

In 1989, governments across the world promised all children the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The convention says what countries must do so that all children grow up healthy as possible, can learn at school, are protected, have their views listened to, and are treated fairly

Children's rights are central to all aspects of Unicef's work, including education, and at Howard Primary School we use the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as a framework for our activities. The UNCRC is a comprehensive human rights treaty that all governments of the world apart from the United States have signed up to and enshrines specific children's rights in international law. These rights define universal principles and standards for the status and treatment of children worldwide.

At Howard we work hard to ensure that our children's rights are embedded in the school ethos to ensure that our children can learn about children's rights in the classroom and beyond as well as the responsibilities that go with the rights.

Key principles and provisions of the Convention

The UNCRC consists of 54 articles. A 'child' is defined as every human being below the age of 18. The key provisions are:

- The right to a childhood (including protection from harm)
- The right to be educated (including all girls and boys completing primary school)
- The right to be healthy (including having clean water, nutritious food and medical care)
- The right to be treated fairly (which includes changing laws and practices that discriminate against children)
- The right to be heard (which includes considering children's views)

Click here to see the UNCRC articles that we work towards our pupils understanding and following, in child friendly language:

http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publications/Child_friendly_CRC_summary_final.pdf

Why teach about the Convention and children's Rights and Responsibilities?

Teaching children and young people about the UNCRC means that they can find out about the legal and human rights and responsibilities that underpin society. By learning about the Convention, children and young people in the UK can discover that:

- They have rights
- They should be informed about their rights
- They should be helped to exercise their rights
- They should be able to enforce their rights
- There should be a community of interest to advocate young people's rights

These tenets of the CRC are true for children and young people worldwide, making the Convention an excellent starting point for understanding global citizenship.

Howard Primary School's Charter of Rights

At Howard we have been following the School's own Charters of Rights, based on the UN Convention on the 'Rights of the Child' for four years. Our Charter's focus on the Rights and Respecting the Rights of Others at all times. It is a Whole School Approach and is fully embedded in everything we do. Reference to Children's Rights and Responsibilities which emphasise Respecting the Rights of Themselves and Others is a key to everything we do each day.

The Rights and Responsibilities are highlighted throughout the school, in displays, during assemblies, at playtimes and in every classroom. Classes regularly discuss their Rights and Responsibilities and School Council regularly review the schools various Charters.

The Key Articles we follow at Howard are:

(Article 2)

We have the right to be treated equally and with respect.

We have the responsibility to treat others equally and with respect.

(Article 12)

We have the right to be heard and listened to.

We have the responsibility to contribute our opinions and listen to others.

(Article 14)

We have the right to our own beliefs and opinions and to share them freely.

We have the responsibility to not say things that will hurt or harm others and we must respect others beliefs and opinions.

(Article 24)

We have the right to medical care if we are sick or hurt.

We have the responsibility to look after ourselves and not hurt others.

(Article 28)

We have the right to learn.

We have the responsibility to make the most of our learning opportunities and not interrupt the teaching or learning of others.

(Article 31)

We have the right to play in a safe environment.

We have the responsibility to play sensibly, fairly and include others.