows children to remain safe and as an educational body we have a duty of care to protect all children whilst in our care. As stated by Walker "Safeguarding is about 'keeping the child in focus". (Walker, 2011). Safeguarding is reflecting in action; all our staff are trained on a level 1 basis on the basics of safeguarding. All teachers are educated at a level 2 standard and selected staff are taught at a level 3

standard. This is to ensure that they all uphold the necessary qualities to ensure your child/children are kept safe. Are staff are taught that if they develop concerns for a child's welfare, that is the threshold at which you are required to report this concern and put your training into action.

The Right to use your own language

Article 30 "Your right to use your own language" is particularly prevalent within Wales Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). In order to increase the use of English within the Welsh education system during the late 19th century the 'Welsh Not' was implemented. The 'Welsh Stick' was used as a "method of discouraging children from speaking in their native tongue." The piece of wood had 'WN' carved into it, it would be given to pupils caught speaking Welsh. Whoever was carrying the wood at the end of the week was cruelly penalized BBC, 2014 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/j35VCjYcS0CC3RGzvklb-Q>). It is rumoured that the 'Welsh Not' did not end until some period between the 1930's and 1940's Wrexham History (2016).



The History of Children's Rights

In 1907 Owen M. Edwards became the first Chief Inspector of Schools for Wales, of the newly founded Welsh Education Department. Owen Edwards implemented steps that ensured the Welsh Language was taught in the schools in Wales, Welsh Not

(CamalzMedia, 2016). This supports that at the start of the 20th century, children's protection was starting to be implemented. This began in France and later came to Europe. The League of Nations implemented the Declaration of the Rights of the Child on 16 September, 1924. This is the first established universal agreement regarding children's rights. "In five chapters it gives specific rights to the children and responsibilities to the adults" Humanium (no date).

Welsh Language in Primary Schools

As a result of the horrific history endured by Wales because of the implementation of the 'Welsh Not' we at Carmarthen Primary School actively encourage students to express their passion of the Welsh language. Although we are not a registered Welsh - language primary school we have taken large actions to ensure we encourage the use of the beautiful language. We have been doing so since to opening of our school in 1990. Recently there was a publication by 'Wales Online' stating "The subject of second – language Welsh is being abolished in schools in Wales". This is due to be implemented gradually within schools as of January 2019, upon publication of this article Wales Online, 2019 (<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/subject-second-language-welsh-being-15693728>). Additionally, the new curriculum is due to be implemented gradually from September of 2022. Here at Carmarthen Primary School we believe that it is extremely important to encourage the use of the Welsh language, hence why we as a school hold four hours of Welsh weekly. In addition once a month we hold a Welsh Language day, to encourage the children to become confident Welsh speakers.

Sign Language in Primary Schools

Moreover, Article 30 mentioned above can be interlinked with Article 23 "Your right to special care and support if you have a disability so that you can lead a full and

independent life." Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). Over the 20 years that our school has been open we have welcomed a variety of children ranging in ability and all with differing needs. Firstly, we have welcomed students who use differing forms of sign language in order to communicate. We take our role extremely seriously as a school, we have had 23 pupils over the 20 years that we as a school have been open who have suffered with profound hearing loss all of which we have been supported through giving them one to one support with a member of staff, if and when is necessary. Additionally, they may be placed at the front of class if this is of more benefit to them. We hold a weekly meeting with them to ensure that they are making adequate progress.

In 2007 the following statement was made.

"A sign bilingual child is one who uses two or more languages in their daily life, at least one of which is a sign language. Sign bilingual education is an approach to the education of deaf children which, in the UK, uses BSL and English."

Swanwick and Gregory, 2017

(http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/DeafStudiesTeaching/bil/papers/sign_bilingual_statement.pdf)...

This statement suggests that sign language in primary schools is vital and therefore we have brought in mandatory sign language for two hours per week. This allows our school to be more inclusive and allow the children at our school to have better job prospects as they will have an additional life skill.

Visually Impaired Pupils in Primary Schools

In addition, within our primary school we have had several pupils who are visually impaired. We understand that 64 per cent of children who are visually impaired are taught

in mainstream schools. These mainstream schools include additionally resourced for blind and partially sighted pupils. Therefore, we feel it is extremely important to have appropriate and accessible services available to those individuals so that they are enabled to reach their full potential. Within our school we have implemented frequent use of braille. In the instances where there has been a visually impaired pupil within one of our classrooms, we have educated the remainder of the pupils on the struggles that the individual faces on a day to day basis and ways in which they can help. This is one of the reasons our kindness campaign was recently launched. As you may be aware this consists of each child from a class taking a note from our board 'A Random Act Of Kindness' weekly which states an act that the children are required to do either within their own homes or within the local community in order to spread positivity and allow children to learn the impact that kind actions have on an individual. Additionally, we ensure that every child is treated equally within our school as we feel it is vital for all children to be kind to one another and staff ensure that this is taking place to make sure that children's rights are implemented. We also ensure that the pupil always has a one to one support to ensure that their needs are met and that they are comfortable and confident within their learning environment RNIB (no date).

Early Intervention for Pupils

Graham Allen wrote a report on the need for early intervention

"If we intervene early enough, we can give children a vital social and emotional foundation which will help to keep them happy healthy and achieving throughout their lives and above all equip them to raise children of their own" BBC News, 2011 (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-12216967>).

This links with article 5 "Governments should help parents to help you to know about and use children's rights as you grow up" similarly article 18 "Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and they should always think about what is best for each child". Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). We as a school aim to aid you as parents/ carers to work with your child to ensure they are fulfilling their full potential within their academic studies and within their home life to ensure that they become well rounded individuals and successful working adults. This statement by Graham Alan allows all groups to work together in order to achieve the best resources and therefore outcome for each child to prosper.

Social Justice Arena

Social justice is a concept of improving lives, it consists of providing individuals with multiple disadvantages with the correct support in order to transform their lives. This was an innovative approach used by the those in power between 2010 until 2015 and it is still used today. The government has suggested that the focus is not on income poverty alone. The sole focus on household income over the past decades has ignored the root triggers of poverty. This has enabled social issues to intensify and become established Gov.uk (2012).

Becoming a Rights Respecting School

Since becoming a rights respecting school all pupils have become more content within their environment and are more willing to learn. One of the pupils stated, "I just think that it has shaped me as a person coming to a rights respecting school".

We at Carmarthen Primary School strongly believe that

“Children who are aware of their rights and aware that the school they are in upholds their rights are happy and confident, they know that if there are issues, that they can talk about those issues and therefore behaviour is improved” UNICEF, UK 2016 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AH8LIQsiM8o>).



Conclusion

At Carmarthen Primary school we believe that all the rights mentioned within this pamphlet are extremely important for the academic progress of the children within our school as well as their health and wellbeing. As a school we take children's rights very seriously and strive to improve in areas wherever necessary. If there are any matters that you are wanting to discuss with us our email is shown below alongside our telephone number.

Email Address:

CarmarthenPrimary@outlook.com

Telephone Number: 0300 777 6363

The Daily Mile

Article 6 “You have the right to life and to grow up to be healthy” Children's Commissioner for Wales, no date (<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/>). This right is met within our school by our pupils completing The Daily Mile, this is a positive step we have taken as a school to ensure our children remain healthy and encouraging them to remain well mentally. We as a school can only thank you as parents for the positivity we have been greeted with since we began this in 2016. As you may already know it takes place in 15 minutes, it helps to improve fitness and achieve a healthy weight. It's an inclusive activity, every child within our school no matter their ability successfully completes The Daily Mile. We are part of the 504 countries within Wales who partake in this daily activity, collectively there are 11,082 schools and nurseries who complete this activity daily. This equates to 2,309,784 children now running a mile a day. The Daily Mile (no date).

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