



City of Sanctuary

Schools of Sanctuary Award - Guidance for Completing an Application

Schools of Sanctuary is an initiative to celebrate the good practice of schools who foster a culture of welcome and inclusion for all, especially asylum seeking and refugee families. Schools of Sanctuary offers a way to educate the whole school community about the human right to sanctuary and engage with sanctuary seekers and families in their local communities. The aim is to create a safe environment that includes everybody in a school, regardless of people's background, ethnicity, faith or gender. Schools that are committed to welcome and inclusion can apply for an award from the City of Sanctuary movement.

City of Sanctuary recognises that schools vary in their contexts, there is no expectation that every School of Sanctuary will follow the exact same path to embedding the ethos of welcome to all and achieving an award. This document outlines the principles and minimum criteria required for the award, but we encourage schools to build on these in a way that best reflects their unique situation and to aim for a whole organisation approach.

This guidance is designed to be read alongside the [Schools Resource Pack](#) and [sanctuary award application](#). In addition, there is an [audit/self-assessment/planning tool](#) to aid schools to self-assess where they are in the sanctuary journey and support planning for further development.

We suggest that schools consider the creation of a portfolio of activities to evidence their progress as they work towards an award. Some, but not all, [local City of Sanctuary groups](#) are able to support you to work through the awards process. In the event there is not a local group to support your school to achieve the award, please contact your nearest [Regional Coordinator](#) for guidance.

The Core Processes: Learn, Embed & Share

A school can attain an award if they can provide evidence that they have integrated our three core processes:

- **Learn:** learning about what it means to be seeking sanctuary, both in general, and specifically.

- **Embed:** taking positive action to embed concepts of welcome, safety and inclusion within the school including, but not limited to, the pupils, teaching and administrative staff. To take steps to ensure this progress remains sustainable.
- **Share:** sharing your vision, achievements, what you have learned, and good practice with other schools, the local community and beyond.

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. Please provide evidence of meeting each of the criteria in the relevant section of the award application.

Learn Criteria

In this section of the application, we will be looking for examples of work which signals the commitment of your school to learn about what it means to be seeking sanctuary. It is also important that you include sanctuary seekers in those learning opportunities if possible. We recognize that this may be challenging in certain school locations and situations, and City of Sanctuary nationally and via its local groups would try to assist schools that have limited links to people seeking sanctuary and refugees.

To receive a School of Sanctuary award, a school must meet these two 'Learn' minimum criteria:

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

Embed Criteria

Embedding means that institutions are taking positive action to implement welcome, safety and inclusion throughout the school, across its entire community. City of Sanctuary wants schools to detail how they will ensure a continuation of support for sanctuary beyond the current student and faculty population.

To receive a School of Sanctuary award, a school must meet the following three 'Embed' minimum criteria:

- Criterion 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 induction processes.

- Criterion 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>. *NB. We recognise that not all schools will be able to participate in the annual national Refugee Week which usually takes place during the third week of June, but would encourage all schools to find ways to regularly mark and celebrate the experiences and contributions of sanctuary seekers living in the UK.*
- Criterion 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.

Share Criteria

The third and final process in the City of Sanctuary model is Share. City of Sanctuary will be seeking evidence that the school is seeking to share its commitment with the wider community reaching parents, local organisations and spreading the word about the school's efforts. Schools can also tap into national (or even international) school networks to spread the ethos within the sector.

To receive a School of Sanctuary award, a school must meet the following three 'Share' minimum criteria:

- Criterion 6: A **public commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of welcome**, including the endorsement of [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.
- Criterion 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.*
- Criterion 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 national City of Sanctuary website, and/or with other local/regional schools.

As you complete the application, here are some suggestions to support you in replying to each of the sections.

To achieve an award, schools must confirm they endorse the [City of Sanctuary Charter](#) (by ticking the relevant box on the application form). The City of Sanctuary Charter has been agreed by the network and outlines our values of inclusiveness, openness, participation, inspiration and integrity. In addition, we encourage all schools to become an organisational supporter of City of Sanctuary by signing a [pledge](#) and to support any pledges created by their [local City of Sanctuary groups](#).

Q: Please provide a summary of how your school engages with sanctuary seekers.

In this section, outline the ways you have engaged with people seeking sanctuary. How has your school sought to build relationships with local people seeking sanctuary? Has it formed partnerships with any local support organisations or CoS groups?

Q: Using the 3 processes of the sanctuary award, please reflect on how you have achieved these principles attaching evidence to support your answer.

Here we are looking for evidence of your initiatives, projects, policies and progress. Even if something is ongoing, include it as it helps to build a picture of how the school is developing. Try to be concise but don't assume that the recognition team will have knowledge of your school (so please explain all acronyms and give context where necessary).

Q: Please identify how sanctuary seekers have been involved in helping you achieve these principles.

All applications for a Sanctuary Award are expected to involve people seeking sanctuary, refugees and migrants, in the planning, delivery and/or evaluation of activities for each of the principles, where appropriate. What about the student body - have those within it who have sought sanctuary themselves been consulted on your initiatives, if appropriate? Is there a mechanism for feedback from, and support to, them?

Building on the examples you have given, identify the ways in which people seeking sanctuary have contributed to these successes. <https://cityofsanctuary.org/groups/>

Q: How does your organisation intend to build on your achievements over the next three years in order that your award is renewed?

We want to acknowledge and celebrate institutions which show a commitment to the principles in the long-term and which have a forward-looking approach; receipt of the sanctuary award is just the beginning! Each award is valid for three years and a procedure for renewal is in place which will vary according to local circumstances. Use this section of the application form as an opportunity to share information about your strategic planning. Ideally, we would like to see sanctuary and inclusion built into a school plan.

Questions to ask yourself as you complete this section include: Has your school demonstrated a sustainable commitment to sanctuary in the long-term? Has this effort been embedded in the school plan? How will your school reevaluate and adapt to continue to demonstrate sanctuary, welcome and inclusion? Can you provide evidence that this commitment will continue after the award is granted?

Additional points to include where relevant:

Evidence of self-evaluation

Do pupils, staff and others involved feel that the school has met the principles? How do you know?

Feedback from others involved

Has feedback from the local community, prospective pupils or the refugee & migrant support sector has been considered? Have there been any changes or actions arising from the activities?

Feedback from refugee/migrant involvement

It is always useful to include quotes or comments from an asylum seeker, refugee or other migrant who has engaged with any aspect of the school's endeavours.