

Safeguarding children

1.1 Children's rights and entitlements

Procedure statement for St Joseph's Pre-school

In early years, children's rights are a fundamental aspect of their development and wellbeing. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), provide a legal and ethical framework for ensuring that children's rights are respected and upheld. The following principles guide the practices and policies of St Joseph's Pre-school, ensuring that children's rights are actively promoted and respected in daily interactions and experiences:

- *Respect and Dignity*: children are treated with respect and dignity, recognising their inherent worth and value;
- *Freedom of Expression*: children are encouraged to express themselves through various means, including talking, drawing or writing;
- *Protection from Abuse*: safeguarding procedures are in place to protect the children from harm and abuse;
- *Access to Information*: children have access to developmentally appropriate learning materials and media;
- *Right to Education*: children are provided with inclusive, quality education for all.

Background

Children and young people in the UK have their rights by two main documents The Human Rights Act 1998 and the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC). The CRC is for everybody below the age of 18 and lists over 40 rights belonging to children and young people, for example:

- the convention applies to all children without discrimination (Article 2);
- the right to express their views, feelings and wishes and have them taken seriously in matters that affect them (Article 12);
- that children have the right to express their thoughts and opinions (Article 13);
- the right to be free from all forms of violence and abuse (Article 19);
- disabled children have the right to 'promote self-reliance and active participation in the community' (Article 23);
- a child's right to an education (Article 28) and on the quality and content of education (Article 29);
- the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural activities (Article 31).

In 1991 the UK government promised it would do its best to make sure the CRC rights are respected for children and young people. The CRC is part of international law, but is not yet law in the UK. However, The Human Rights Act does contain lots of the rights in the CRC like the right to life, the right to education, and the right to family life but is not as detailed as the CRC itself.

Every 5 years the UK Government has to report to a United Nations Committee of children's rights experts who check whether the rights in the CRC are being respected and protected here in the UK.

Children's rights and entitlements we promote at St Joseph's Pre-school

- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

What it means to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*' at the setting

To be **strong** means to be:

- **secure** in their foremost attachment relationships where they are loved and cared for, by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on;
- **safe and valued** as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as day care or school;
- **self assured** and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage;
- **included equally and belong** in early years settings and in community life;
- **confident in abilities** and **proud** of their achievements;
- **progressing optimally** in all aspects of their development and learning;
- **to be part of a peer group** in which to learn to negotiate, develop social skills and identity as global citizens, respecting the rights of others in a diverse world; and
- **to participate and be able to represent themselves** in aspects of service delivery that affects them as well as aspects of key decisions that affect their lives.

To be **resilient** means to:

- **be sure** of their self worth and dignity;
- be able to be **assertive** and state their needs effectively;
- be able to **overcome** difficulties and problems;
- **be positive** in their outlook on life;
- be able to **cope** with challenge and change;
- have a **sense of justice** towards self and others;
- to develop a **sense of responsibility** towards self and others; and
- to be able to **represent** themselves and others in key decision making processes.

To be **listened to** means:

- adults who are close to children recognise their need and **right to express and communicate** their thoughts, feelings and ideas;
- adults who are close to children are able to **tune in** to their verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated;
- adults who are close to children are able to **respond appropriately and, when required, act upon their understanding** of what children express and communicate ; and
- adults **respect children's rights** and **facilitate children's participation and representation** in imaginative and child centred ways in all aspects of core services.

Further information

- [Children's Commissioner for England](#)
- [Children's Parliament](#)
- www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/ - [RRSA Guidance for Early Years Practitioners: supporting a child's rights approach](#)
- Young People's Human Rights: CRC Factsheet [The CRC in the UK](#)
- www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/ - [Article of the week](#)

Associated policies and procedures

- 1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection
- 1.3 Children in care

Version Number	Author	Purpose of change	Date
1.0	K Coupe	Reviewed and page numbered	Sept 2014
2.0	Committee	Reviewed	Oct 2016
3.0	K Coupe	Reviewed, version controlled	01 May 2019 Committee Meeting
4.0	K Coupe	Reviewed and updated – reference to the Human Rights Act and the Convention on the Rights of Children (including links)	20 Nov 2021 Committee Member (T Clapp)
5.0	K Coupe	Inclusion of “Associated policies and procedures” section as per EY GCC’s safeguarding audit (section 175/157) 2022	03 May 2022 Committee Member (M Montgomery)
6.0	K Coupe	Reviewed and updated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• inclusion of reference to Article 23• new “Further Guidance” section	16 May 2024 Committee Member (G Ind)
7.0	K Coupe	Reviewed and updated with information from www.unicef.org.uk website. Hyperlinks included	18 Dec 2025 Committee Member (H Heaven)