



# Schools of Sanctuary

## NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2022

We are very proud to be a School of Sanctuary. That means we aim to be a safe and welcoming place for all, and especially for refugees and asylum seekers.

We are conscious that there has been much troubling news internationally of late. We know that news stories, such as the political instability in Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine, can be a source of worry and anxiety and in an age of 24-hour news and social media it is all but impossible to prevent our children hearing about these conflicts and the forced displacement that they result in.

In this newsletter you will find information about how we are and will be supporting the children to understand some of these issues and to build a culture of welcome in our community. We also provide some guidance about how you can talk to your child in an age-appropriate way on these topics, as well as some ideas of what action you might take at home to show solidarity with the many millions of people who are forced to leave their homes to seek sanctuary due to conflict.

Mr Rose-Brown

As a School of Sanctuary, we aim to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about refugees and asylum seekers. To that end you will find facts and figures throughout this newsletter which were taken from the UNHCR's report Global Trends in June 2021. Please note that these statistics predate the recent displacement from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

### TOP 5 COUNTRIES HOSTING REFUGEES

**Turkey** 3.7 million

**Colombia** 1.7 million

**Uganda** 1.5 million

**Pakistan** 1.4 million

**Germany** 1.2 million

**86%** of the world's refugees are hosted by countries in the developing world

are hosted by neighbouring countries

**73%**



SCHOOL OF  
**SANCTUARY AWARD**  
WELCOMING ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

## OUR SCHOOLS OF SANCTUARY AWARD HAS BEEN RENEWED!

Earlier this year we applied for our award as a School of Sanctuary to be renewed. We were successful in our application which you can view alongside some of our other Schools of Sanctuary work [here](#). We will be sharing this news with the children in an upcoming assembly.

### FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE MID-2021

26.6 million refugees<sup>1</sup>

20.8 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate  
5.7 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate

4.4 million asylum-seekers

3.9 million Venezuelans displaced abroad<sup>2</sup>

48.0 million internally displaced people<sup>3</sup> end-2020



# AT SCHOOL

Throughout the year we support our pupils to understand the rights and experiences of refugees and asylum seekers and we work together to build a culture of welcome for them and everyone else in our community.

Here are a few of the strands of that work happening in coming weeks and months.

A whole school assembly about our Schools of Sanctuary work

On 17th June our school will again take part in [A Day of Welcome](#) and all lessons across school will be focused on refugee migration.

A fundraiser for Welcome Wheels

Whole-staff training from New Routes Integration – a local charity that support refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers in Norwich

# 68%

of the world's refugees originate from 5 countries

**Syrian Arab Republic** 6.8 million

**Venezuela** 4.1 million

**Afghanistan** 2.6 million

**South Sudan** 2.3 million

**Myanmar** 1.1 million

However, since the conflict in Ukraine an estimated 2.6 million people have fled the country. Only 3000 of these have so far been granted visas to the UK. Poland has taken in 1,600,000 while Germany has welcomed 80,000 so far

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

## OUR RESPONSE TO THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

A number of children have come into school talking about the invasion of Ukraine. However, we are also aware that some children will not know about the conflict. As such, we are adopting the following strategy:

In Year 3 and 4, we will follow the cues from the children. If they do not raise the topic then we will not discuss it at this point. This is because of the age of the children and that they can feel overburdened by issues in the news. If children instigate discussions about it, we will use the resources below.

In Year 5 and 6, we will use the resources below whether prompted by the children or not. This is because it is highly unlikely that children in these year groups will not have heard something about the invasion. They also have, at this age, their own views and preconceptions about war that they have gained from various sources including games and the media. These preconceptions are often incorrect.

The first resource we will use is a simple video from Newsround explaining the history of the two countries and how this point has been arrived at. The second video is advice for children if they have felt, or feel, upset by anything they see in the news - the teachers will use their discretion about the use of this.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60417806>  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/13865002>

Please do take a moment to watch the videos so that you understand what your child may have seen or talked about in school.

Also, if you have a particular connection to the conflict or your child is particularly worried and you would like us to support them in any way, please do get in touch with your child's teacher.

Mike Hooper



**Norfolk  
Schools Of  
Sanctuary**

# AT HOME

Here are some suggestions of things that you or your child/children might like to do at home. Helping children get involved in a practical way with supporting people affected by conflict can help them feel like they have some agency and thereby help reduce their anxiety.

## DONATE

If you are able to, we encourage you to donate to one of the organisations below, all of which support people fleeing conflict and persecution around the globe

**International Rescue Committee** help people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control over their future. Donate [here](#).

**British Red Cross** help anyone, anywhere in the UK and around the world, get the support they need if crisis strikes. Donate [here](#).

**UNHCR** works to protect and assist refugees everywhere. Donate [here](#).

## SPEAK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

If you decide to discuss this with your child/children, it's important to reassure without raising further anxiety. Use the guidance on the next page to prepare yourself for the conversation.

## TAKE PART IN UEA'S REFUGEE WEEK

There are lots of free and fabulous events being organised by the UEA for their Refugee Week this week. See their programme of events [here](#) for further information.

## WRITE TO OUR MP

You or your child might like to write to Clive Lewis MP to let him know your thoughts and feelings about refugee migration and how refugees and asylum seekers should be supported in the UK. Email him at [casework@clivelewis.org](mailto:casework@clivelewis.org) or send him a letter addressed to Clive Lewis MP, House of Commons, London. SW1A 0AA

## JOIN THE 'TOGETHER WITH REFUGEES' DAY OF ACTION ON 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH

People across the country will be taking action online and in person on the 21<sup>st</sup> March as part of the 'Together With Refugees' campaign. Your child could make an orange heart to display in your home. [www.togetherwithrefugees.org.uk](http://www.togetherwithrefugees.org.uk)



## DISPLAY A 'NORFOLK WELCOMES REFUGEES' POSTER

In a window at your home. These can be collected from the school office.

## PLANT SOME SUNFLOWERS

Or even a sunflower garden in solidarity with Ukraine. The sunflower is the national flower of Ukraine and gardening is excellent for your children's mental health and wellbeing.

## Ways to Speak to Children About Events in Ukraine

The media coverage of events in Ukraine is undoubtedly being heard by our children. The use words such as invasion, attack, bombing and war are, undoubtedly, being overheard and absorbed by our children. For some, this may well be very frightening. Sitting on top of the experiences of the last two years may add further anxiety and fear, exacerbating distress. As parents/carers or teachers, you may feel uncertain about the best way to reassure without raising anxiety further. We may inadvertently communicate our own anxieties and fears around the events by if we don't notice how we are feeling before speaking to them, or by ignoring the topic completely



**Steady yourself** before you start to speak to your child. Your child will take their cues from you, if you appear anxious, their fear may escalate. **Be calm, steady and factual.**

**Find out** what your child understands already and what they may have heard. "I'm guessing you have heard lots about Ukraine on the news, or from adults talking about it, I'm wondering what you may be thinking about it or if you have any questions?"



**Listen, Validate, Empathise** to your child's fears and worries. Be compassionate and understanding and accept their feelings before moving to reassure. War **is** frightening and this comes on top of their experiences of the pandemic which may have heightened their sense that the world is not safe.

**Contextualise and contain** locate where the conflict is happening so the child has a sense of distance and the risk of them being caught up in the conflict for them is low. Use appropriate sources of information - BBC Newsround, Time for Kids, News for Kids, The Day to find accurate, age appropriate information



**Take action:** be aware of what your child is overhearing either through news bulletins or through adults discussing the situation. Find ways to empower your child in to do something meaningful - maybe contribute to care parcels sent out to those displaced by the conflict, find out what is happening locally to provide support, looking for those helping can balance the child's perspective

[www.traumainformedschools.co.uk](http://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk)

Further support and guidance can be found [here](#)

## SEEKING ASYLUM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

# £5.66

Per day to purchase food, clothes, toiletries, phone and travel. This is paid via a pre-paid debit card that can only be used in selected shops.

At £37.75 per week that is just under 50% of what people on Jobseeker's Allowance receive

# 50%

Asylum seekers did not receive the same £20 uplift as people on Universal Credit during the Covid pandemic.

Asylum seekers have no right to work as they do in most other EU countries. Asylum applications in the UK routinely take months and years to be resolved.