

Schools of Sanctuary

Resource Pack





Welcome to the new edition of the Schools of Sanctuary Resource Pack!

If you are interested in becoming a School of Sanctuary then please read on - this Resource Pack is written to inspire and guide you whether you are a nursery, primary school or secondary school. It shares and celebrates just a glimpse of the amazing work going on in schools around the country today and provides plenty of practical tips to begin your journey to being recognised as a School of Sanctuary.

We hope this Resource Pack and the [Schools of Sanctuary website](#) will help explain why you should join the growing UK network of schools, and the nationwide movement to create a culture of welcome, support the thousands of young people forced to come and live in the UK in search of safety and raise awareness of refugee-related issues.



Washwood Heath Academy became a School of Sanctuary in 2019. Pictured above is Head Boy, Ihsanullah Ahmadzai, who arrived unaccompanied in the UK from Afghanistan, never having attended school before.

Web resources are linked on the online version of the resource pack. This is available at <https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org/resources>

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela



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Introductions

What is City of Sanctuary UK?

Launched in October 2005 in Sheffield, City of Sanctuary started with the vision that the UK should be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. From this start in a single location, the idea of celebrating and promoting welcome to those seeking sanctuary has spread into a grass-roots network of over 120 local groups across villages, towns, cities and regions in the UK.

This growing network is supported by the umbrella organisation City of Sanctuary UK (CoS UK). CoS UK provides resources, networking opportunities and support to the entire network of CoS groups; this includes promoting engagement with community institutions via the Streams of Sanctuary, Sanctuary Awards and other activities. City of Sanctuary UK enjoys close partnerships with all the major refugee organisations and remains committed to working with them to build a united voice to advocate for people fleeing violence and persecution in our nations and worldwide.

What are Streams of Sanctuary?

At City of Sanctuary UK, we believe the sanctuary message of welcome and inclusion is vital in all spheres of society and in mainstream organisations. In addition to supporting the network of CoS groups, CoS UK helps all types of organisations learn about why people seek sanctuary and how to make their work and spaces more welcoming.

We are committed to helping institutions and shared community spaces such as theatres, museums, health clinics and surgeries, gardens, maternity centres, schools, colleges and universities, shops and faith institutions to become places of sanctuary and make their commitment to welcome in their operations tangible. A key element of our work in Streams of Sanctuary is awareness-raising: giving a platform to the voices of asylum seekers and refugees, so that they can be heard by those who might otherwise never hear them in all types of public spaces - including schools.



City of Sanctuary Values

The City of Sanctuary UK organisation and its networks are guided and informed by a commitment to the following values:

Inclusiveness: We welcome and respect people from all backgrounds and place the highest value on diversity and are committed to equality.

Openness: We are committed to a culture of working collaboratively within the network and in partnership with others.

Participation: Those who support our vision, work together with people seeking sanctuary. We value and recognise the contribution of all involved. We aspire to ensure people seeking sanctuary are fully involved in decision-making processes and supported to become leaders within the City of Sanctuary organisation and network as well as the wider movement.

Inspiration: We work with enthusiasm and positivity and are determined to surpass what has already been achieved to welcome refugees and people seeking sanctuary. We act as a catalyst for change by being open to new and innovative ideas and through sharing knowledge gained with others and working in partnership.

Integrity: We aspire to high standards of honesty and behaviour, and always act in the interests of people seeking sanctuary.

The values are outlined in the CoS Charter which was developed as the strategic framework for the work of the City of Sanctuary UK organisation and the networks we support.

“Wherever people seeking sanctuary go, we in the City of Sanctuary network want them to feel safe and find people who will welcome them.”



Schools of Sanctuary

What is a School of Sanctuary?

A School of Sanctuary is:

- ▶ **Is a place of welcome for all.**
- ▶ **Educates about why people are forcibly displaced.**
- ▶ **Recognises that the UK is enriched by new arrivals.**
- ▶ **Supports pupils from all backgrounds to feel seen, supported and included.**

'Becoming a School of Sanctuary has been a transformative process that has contributed to being recognised as a national inclusion centre for excellence at a primary school that was failing five years ago.'

Victoria Kirkman,
Headteacher in North Yorkshire

'You can see the children's pride when they discuss the importance of our academy being a School of Sanctuary with any visitors to the academy and their focus to be at the heart of the community they are privileged to serve.'

Mrs Went, School of Sanctuary Lead
at Outwood Primary Academy
Greystone in Ripon North Yorkshire

'It really lowers your confidence when someone is not being nice to you, like you think, what have I done? Why is he [a teacher] not being nice to me? ..it makes you worry as well, like, why I'm not getting treated the same way as others.'

Jay, 18, from Palestine explaining why
Schools of Sanctuary are important.



Why become a School of Sanctuary?



"Education does not change the world. Education changes people. People change the world."

Paulo Freire

Working towards becoming a School of Sanctuary also provides schools with a powerful focus for possible school improvement in areas such as:

- **Meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010**
- **Imaginative re-engagement with required curriculum areas such literacy, language arts, geography, history, humanities**
- **Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education and 'British Values'**
- **Building a school culture that reduces intolerance, hate speech and bullying**
- **Increasing pupil voice and promoting active & engaged citizenship**
- **Engaging families and strengthening the school's role in the local community**
- **Improving the provision of English as an additional language in school**
- **Helping improve pupil outcomes and attendance - students that feel safe and included will be more likely to attend schools**
- **Promoting well-being & community cohesion by building empathetic school environments**

Schools are often at the forefront of receiving and supporting those forcibly displaced - for example, nearly a quarter of asylum seekers in the year ending September 2019 were under 18. Whilst some schools have a long tradition of welcoming and supporting students from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds and continue to receive them today, the Vulnerable People Resettlement Programme (VPRS) in response to the Syrian conflict has seen the settlement of refugees in areas with smaller immigrant populations and little recent experience of supporting people who are seeking sanctuary. It is important that all schools recognise the need to pre-emptively prepare for the arrival of a new student who is seeking sanctuary.

In this context and amidst the ongoing hostility in the media and some public spaces, young people in the UK need not only to learn about these issues but where possible meet people face-to-face who have lived experience of displacement in order to understand both their local communities and the wider world better.

Schools do not need to have children from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds within the school community to become a School of Sanctuary, but should instead consider how they might welcome children seeking sanctuary should they start and look at other ways to support people seeking sanctuary at a local, regional, national or international level.

'When I came here, I felt sad and I felt a bit scared as well. Now I am feeling so different. I feel so happy now.'

Mohammed, Syrian resettled in the UK attending
Widdon Primary, School of Sanctuary in Gloucester.

What are the Steps to Becoming a School of Sanctuary?



STEP ONE

Sign an **organisation pledge of support**, committing the school to acknowledge and support the CoS charter & organisational values.

STEP TWO

Connect to Schools of Sanctuary: Contact [Schools of Sanctuary UK](#) who will put you in touch with your Local Schools of Sanctuary Lead. This will be your SoS contact and they will offer advice, resources and see what partnering opportunities can be developed to support you through the application process. You should also register for the [SoS national newsletter](#), the [regular mailing list](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the latest events and resources at national level.

STEP THREE

Review what your school already has in place or has done to date to meet the award criteria (consider using the [Schools of Sanctuary self-assessment tool](#) to help you) and make an action plan using the resource pack and website for inspiration.

STEP FOUR

Submit an application outlining your evidence of having met the criteria to your Schools of Sanctuary contact. You can use this [application guide](#) to help you. They will follow up to organise an assessment visit or meeting where you should showcase your work and include opportunities for the assessors to discuss SoS with the leadership, pupils and teachers.

STEP FIVE

Once awarded, share the news on the school website, social media and through local news outlets. Continue to engage and share your activities in preparation for reaccreditation after three years.

Getting Started: What does your school have in place already?

Consider your School Development Plan and your range of school policies – particularly around inclusion and English as an additional language.

- **Do you currently have any elements of promoting welcome and inclusion in your school policies?**
- **Undertake an audit using our provided tool - or develop your own review with the support of the local CoS group or SoS coordinator.**
- **Reflect on what your school does currently to welcome new pupils, staff, families and visitors to the school, and how you support an ethos of inclusivity.**
- **How do you use the national curriculum to support & learn about sanctuary and migration?**
- **What regular school events (assemblies, celebrations, learning excursions) can incorporate themes about displacement, migration and asylum?**

“Now we have many awarded schools in the area. Local politicians and decision makers have begun to see the value (of the SoS process), and our award ceremonies are always times of great celebration and joy. The proudest of all on these occasions are the children.

They feel, rightly, that this is something they have achieved, and they are going into life as citizens with a passion for sanctuary. More than ever, I know that these small changes in communities will bring a positive culture change across society and I count it a privilege to be involved.”

Izabela Zalewska-Ratajczak,
Lancashire County Council



How will you be supported in this effort?

To help you on your journey to become a School of Sanctuary, we will:

- **connect you to a SoS lead who will support you through the process - whilst this person is often local, as a mostly volunteer-led network this is not always possible and someone regionally or nationally can help you remotely;**
- **share resources, ideas, and advice via the website, termly newsletter and regular mailing list;**
- **share examples of good practice and showcase your own brilliant work across our communication outlets and social media;**
- **provide you with opportunities to join national campaigns of support for people seeking sanctuary;**
- **extend invitations to national and/ regional gatherings and meet-ups.**

How long does it take to become a School of Sanctuary?

Every school is different and the journey to becoming a School of Sanctuary is unique - so there is no standard or expected length of time to complete the process. Some schools may have already met many of the criteria through their on-going efforts and may only need to document their efforts and share their work with CoS UK for recognition.

Other schools may have significant learning to do about sanctuary issues and may need more time to embed best practice. We also recognise that schools without pupils from a sanctuary seeking background may have less direct experience and want to spend more time learning about asylum and migration in the UK and global context.

In general, we suggest that schools may find it easiest to commit to spending a full academic year completing the process so that there is ample time to work on ensuring they achieve the criteria and fully embed the ethos of welcome across their school. Often setting a target award date helps create momentum for completion; [Refugee Week](#) in June is a popular time to celebrate the achievement of an award.



City of Sanctuary recognises that schools vary widely in their contexts and capacities, and **there is no expectation that every School of Sanctuary will follow the exact same path to demonstrating an ethos of welcome and achieving an award.** The criteria have been developed to ensure a measure of rigour and standardisation to achieve the award, but hopefully with enough flexibility for schools to be able to devise their own unique pathway.

We encourage all schools to think creatively about how their school can complete the three processes and meet the criteria. We also recognise that some school activities can be considered evidence of achieving more than one criterion - so schools are welcome to reference the same activities if they meet multiple criteria.



"Our school in recent years has not had many refugee or asylum seeking students on our school roll. However, that does not mean that the need for education and conversation about refugees and asylum seekers is not needed, on the contrary I have found that it is needed more than ever. The journey that our school has started on has led us to think about our students, our staff, our communities and our responsibilities in a way that perhaps we have not done in the past."

Kerril Case,
Ellesmere Park High School
Eccles, Greater Manchester

The Schools of Sanctuary Criteria

Learn, Embed, Share Processes

The Schools of Sanctuary criteria have been structured to fit into the three overarching processes of Learn, Embed, and Share, which are used for all sanctuary awards given out by City of Sanctuary UK.

Schools of Sanctuary are schools that:

1 LEARN

about what it means to be seeking sanctuary, issues surrounding people who are seeking sanctuary and how to support those who are seeking sanctuary within the school.

2 EMBED

concepts of welcome, safety and inclusion into their very fabric, and that share and celebrate their achievements.

3 SHARE

their values and activities across the entire school community, with students' families and in their local community.

This section is organised around the minimum criteria for achieving the Schools of Sanctuary award. It includes suggestions and real examples of the three principles in practice in schools around the country to inspire you as you explore the award.

Section 5: Resources and the [Schools of Sanctuary website](#) contain more suggestions.

We recognise that all schools are different and will go about this in many different and creative ways! The criteria are not intended to be onerous, as the examples about how you can provide evidence are intended to demonstrate.



Minimum Criteria

1 LEARN

1. Training and education opportunities are provided for school staff & management on refugee, asylum and migration issues.
2. Evidence of refugee/asylum/migration learning activities are incorporated into school life and at least one example in the curriculum, across the key stages.

2 EMBED

3. The school must demonstrate how it has embedded the concept of welcome and inclusion in the school. This should show how the school will continue to develop and sustain a culture of welcome beyond the award and ideally, this should be linked to the School's Improvement / Development Plan and made clear in policy documents and staff induction processes.
4. Recognition of and participation in the annual Refugee Week or other annual/regular celebratory events which highlight the contribution of people seeking sanctuary and migrants to the UK. More information about the annual event can be found here: <http://refugeeweek.org.uk>.
5. Commitment to supporting age appropriate active pupil voice on sanctuary and welcome/welcoming activities in the school. For example, this might mean ensuring that your School Council or other student-led groups are actively involved in the process of working towards recognition.

3 SHARE

6. A public commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of welcome, including the endorsement of the [City of Sanctuary charter](#) which can be done via signing the [City of Sanctuary organisation pledge](#). This pledge should be included on the school's website and in a public space in the school. Some local City of Sanctuary groups have their own pledge and therefore schools would be encouraged to sign these pledges if appropriate.
7. The school publicly highlights its activities in support of welcome and inclusion. This can include social media/website posts, school newsletter updates or attending regional activities or meetings.

NB. Once a school has achieved a sanctuary award, we expect schools to include the Schools of Sanctuary logo and a link to the Schools of Sanctuary webpage on their website.

8. Commitment to on-going engagement with the Schools of Sanctuary stream. This may include sharing resources, ideas and achievements via the school's website or the City of Sanctuary website, and/or with other local/regional schools.



Ideas and Inspiration from Across the Network

LEARN

Criterion 1: Training and education opportunities are provided for school staff and management on refugee, asylum and migration issues.

There are many ways to provide training/education for staff depending on a schools' circumstance, this may include:

- Arranging a visit with a local refugee organisation to speak to the school management team;
- Screening a film or documentary in a staff meeting;
- Running a training workshop about refugee issues such as mental health (stress, trauma), English as an Additional Language (EAL) or asylum claims;
- Enabling staff to undertake trainings to understand more about the experience of seeking sanctuary.

CASE STUDY

School Staff Visit a Sanctuary

Cardinal Wiseman Secondary School, Birmingham

While becoming a School of Sanctuary, every member of staff at Cardinal Wiseman Secondary School (Birmingham) visited a sanctuary run by the church and the Salvation Army to meet people from refugee backgrounds. It led to the school establishing its Sanctuary School Project.

"An opportunity to see, experience and learn; to meet extraordinary people with extraordinary stories and to open our hearts and minds to what we could do in and through our school. Part of me feels relieved that [other staff] can all now see what I have seen and heard. It is a topic we can openly discuss and have empathy and understanding for people who are here due to fearing for theirs' and their families lives."

A member of staff reflects



CASE STUDY

Identifying Training Needs for Support Staff

Ladybarn Primary School, Manchester

Ladybarn Primary School included the following performance review targets for a member of its support team:

- gain knowledge and confidence in helping EAL children;
- and develop strategies for delivering pastoral interventions for refugee children with the specific outcome that 'refugee children in the school have their needs met'.

LEARN

Criterion 2: Evidence of refugee/asylum/migration learning activities are included in school life and at least one example in the curriculum, across the key stages.

Curriculum mapping is often a really useful part of your audit.

You should ask:

Where is the best place for this learning to happen: in the classroom, as an extra curricular activity or as a whole-school activity?

What do you want your students to leave school knowing and understanding about refugee/asylum/migration issues?

Here are some suggested activities:

Curriculum	Extra curriculum	Whole school
Learn about the countries where most people fled from in 2020 (Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan) and the reasons why	Set up a lunchtime club to campaign for refugee and asylum seekers' rights	Hold an assembly about a refugee-related topic
Do a project on famous people who had to seek sanctuary or teach the history of migration in the UK or your local area	Arrange for students to meet with local refugees, perhaps in a volunteering/befriending capacity	Arrange for a speaker to visit the school
Organise a reading day/week based around literature written by or about people seeking sanctuary	Screen a film or documentary after-school about refugee issues	Have an information board on the topic

CASE STUDY

Befriending Day

King Edwards VI Grammar School, Louth

Students from King Edwards VI Grammar School and young refugees from Leicester and Leeds took part in a befriending day. They participated in the international Paper People Project, enjoyed a lunch provided by volunteers at Spout Yard, and enjoyed perfect weather at Sutton on Sea. This befriending day was also partially funded by a generous grant from Louth Town Council to enable young people in the Louth area to connect and learn about the plight of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK.



Criterion 2:

CASE STUDY

Curriculum Planning and Global Diversity

Kingsway Community Trust Primary Schools, Manchester

Schools across the Trust reviewed their curriculum to ensure that sanctuary topics were embedded across different subjects. This was in addition to a wider focus on avoiding stereotypes by looking at the contribution of immigrants to society and on the theme of diversity. For example, the students looked at the different reasons why Ugandan Asian refugees came to the UK in the 1970s and the story of British Olympic runner Mo Farah, who came to the country as a young child.



English/Literacy

Students looked at stories written about different cultures. Students also wrote an imagined autobiographical account of someone who had recently arrived to the UK.

Global Citizenship

Students reflected on the moral, social and cultural issues associated with migration. They then looked at ways to recognise and value the range of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK.

History

Students learnt about the national and global events that affected immigration in Britain and contributed to today's society. They also reflected on the experiences of those who have been forced to move in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Geography

Students learnt about the impact of migration on different countries around the world.

Religious Education

Students studied and discussed ways in which religions are represented in multicultural societies.

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

Students developed research skills using the internet by creating research questions about people seeking sanctuary and skimming website to find the appropriate answers.

Design Technology

Students designed and built a bridge to support a weight whilst considering how bridges can be built between countries and cultures.

Drama

Students developed their improvisation and expression skills when creating pieces about the experience of seeking sanctuary.

Criterion 3: The School must demonstrate how it has embedded the concept of welcome and inclusion in the school

Demonstrating fulfilment of this criteria may differ for schools in different contexts but remains relevant to all Schools of Sanctuary.

For schools with students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds, inclusive practices that meet the specific needs of their students should be adopted, including:

- systems for identifying and evaluating new arrivals' needs, acting on them and reviewing interventions at regular intervals;
- new arrival 'buddy' programmes;
- effective English as an Additional Language (EAL) provision;
- support to overcome disrupted schooling;
- trauma counselling;
- relevant safeguarding policies;
- uniform policies and canteen food options that cater to their cultural and religious needs;
- staff who speak the same language as students when possible.

For other schools, they should consider how to proactively welcome people who are seeking sanctuary to their school/area and ensure their staff and students will be welcoming to people from sanctuary seeking backgrounds in future encounters:

- ensuring staff and students engage with anti-racist learning and activities;
- linking with schools and organisations with people who are seeking sanctuary to hold shared events and activities;
- sharing resources with organisations who support people seeking sanctuary, for example playing fields, minibuses and assembly halls for events.

Furthermore, schools should be living their values, as can be seen in the case study below.

CASE STUDY

Embedding and embracing welcome in a school's values

Oasis Academy Foundry, Birmingham

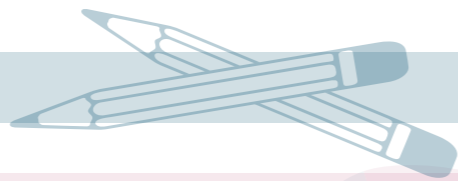
Oasis Academy Foundry achieved Flagship status as an Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) school in 2019 and has been a School of Sanctuary since 2015.

The IQM assessor found that:

"The Oasis Foundry works hard to create 'A Positive Climate in School'.

Children spoke about the positive climate in the school, making specific reference to the "nine habits" or values which they embrace. They provided examples of how they demonstrated compassion, humility and consideration towards one another. They were aware that teachers didn't just help with learning but that they were also there for any kind of issue or problem which they may have. All were aspirational for their futures with ambitions including careers as a librarian, archaeologist and doctor cited."





Criterion 4: Participation in Refugee Week or other annual/regular celebratory events which highlight the contribution of people seeking sanctuary and migrants to the UK.

Refugee Week is an annual festival that 'celebrates the contribution of refugees to the UK and promotes better understanding of why people seek sanctuary' through arts, cultural and educational events and activities. It takes place in the week surrounding World Refugee Day (20 June) and provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate the contributions of refugees to life in the UK. Each year the Refugee Week organisers identify a theme around which activities should revolve, and produce printed materials such as posters and post cards which schools can request and use in lessons.

Ideas for activities include:

- **Having a writing competition on sanctuary themes**
- **Holding fundraising events for relevant local or national charities**
- **Putting on a concert, a play or an art display about displacement or the idea of home**
- **Having assemblies about welcome and forced displacement**
- **Welcoming visiting speakers to give presentations on asylum and welcome**
- **Using the annual Refugee Week resources <http://refugeeweek.org.uk>**

CASE STUDY

Celebrating Refugee Week

Phoenix Primary School, Liverpool

In 2017, Phoenix Primary School, in Liverpool developed a programme of activities to recognise Refugee Week as a school. This included an assembly called **"Far From Home"** to encourage pupils to think about why people have to leave their homes and how they might feel. Each class also had a specific storybook related to leaving home to further explore this theme and year groups took part in different activities, including speaking with a parent who had sought sanctuary. Students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds themselves attended a cross-city Schools of Sanctuary Refugee Week event to share poems they had written about their experiences. Finally, at the end of the week they shared the results of their activities and work with parent/carers.



A Day of Welcome Norfolk Schools of Sanctuary

Every year Norfolk Schools of Sanctuary organise a **'Day of Welcome'**: an event to encourage schools and families to mark Refugee Week and bring supporters together to stand in solidarity with people seeking sanctuary.

Particularly aimed at local schools, teachers from different Schools of Sanctuary share examples of activities they are conducting in their school and the team behind Norfolk Schools of Sanctuary - many of them teachers themselves - share resources specifically designed to enable learning around little-known histories of refugee migration in the local area.

CASE STUDY



Criterion 5: Commitment to supporting age-appropriate active pupil voice on sanctuary and welcoming activities in the school.

City of Sanctuary UK takes a whole-school approach to recognising Schools of Sanctuary and so we expect to see active pupil engagement in welcoming activities in a school. Moreover, pupils are the citizens and leaders of tomorrow, and so this is an opportunity for them to engage in some of challenges facing our shared future around globalisation, climate change, natural resource use and migration.

Children of all ages can get involved in demonstrating a commitment to sanctuary - from the very youngest to those in Sixth Form.

This can include:

- **Creating welcome displays, artwork, and festive bunting;**
- **Become a "buddy" for newly arrived students;**
- **Fundraising for local refugee support agencies or international aid agencies working to support those forcibly displaced;**
- **Developing assemblies or performances around themes of sanctuary for their peers.**

Pupils can also consider ways in which they can support refugee sector efforts to improve the conditions of people seeking sanctuary in UK, including getting involved in campaigns such as:

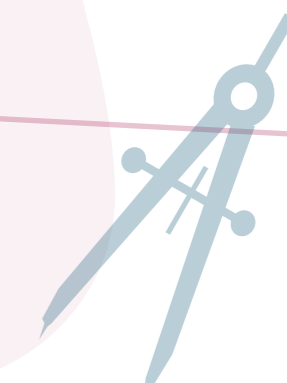
Together with Refugees is a coalition of organisations and individuals calling for a kinder, fairer and more effective approach to supporting people seeking sanctuary.

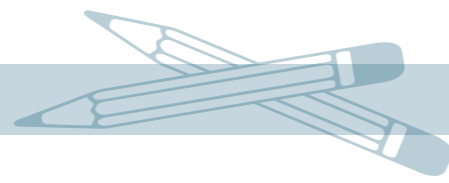
The **Lift the Ban** campaign to abolish the ban on asylum seekers working whilst waiting to hear if their refugee status has been approved. Being allowed to work enables them to integrate and contribute to society and save the government money in benefit provision.

The **Families Together** campaign is working to expand the UK's refugee family reunion rules, so that those with the recognised right to remain in the UK can be reunited with family members.

Working with partner organisations like **Detention Forum** and **Right to Remain**, City of Sanctuary UK are advocating that the government limit the length of time people can be detained for immigration issues to 28 days.

#WelcomingEurope, a European Citizens' Initiative that aims to decriminalise humanitarian aid for refugees and migrants.





Criterion 6: A public commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of welcome which includes an endorsement of the City of Sanctuary pledge visible on the school's website and in a public space in the school.

It is expected that all schools that are applying for the Schools of Sanctuary award **sign an organisational pledge** to confirm their commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of welcome. Once this is done, your school's name and logo (if included) are displayed on the City of Sanctuary website. We ask that the Supporting Organisation logo is then added to your website and displayed in school to advertise your pledge.



CASE STUDY

A selection of some of our wonderful school displays.



(St John's Infant School, The Wirral)



(Moorside Primary School, North Yorkshire)



(Abingdon Primary School, Middlesborough)



(Christ Church CE Primary School, Birkenhead)



Criterion 7: The school publicly highlights its activities in support of welcome and inclusion in its communications including on its website and social media streams.

Once a school has achieved a sanctuary award, we expect schools to include the SoS logo and a link to the Schools of Sanctuary webpage on their website.

There are so many ways to share your activities:

- **Have a display in school to remind all members of the school community about the school's recognition as a School of Sanctuary and the work that has been undertaken to achieve the award: regularly update with the latest activities;**
- **Write about being a School of Sanctuary in the school newsletter or on the school website so all parent/carers know what it's about and why it's important;**
- **Share your activities and work via social media, tweeting the Schools of Sanctuary account. We will share and comment to get your efforts recognised at the national level;**
- **Connect with other Schools of Sanctuary in your local area or multi-academy trust; look for opportunities to share your experience and encourage others to join (and let us know when you do!).**

Engaging with Local Media

Upper Wharfedale School, North Yorkshire

Upper Wharfedale School shared their journey to becoming a School of Sanctuary with families by writing a news article for the school website. Here they outlined the different activities the students had taken part in and the different things they had learnt. The news of being awarded recognition as a School of Sanctuary was then further shared in a number of local newspapers: see articles in the [Craven Herald](#) and the [Telegraph & Argus](#).

CASE STUDY



Sharing Online

St Mary the Virgin Primary School, Cardiff

Staff at St Mary the Virgin Primary School demonstrate their ongoing commitment to sanctuary issues by sharing their most recent efforts with the Schools of Sanctuary network on twitter. Here they have [shared their activities for Refugee Week](#), tweeting at their local School Improvement organisation, local church, diocese team, the Norfolk Schools of Sanctuary team who inspired some of their activities and Schools of Sanctuary. Other schools have also tweeted authors of books they have been using to learn about sanctuary including Michael Rosen, Onjali Rauf and Sita Brahmachari.

CASE STUDY

Criterion 8: Commitment to on-going engagement with the Schools of Sanctuary stream.

While there are some specific elements of “sharing” we require as part of the award - including a commitment to being a place of sanctuary on the school website – **all schools should endeavour to showcase their efforts creatively in their local and regional communities and contexts.** There are also plenty of opportunities and reasons to engage nationally and have your activities and efforts highlighted across the UK network.

Some great ideas include:

- **Creating videos and arts displays which are then shared on social media;**
- **Contacting local media outlets to invite them to award celebrations;**
- **Inviting local community groups or dignitaries to the school to share why it is important to be a place of sanctuary;**
- **Getting in touch with Schools of Sanctuary UK to share details of an activity you have done, or a story you have to share in the newsletter;**
- **Getting involved with the termly SoS newsletter and competition: if a student from your school wins, they will receive a certificate - take a photo and share details of their submission and a photo of the certificate on social media.**

Participating in and Winning the Schools of Sanctuary Termly Competition

Schools across the network

In every edition of the termly Schools of Sanctuary newsletter, we announce a new competition that schools can participate in to renew their engagement with sanctuary issues. Often creative, these competitions are great for students to demonstrate their understanding of the discussions around sanctuary raised in school and share their thoughts. Winners of the Schools of Sanctuary competition receive a certificate and are showcased across City of Sanctuary and Schools of Sanctuary communications: the newsletters, websites and social media.



CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY

A journey to becoming a School of Sanctuary

St Mary's Primary School, Lewisham

The school has learnt about sanctuary through whole-school assemblies in addition to recognising celebrations like 'International Day', 'Black History Month' and 'Wear Your Hair' days.



Years 5 and 6 also participated in workshops to learn about issues like British citizenship fees for children and [No Recourse to Public Funds \(NRPF\)](#).

The Parents' Immigration Action Group has educated parents about their rights and entitlements.



LEARN

The school has structures to identify and support students with EAL and those with emotional or trauma-related issues.



Students have led and participated in various campaigns: including an event at Westminster; a march to the Department of Education and a Christmas card campaign. They also directly spoke to the Labour Councillor and Cabinet Member of Lewisham Council about the issues affecting them, resulting in Free School Meals (FSM) being offered to all NRPF children.



EMBED

The school has also created a display on the schools gates calling for the end of No Recourse to Public Funds.



Since being recognised as a school of sanctuary, a member of staff has shared their activities in a Schools of Sanctuary UK event and supported the development of this case study for the resource pack and website.

Going forward, St Mary's is committed to encouraging and supporting schools in their local area join the Schools of Sanctuary network.



SHARE

Seeking Sanctuary

The Global Picture

Over the last few years, images of men, women and children fleeing war zones and making dangerous and often fatal sea and land crossings have become tragically familiar. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) over 82.4 million people, greater than the entire population of the UK, are currently forcibly displaced from their homes. The vast majority are internally displaced within their own countries or living in neighbouring countries - very few reach UK shores. To learn more about the global refugee crisis, and who is on the move and why, check out the [UNCHR website](#) which provides comprehensive and up to date information.

In this context, it is worth remembering that the UK is not the most popular destination in Europe for those seeking asylum. In the year ending June 2020, there were 32,423 asylum applications made in the UK; during the same period, Germany received 115,435 asylum applications.



Key Language



Asylum Seeker

A person who has requested asylum in the UK, and who is waiting for the Home Office to make a decision on that application. They may be waiting to receive an initial decision on their claim, or they may have had their claim refused but they are appealing the decision. **There is no such thing as an illegal asylum seeker; everyone has the right to have their claim to asylum considered.**

People Seeking Sanctuary

This is the term preferred by City of Sanctuary in recognition of the dehumanising rhetoric which can occur when referring to people by their immigration status and to be more inclusive of all those who are forced to migrate and seek safety and welcome, including - but not limited to - those who are refugees and seeking asylum. We might also use 'people with lived experience' to refer to people who have experienced seeking sanctuary.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC)

These are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a local authority.

CoS UK prefers to use the term separated children and young people seeking sanctuary as it can be dehumanising to be referred to as an acronym. Also, unaccompanied can imply a deliberate decision to send lone children into danger and does not reflect that many lose their families in the chaos of fleeing war and other dangers.

Refugee

A person who is in the UK legally, having either received a positive decision on their asylum application or been resettled in the UK via a United Nations Resettlement Programme. In international law a refugee is someone who,

'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside of their country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside of the country of their former habitual residence is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.'



In the UK

People who are Seeking Sanctuary make up a tiny minority of the UK's population.

The UK has a very small population of refugees and asylum seekers. People who claimed asylum within the UK make up an estimated 0.06% of the UK population and the number of asylum applications in the UK equates to a tiny fraction of non-EEA nationals arriving. The UK asylum system is deliberately hostile to people seeking sanctuary, with thousands of people waiting months - and even years - for a decision. Just 36% of initial asylum applications that were submitted between 2016- 2018 were granted.

The quality of decision making is often poor, with many refugees having to rely on the courts to award protection following an appeal process which overturns the government's initial decision. The proportion of asylum appeals allowed in the year to June 2020 was 43% - demonstrating that nearly half of all negative decisions are overturned by the judiciary. During the lengthy waits for a decision on their initial application or appeal, most people are not allowed to work or claim mainstream benefits and instead they must survive on Home Office support (which is just £39.63 per week at the time of writing). Waiting for a long time on an asylum application can result in people seeking sanctuary experiencing poverty, loneliness, stress and limited opportunities to integrate into life in the UK.

While the UK does offer resettlement opportunities via UNHCR to a limited number of refugees, it has not committed to a minimum annual figure of refugees to be resettled. Following the crisis in Afghanistan in 2021, the UK has launched some resettlement programmes specifically for Afghans; however, there is no clarity on resettlement opportunities for refugees from other countries.

As of 2021, the government continues to seek to make the asylum process more difficult to navigate. In the Autumn of 2021, the UK government has brought forward legislation to parliament which would limit the number and availability of 'authorised' pathways for people in need of protection to come to the UK; and to make it more difficult for people seeking sanctuary in the UK to remain here. These factors contribute to an increasingly 'hostile' environment for people seeking sanctuary in the UK, feeding anti-immigrant sentiment, racism, and stressing community cohesion.

There are, however, also plenty of opportunities for individuals and organisations like schools to campaign to improve the conditions of people seeking sanctuary in the UK (see page 16 for campaigns, organisations and ideas).



The Impact on Children and Families

Children make up a significant number of those who arrive in the UK seeking sanctuary. According to Home Office statistics, in 2019 40% of those offered a form of protection (asylum, humanitarian protection, alternative forms of leave and resettlement) were children.

In addition to those on resettlement programmes, many children arrive with their families in the UK to claim asylum, although the UK's provisions for families who are seeking asylum leave them vulnerable to destitution and homelessness or being confined to insufficient and overcrowded accommodation. If the family's asylum application is refused, children continue to be held in detention units with their families prior to deportation from the UK.

Other children arrive to claim sanctuary alone, having been separated from their families. In 2020, there were 2,291 applications from children who arrive alone, accounting for 8% of total asylum applications and of the children whose claims were decided in 2020, 68% were granted asylum. A further 65 separated children were granted short term leave to remain which expires after 2.5 years, leaving them uncertain and anxious about their futures.

In terms of education, children who are seeking sanctuary continue to face delays accessing schools, with those who are seeking asylum more likely to face longer periods of missed schooling than those on resettlement programmes and those with Special Educational Needs particularly disadvantaged. Once enrolled, children may face language barriers, have acute psycho-emotional needs as the result of trauma, experience higher rates of bullying and discrimination both in and outside school, and may have to overcome periods of missed or interrupted schooling. Those who arrive with their families, may live in disadvantaged settings with few resources and parents may struggle to effectively support them with learning at school as a result of a lack of understanding of the UK's school systems and curricula, low levels of literacy and education and a lack of confidence.

Schools of Sanctuary are schools that proactively try to overcome these challenges for their students, raise awareness of the issues facing people seeking sanctuary and seek to change the UK's policies towards people seeking sanctuary.



Resources for Teaching, Learning and Policy-Development

Summary

This section aims to outline key resources to enable schools to become a place of sanctuary and appropriately support the needs of pupils from a refugee or asylum-seeking background. Here we outline themes and areas of practice that schools should consider as they develop plans to become a School of Sanctuary.

Whilst this section aims to list the key resources, sources and provide some initial guidance and advice, we recommend all schools stay in touch with us to receive the most up-to-date materials and information about related upcoming training and events.

You can stay connected by:

- **Signing up to our regular mailing list and subscribing to the termly newsletter where we share details of the latest resources and events;**
- **Regularly checking the website for the most recent updates and posts;**
- **Connecting with us on Facebook and Twitter;**
- **Looking out to see if any of our upcoming events are of interest.**

The following section covers the themes of:

the basics,
anti-racism,
English as an additional language,
home learning,
inclusive practice,
pastoral care/ mental health,
post-16 support,
safeguarding,
teaching about sanctuary,
Schools of Sanctuary in the devolved nations.



The Basics

A cornerstone to becoming a School of Sanctuary is making sure all members of the school community (senior leadership, students, teachers, governors, administrative staff, cleaners and kitchen staff) are aware that the school supports welcome for all and learn about the diversity of experiences of people seeking sanctuary.

Here we list some sources of information to ensure that learning in this area is based on accurate facts and some resources for teaching and learning at different ages and with school staff.



Sources of Facts, Figures and Definitions

A wide-range of information is available depending on interest.
This includes:

The UNHCR

A wide-range of information available depending on interest/need, includes:

basic migration information:

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/asylum-and-migration.html>

maps / infographics by region and country:

<http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations>

<http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/overview>

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html>

global reports:

http://reporting.unhcr.org/publications#tab-global_report

The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford

A website that seeks to inform public debate and policy through data and statistics.

The Home Office

The latest UK-based statistics on people migrating to the UK, includes data on the resettlement programmes, asylum seekers, migrants and more.

The Refugee Council

Definitions of key terms, statistics, laws and stories of people who have sought sanctuary in the UK.

The Basics

Learning for Students

Learning about people who are seeking sanctuary can take a variety of forms and is possible across the curriculum. It can take place through books, films and documentaries or through classroom-based activities and assemblies.

Inviting a person with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in to school to talk about their story and journey is often a memorable experience for all involved, but we should also remember that sharing their story can often be an emotionally challenging experience and a lack of transport links and other pressures may make it practically difficult for people who are seeking sanctuary to come to school. If your school does welcome a person with lived experience into the school, please review our [guidance note](#) on our website to help you in that process.

Other key resources include:

Oxfam Refugee Teaching Resources

A variety of resources related to learning about people seeking sanctuary, refugees and themes such as kindness, isolation, climate change and crossing the Channel, differentiated by age suitability (across primary and secondary), subject and type.

UNHCR Teaching Materials

Videos, worksheets, classroom lesson plans and activities, key facts and figures and helpful infographics. Divided by age ranges 6-9/ 9-12 / 12-15/ 15-18.

UNICEF Rights' Respecting School Assemblies

Assemblies for primary schools covering a variety of topics related to Human Rights. We particularly recommend #16 about World Refugee Day (20th June) and #2 about the environmental causes behind displacement.

Kazzum Arts Migration Teaching Packs

A variety of resources including teacher and student packs, activity sheets, videos and infographics differentiated between primary and secondary levels.

TES - Teaching about Refugees Resources

A post sharing all of the refugee-related resources available on TES. Aimed at secondary/older students.

Reading International Solidarity Centre - All You Need for a Refugee Assembly Pack

A pack sharing ideas and tips for developing assemblies and lessons around refugee-issues and stories. For KS2-KS4.

Schools of Sanctuary:

Books about Sanctuary

A compilation of the best books that address issues of sanctuary, divided by age suitability.

Learning for Teachers

UNHCR Teaching About Refugees

Definitions, statistics, animations, teachers' notes and information about teaching about refugees.

The Brighton & Hove Education & Enterprise Marketplace

Free online training tools specifically to support staff understanding of refugee and asylum issues. It includes exercises on terminology, myth-busting and action planning.

Future Learn/British Council Course - Migrants and Refugees in Education: A toolkit for teachers

A part-time four-week course to learn how to teach and support young people across the globe affected by violence, conflict, or displacement.

Open University Free Course - Who Counts as a Refugee?

A free 10-hour advanced level course to explore how changing social policy and terminology help to shape - and are shaped by - the experiences of people seeking asylum in the UK.

Anti-racism

Never has it been more apparent that every school should work towards becoming actively anti-racist, an important component of truly promoting sanctuary as a school. It is worth recognising that the challenges that people who are seeking sanctuary experience often intersect with racism.

Here questions of school policies (admissions, uniform, food), teaching practice/pedagogy, recruitment and curricula are all aspects that should be considered.

We encourage all Schools of Sanctuary to review the [National Education Union's anti-racist charter](#) which offers a framework to support schools to implement an anti-racist whole-school approach.

Based in Scotland, [The Anti-Racist Educator](#) is a collective of educational stakeholders who aim to raise awareness of racial literacy in education settings and disrupt racism. Their website offers a variety of resources to help educators be better informed, adopt anti-racist practice and include anti-racist activities in the classroom.

[Hope Not Hate](#) is an anti-fascist organisation that aims to counter far-right extremism through research and training. They offer teaching resources and training workshops to combat unconscious bias in staff and students.

[The Red Cross UK](#) has produced [a guide](#) for helping teachers talk to children about race and racism.

CASE STUDY

Developing Anti-Racist Practice

Acorn Nursery, Brighton

Staff at Acorns Nursery have taken advantage of training offered by the Brighton and Hove City Council to develop their understanding of anti-racist practice by taking courses on micro-aggressions, unconscious bias and more. Working from this, staff collaboratively developed an anti-racist pledge, and have been critically reviewing the experiences of colour in the nursery setting. They have since reviewed the toys available in Home Corner in discussion with parent/carers to make sure they reflect the real-life objects in children's homes, including the foods in the kitchen and the clothes and hair combs in the dressing up box.



English as an Additional Language

Many students who are seeking sanctuary come to the UK as learners of English and so schools should ensure that students are sufficiently supported to learn English and their multilingual skills are celebrated. The EAL provision in school should empower students in their learning of English whilst acknowledging and valuing students' prior knowledge in their other language(s).

We recognise that school contexts vary significantly and that therefore the available provision may differ from school to school. There are a variety of organisations that can help schools of all contexts develop their EAL (English as an Additional Language) provision:

The [Bell Foundation](#) offers teacher training, teaching resources, an EAL assessment framework and regular events to support schools to improve their provision of EAL.

[NALDIC](#) (National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum) is the UK's national subject association for EAL; it provides a professional forum for the teaching and learning of English as an additional language, and promoting the development of research, policy and practice. Check out the [NALDIC journal](#) for more ideas.

Celebrating Multilingualism

Whilst much emphasis often lays on students' acquiring English, it is important we continue to recognise students' first language(s) and empower them to use them.

Here are some ways to do this:

Student Interpreters: Training students to become interpreters, not only values and upskills their multilingualism, but can also help improve communication with families and new students.

For primary schools, [Lost Wor\(l\)ds](#) is a website that offers ideas, activities and resources to help schools celebrate multilingualism in school - both for multilingual/bilingual students but also raising awareness and enthusiasm in monolingual students.

For secondary age students, schools should consider supporting their students to receive recognition of and qualifications in their multilingual skills. As of 2021, it was possible to sit GCSE exams in 15 different languages with the Edexcel exam board.

CASE STUDY

Language Ambassadors

St Gregory's Roman Catholic School

St Gregory's Roman Catholic Primary School was the first primary school in Bolton to become a School of Sanctuary. Embedded in their practice is the appointment of 'Language Ambassadors'. These are students who speak English and at least one other language. They are on hand to help newcomers and assist them with any language problems they are having.



Home Learning

In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and extended school closures in 2020 and 2021 the role of home learning has never been more important, perhaps even more so for students who are from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds.

This period brought to light the gap between home and school for some families and reinforced the need for schools to proactively meet the needs of students at home, just as much as in school.

Central to effective home learning is regular and meaningful two-way communication between home and school. Families must be clear on what is happening in school, what their children are learning, what skills they need to develop and how they can support this at home. Equally, school should have a clear understanding of the home environment and its resources, the family's background and the capacity of parents to support their children's home learning given their proficiency in English, digital literacy and literacy in their first language.



For these reasons some effective ways of supporting home learning include:

Providing information during admissions meetings about the UK school system, curricula and expectations of students;

Offering workshops for parents' on using digital platforms (particularly those used by school), understanding the UK school systems and curricula and effective ways of supporting children's learning at home;

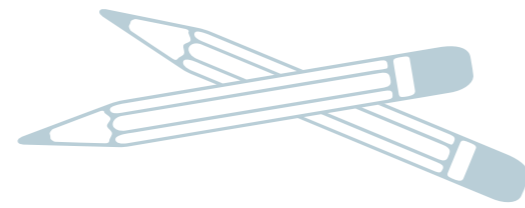
Looking for partnerships with local organisations who might be able to offer additional support to families and children outside school;

Ensuring communications use images, photos and videos to facilitate families' understanding and overcome language barriers;

Identifying which resources families are lacking at home and providing or finding solutions;

Scheduling regular contact with families through a designated 'Sanctuary Lead' member of staff in school.

Inclusive Practice



Inclusive practice includes recognition and celebration of the diversity of students' ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds and ensuring that school is a place that respects, values and is comfortable for each and every student.

You should consider:

Representation in school:

Do students see themselves represented across the school - in the curriculum, in the teaching/staff body, in displays and in awards?

School uniform regulations:

Are they appropriate and comfortable for all the students in your school?

Do they discriminate against any religious or racial group?

Recognition of cultural and religious celebrations:

Are you aware of and informed about the celebrations that are important to your students and their families?

How do you recognise these celebrations in school?

Are families made aware of their entitlement to cultural and religious holidays and student absence from school?

Food and catering options:

Are you conscious of your students' dietary requirements?

Do the catering options provided by school offer them a healthy and varied diet?

Key resources:

The National Education Union toolkit for teachers and governors about their statutory duties under the 2010 Equality Act in England and Wales. <https://bit.ly/3BWmZUJ> and their guide **Welcoming refugee children to your school** <https://bit.ly/3qf6KxF>

The Open School Doors programme supports school leaders, teachers and support staff in building their knowledge and understanding of newly arrived families' needs. <https://bit.ly/3wr9WYe>

UNHCR advice for teachers on including refugees in the classroom covers areas such as stress, trauma and language acquisition. <https://bit.ly/3qf6KxF>

Clear and practical advice from the Children's Society: <https://bit.ly/3mTTr3J>

Equitable Education by Sameena Choudry covers various aspects of teaching practice with regards to students with English as an Additional Language refugee and asylum-seeking students, ethnic minorities and more!

Education for Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Children: Access and Equality in England, Scotland and Wales (2018). UNICEF. There is a section on good practice: <https://bit.ly/3GXQVsd>

'Best practice' advice on supporting refugee children from SecEd: <https://bit.ly/3CX2DtO>

The National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum addresses EAL issues for refugee background students. <https://bit.ly/3wsYpb2>



Pastoral Care and Mental Health

Students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds often have particularly acute emotional needs that derive from their pre-, trans- and post- migratory journeys. Identifying these needs and responding to them appropriately are key to providing a high-quality education to students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds.

Some suggestions of effective provision to meet the psychological and emotional needs of students includes:

- establishing a comprehensive admissions process in which the school gains a good understanding of the students' previous educational and life experiences and current living circumstances in order to identify any emotional needs;
- having a designated staff member responsible for regularly checking-in with the student (and their family) to quickly identify any areas of concerns; both inside and outside school;
- assigning a peer 'buddy' to a newly arrived student to help ease their transition into school;
- making sure staff are trained in supporting the mental health of students and are conscious of the issues that students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds in particular might find challenging;
- developing an effective system for the identification of and response to mental health concerns in students. This may involve having a designated mental health lead and establishing a triage system with different possible responses/referrals.

CASE STUDY

Establishing effective pastoral care systems

Stacey Primary School, Cardiff

In Stacey Primary School, all staff have received training in responding to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). A nurture room has been established so that all students are aware of a designated safe space to go to if they have concerns. The school also has a Family Engagement Officer that supports the children, parents and their families through regular communication, signposting to key services such as doctor's surgeries and other opportunities outside of school such as ESOL classes. Support structures within the student body have been established through the Peer Mediator programme in which students are trained to help pupils in the playground who are sad, lonely, upset or in need of a friend. They are also there to try and resolve any minor arguments that occur between the children.



Post 16 Support

Thinking ahead to the future and career pathways can be daunting for any student, with lots to understand: from UCAS, student finance and personal statements, to apprenticeships and CVs.

Students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds often face additional barriers and challenges: navigating the complex policies of student finance eligibility in which some students who are seeking sanctuary fall through the gaps and overcoming periods of missed education and/or needing to further improve their proficiency in English. This is additionally challenging given that parent/carers of students who are seeking sanctuary might not be informed about the UK education systems or know how to best navigate the application processes. They are also less likely to have the social capital that can help their children acquire relevant and impressive work experience and connections. These additional difficulties mean that many students “put up barriers in their own mind [about their abilities]” (UNICEF & RSN 2020) and so really benefit from emotional support or mentoring as well as practical support.

The numerous barriers and challenges students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds face mean that they would significantly benefit from earlier guidance and support for post-16 and post-18 steps that specifically caters to their circumstances.

There are a number of resources that schools can use to learn more about the barriers to students' further education and the opportunities available to them:

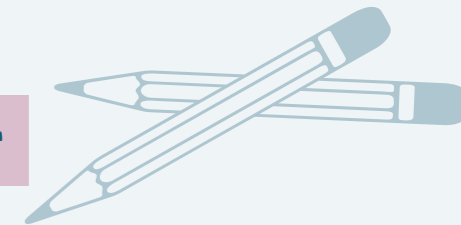
Refugee Education UK have created practitioner advice sheets which are updated annually which aim to make the transition from college to Higher Education that bit smoother for people seeking sanctuary in the UK.
www.reuk.org/resource-educationtransitions

Another excellent resource is the **S.T.A.R (Student Action for Refugees) website**, where there is an up-to-date list of available sanctuary scholarships. It is also worth remembering that several universities offer sanctuary scholarships for foundation years to help those who have missed education or still need to improve their English prepare for a standard undergraduate course at some of the best universities. The STAR website also lists other education opportunities and funding sources for people who are seeking sanctuary.



POST 16

Teaching about Sanctuary



It is important for schools to see learning about migration and sanctuary as an ongoing process and schools should not limit themselves to solely addressing who is a refugee/ asylum-seeker. Sanctuary can be brought in to a wide-range of subjects and be addressed from a number of angles. Here are our suggestions of different themes to approach sanctuary issues:

Local Migration Histories: Research local migration histories and try and answer the questions:

*Which communities/peoples have settled in your area and when did they arrive?
Why did they migrate?
What evidence of their presence can be seen today?*

Windrush: Look at this episode of recent history to better understand the UK's long history of hostility towards migrants. *See how the Windrush generation arrived and contributed to the UK, learn how they were treated and try to untangle the ongoing implications for those today and their families.*

The Hostile Environment & UK immigration policy: Look at immigration and asylum rules in the UK and see how difficult it is for people seeking sanctuary to travel to the UK on authorised routes, receive protection once in the UK and the various policies that make living a happy, comfortable life in the UK difficult. *To start, look at [Right to Remain's toolkit](#).*

People Seeking Sanctuary from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities: whilst often European and/or UK citizens, it is worth recognising that people from these groups often experience some of the highest rates of prejudice, hostility and discrimination in the UK and continue to search for sanctuary in their local areas and schools. *We suggest starting by looking at the resources outlined in our [Learning about Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities](#) post on our website.*

Forced migrants: Look at other groups of people who may not be recognised as asylum-seekers and refugees but nonetheless have sought sanctuary in the UK. *Starting points might include second and third generation immigrants from Italy and Portugal and people from Hong Kong who have received UK citizenship. Consider what their reasons for moving to the UK might be and the roots of their hardships in their country of origin.*

World Cultures: Look at diversity through music, cooking, literature, dance, textiles, sports and religion. *See which students are familiar with, try new types, meet with people from different backgrounds and celebrate difference across the world, the UK, your local community and school.*

Climate and Migration: Learn about the links between climate change and migration. *We suggest starting by looking at the plight of the Marshall Islands and those living on the edges of the Sahara.*

LGBTQI rights and Migration: Research countries in which being LGBTQI is illegal and/or those who are LGBTQI experience persecution, discrimination and prejudice. *Consider why this would force people to leave their country and listen to stories of those who have arrived in the UK to seek sanctuary for these reasons.*

We encourage any exploration of the above mentioned themes with activities to see how the students and school can make concrete, practical efforts to welcoming and supporting the relevant group of people to their school, the local community and/or the UK.

Schools of Sanctuary in the Devolved Nations



NORTHERN IRELAND

The Northern Ireland Education Authority leads the Schools of Sanctuary Stream in Northern Ireland. They have developed resources, action plans and audits that are relevant to the local context. For more details you can find all their resources [here](#) and you can watch an inspiring video about the Schools of Sanctuary Stream in Northern Ireland [here](#).

SCOTLAND

The values of Schools of Sanctuary and the criteria that ensure the promotion of these values are aligned with Scotland's education policies and "New Scots: Refugee integration policies". Policies such as Curriculum for Excellence; Additional Support for Learning; the Scottish Attainment Challenge; Getting it Right for Every Child; and Developing the Young Workforce align to ensure that children and young people, including those who arrive in Scotland seeking sanctuary can reach their full potential.



As the 'New Scots' policy states:

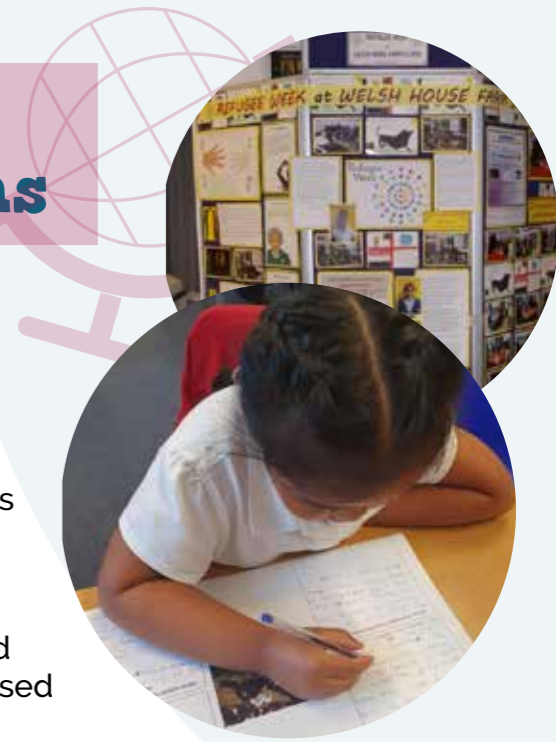
"The Additional Support for Learning framework entitles children and young people, who do not speak English, to support to help them overcome barriers to learning in school. Curriculum for Excellence provides a framework for teachers to provide learning in the ways which best meet the needs of individual children, ensuring there remains a focus on development and wellbeing of children, as well as academic achievement."

In 2017 and 2018, What Works Scotland in collaboration with Save the Children carried out research on the education experiences of refugee children in Scotland. The full report is available [here](#) but key findings include examples of best practice, the importance of English learning but a focus on English not detracting from other aspects of the curriculum and a need for effective collaboration between schools and other service providers.



For Scottish-based learning resources we suggest looking at the [Glasgow Girls campaign](#) and those available on the [Anti-Racist Educator website](#).

Schools of Sanctuary in the Devolved Nations



WALES

Wales has developed its own local network of Schools of Sanctuary that hold regular meetings with representatives from the various local authorities. If you are interested in learning more, or being put in touch with your local Schools of Sanctuary representative please get in touch with us at schools@cityofsanctuary.org.

The value of promoting learning on issues of sanctuary and meeting the needs of minority students has been emphasised in recent reports and policy statements:

The [2019 Nation of Sanctuary Plan](#) emphasised the need to make use of the Flying Start programme, share best practice across local authorities, promote awareness of apprenticeship opportunities amongst youth from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds and counter bullying towards children who have sought sanctuary.

Professor Charlotte Williams Report: "Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the new Curriculum" in [Welsh](#) and [English](#). This report highlights the need for embedding anti-racist practice in schools, expanding learning on diversity and improving representations of ethnic minority themes and contributions.

The report's conclusions were fully accepted by the Minister for Education in a [written statement](#) who announced an additional £500,000 to support the implementation of the actions.

During Refugee Week 2021, the Welsh government released a statement acknowledging the role of Schools of Sanctuary in improving inclusivity and awareness in schools.

Education Wales has also developed a number of resources on the Hwb to help support schools welcome students seeking sanctuary including:

A [Refugee Children Education Toolkit](#) is a great, if slightly outdated, resource to think about how to support refugee students in schools.

An [EAL needs assessment survey toolkit for primary and secondary age ranges](#).

A [case study](#) about Ysol Maesydderwen becoming a School of Sanctuary.

Many schools in Wales have also found the [UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award](#) as a helpful step in becoming a School of Sanctuary.

Appendices

Dates for your Calendar

Find below a list of events and celebrations that provide a great way to incorporate learning about asylum, sanctuary and migrations across the year. Whilst these dates are great opportunities to renew your focus on sanctuary issues, we encourage all schools to recognise that sanctuary should be constantly promoted within school and can be achieved by embedding awareness, inclusion and welcome across school policies, behaviours and curricula.

January

24 January: International Day of Education

27 January: Holocaust Memorial Day

February

LGBT History Month

21 February: World Mother Language Day

March

5 March: World Book Day

8 March: International Women's Day

International Day of Happiness 20 March

21 March: World Poetry Day

21 March: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

April

May

15 May: International Day of Families

8-9 May: Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives During the Second World War

16 May: International Day of Living Together in Peace

June

Gypsy, Roma Traveller History Month

Scottish Refugee Festival

5 June: World Environment Day

20 June: World Refugee Day Refugee Week (3rd week in June)

22 June: Windrush Day

July

30 July: International Day of Friendship

August

9 August: International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

12 August: International Youth Day

September

21 September: International Day of Peace

21 September: European Day of Languages

October

Black History Month

5 October: World Teachers' Day

10 October: World Mental Health Day

November

20th Nov: UN World Children's Day

16 November: International Day for Tolerance

20 November: World Children's Day

National Anti-bullying Week

December

2 December: International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

10 December: Human Rights Day

18 December: International Migrants Day

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