

SoS NEWS



Just as we planned to release this issue schools were put into “lockdown” once again - to support teachers with this we have added an extra page with lots of useful links for home/remote learning.

Click to subscribe to our [SoS newsletter](#) and stay up to date with news, views and events, take part in competitions and discover all kinds of useful resources to use in school. You can also sign up to the wider [CoS UK newsletter here](#) to follow events and activities across the sanctuary movement.

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOLS

Birmingham City of Sanctuary asked its local schools to take part in The **36,000 Humans** Project which seeks to honour and commemorate those who have died on their way to find sanctuary in Europe. On registering, schools receive a section of a document listing these deaths, and they decide on a way of remembering these individual human beings whose lives have been so sadly lost.

Abbey RC Primary School began the project over a year ago, making baubles for the school Christmas tree, each decorated with a flag of a person's country of origin and the date of their death. They also decorated jars to use with candles whose lights remind us that the stories of these people must be remembered. Covid interrupted but could not stop the project and recently some children decorated cardboard tubes to look like a person, and on the back included a date and country from the 36000 Humans list and held a prayer service. They will share this with the rest of the school in a virtual assembly, and every child will make one which will form an Advent display.



Halesowen College decided to represent 1% of those whose lives had been lost, by creating 360 origami birds, each with the details of one person. The plan for these birds was that they would fly overhead in the Student Atrium, but once again this was foiled by lockdown. Nevertheless, some of the birds found their way to a local park during Refugee Week 2020, and now that students are back in college, the birds will continue their journey.



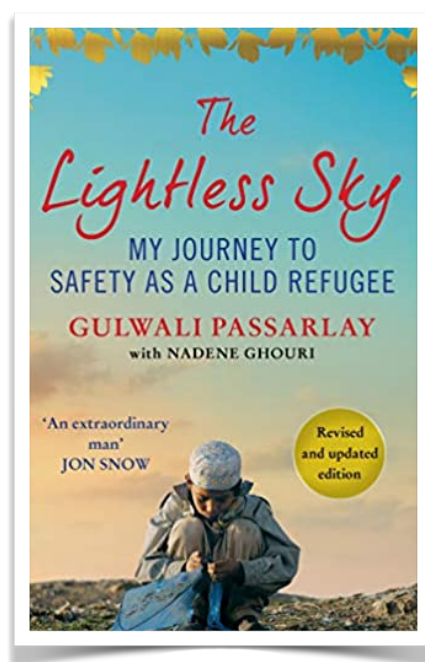
BOOK CORNER

By Ruth Sinhal : A review of "The Lightless Sky", by Gulwali Passarlay



I first met Gulwali when he visited our school during Refugee Week 2016 to take an assembly and share with us the story of his journey from Afghanistan to the UK. He was then aged 22, just a year older than my eldest daughter. This young man has endured so much trauma and yet managed to achieve so much in such a short time. Since being in the UK he has graduated with a degree in Politics from the University of Manchester and achieved his masters of MPA at Coventry University, CTPSR in Global Diversity Governance. In 2018 he co-founded '[My Bright Kite](#)' CIC to empower refugee youth and create awareness about the challenges asylum seekers and refugees face in their host society and he is a published author, with his autobiography: **"The Lightless Sky: A Twelve-Year-Old Refugee's Harrowing Escape from Afghanistan and His Extraordinary Journey Across Half The World"**.

Aged 10 Gulwali faced a dilemma - to become a martyr for the Taliban - to avenge his father's death (he was shot by US soldiers) or get involved with Nato forces and be seen as a traitor and no doubt be killed by the Taliban. So his mother hatched a plan to get him and his brother out of Afghanistan, to be taken 'to safety. To Europe'. As Gulwali says, "I will never forget her parting words: 'You must hold on to each other's hands. Never let go of each other. This is for your own good. However bad it gets, don't come back.' The book tells of his traumatic journey which he incredibly managed to survive especially at such a young age. When you read the book you see there are so many occasions where that could have not been the case, and you're also aware of the sobering reality for many others is not so lucky. It's important to know these individual human stories rather than just the big picture media headlines. I wish everyone could read this book, especially those with negative attitudes towards refugees, because I fail to see how they could keep those attitudes after reading this book.



CHECK OUT MORE RECOMMENDED BOOKS [here](#)



RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS

If you are looking for some ideas to explore identity, diversity, community and equality with your pupils, check out the amazing resources available on **The Linking Network's** [website](#)



There are book suggestions, lesson plans, editable resources and suggestions for social action projects as well as information about Schools Linking.

If you are looking for resources to help support young migrants and refugees in your school or college who may be facing barriers to accessing Higher Education, these resources are what you need - Check out the incredible [resource pack](#) available from **We Belong and STAR** who have created an information pack which addresses all the barriers and questions facing young people from migrant/refugee/asylum seeker communities.



NEWS FOR SCHOOLS

Home learning / homework support project

School-age students seeking sanctuary in the UK have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic particularly in terms of the impact of being forced out-of-school as a result of school closures and periods of self-isolation. At home, they face various barriers to accessing and engaging in learning whilst parents and carers often struggle to support them due to a lack of English proficiency, resources and confidence. Whilst research indicates a widening education gap between disadvantaged students and their peers, anecdotal reports from schools, local organisations and City of Sanctuary groups also suggest rising disengagement and demotivation amongst students who are seeking sanctuary, especially at the secondary-level.

In response to this and following calls from our City of Sanctuary groups and Sanctuary Ambassadors, **City of Sanctuary UK is working to develop a home learning / homework support project** to combat missed education and promote improved well-being and motivation amongst students seeking sanctuary. This project will be trialled between January and March. If you know of any existing home learning / homework support projects being run by schools or organisations in the local community please contact Megan on megan@uk.cityofsanctuary.org. Equally, if you know of students who may benefit from additional support at home or you are interested in and able to commit to regular volunteering as a mentor/teacher (especially if you are a teacher with a current DBS!) please get in touch as soon as possible.

COMPETITION TIME :

The Art of Welcome.

Here is your chance once again to show off the talent in your school!

In this edition we are launching an art competition. Work can be created using any media, 2D or 3D and sent to us as a photo or scanned document, to be judged remotely. This way entrants can keep their work and it can be displayed in your school.

There are four age categories :

- 7 years old and under
- 8 to 11 years old
- 12 to 15 years old
- 16 to 18 years old
-

Please ensure all entries are clearly labelled with name, age and school.

There will be one winner chosen from each age category.

Closing date: February 26th 2021

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CPD OPPORTUNITIES

There are some exciting CPD opportunities available from various organisations:

Future Learn are offering training related to working with asylum seeker/refugee children and families.

ASAP is offering FREE eLearning modules:

Schedule 10 - This E-learning module includes a range of learning activities to help you develop your understanding of asylum support. You can take the course at your own pace; it should take you approximately 1 hour. By the end of this course you will have an understanding of Schedule 10 support and who can access this support.

Or for more training and educational support have a look at the **City of Sanctuary** page.



SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

Find Schools of Sanctuary on Facebook

Find City of Sanctuary on Facebook and Twitter

Why not search these hashtags to discover what is going on and how to get involved in your local area or beyond.

#refugeeswelcome

#LiftTheBan

#saferoutes

Holocaust Memorial Day?

Holocaust Memorial Day, or International Holocaust Remembrance Day, is the day that the British Government, alongside many others worldwide, has designated as a day of remembrance for the millions that were murdered by Nazi persecution during the Holocaust. It also remembers those killed through atrocities committed during conflicts in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. From 2005, Holocaust Memorial Day has been commemorated each year on January 27th. This date represents the same day that the Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated in 1945.

The theme for the day in 2021 is “Be the light in the darkness”.

Before every genocide, perpetrators divide society into those considered worthy of human treatment, and those who are not. Distortions are deployed using propaganda and stereotyping to identify and victimise a specific group (or groups), followed by discrimination – often enshrined into law. The darkness leading to genocide also causes deep emotional trauma.

Why not try out some of these videos and resources from [HMD](#) and specific guidance and support for Schools [here](#).

ANTI-RACIST PLEDGE FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Ruth Sinhal

In the aftermath of the violent murder of George Floyd and the growth in support for the cause of Black Lives Matter many people were desperate to see real change and avoid the continuation of the cycle of trauma, protest and a return to general apathy. Like many other people, I alternated between feeling either overwhelmed and powerless or angry and impatient. Making a lot of “performative” noise on social media really was not helping anyone.

It took me a while to break out of this pointless cycle of emotions and direct my energy into working in a constructive way. I reached out to BLM Leicester to offer them my support and from this conversation the idea of an Anti-Racism Pledge For Schools and Colleges emerged. So began a collaboration with many individuals, local Councillors and MPs, organisations and groups working for racial justice in Leicester, which led to our Pledge having a significantly powerful list of Founder Signatories when it was launched in October.

As teachers, we are always looking to “do the right thing” for all our pupils. But just “doing diversity” is NOT enough. We must work towards becoming actively Anti-Racist. The systems we all operate within have been generations in the making and to dismantle these systems of “white supremacy” will take just as long. This is not an easy journey and we may not see the final destination but it is vital that we join and do what we can, where we can, whenever we can.

Does your school have an Anti-Racist Pledge? Is Anti-Racism embedded in every aspect of school life? Do you agree that this should be the priority in every school regardless of the communities they serve? Get in touch and find out how you can help ensure your pupils are proud to attend an Anti-Racist School.

Email: ruthsinhal@gmail.com

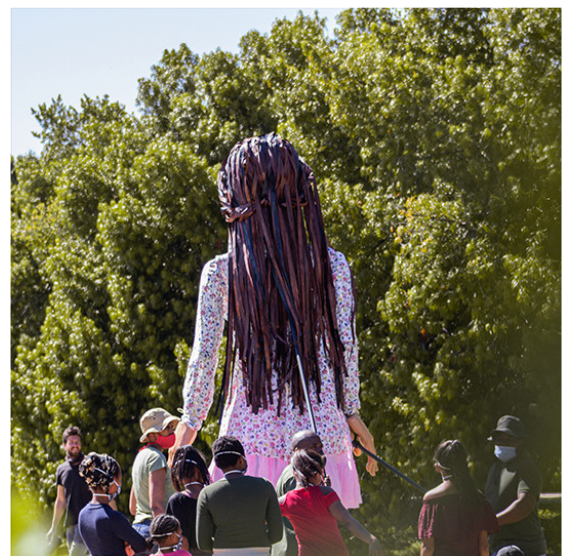
WALK WITH AMAL

Little Amal, a young refugee, embarks on a remarkable journey – an epic voyage that will take her across Turkey, across Europe. To find her mother. To get back to school. To start a new life. Will the world let her? Can she achieve what now seems more impossible than ever?

The Walk – is a travelling festival of art and hope in support of refugees, with Artistic Direction from **Amir Nizar Zuabi**.

In 2021, from the Syria-Turkey border all the way to the UK, *The Walk* will bring together celebrated artists, major cultural institutions, community groups and humanitarian organisations to create one of the most innovative and adventurous public artworks ever attempted.

At the heart of *The Walk* is '**Little Amal**', a 3.5 metre-tall puppet of a young refugee girl, created by the acclaimed Handspring Puppet Company.



Representing all displaced children, many separated from their families, Little Amal will travel over 8,000km embodying the urgent message "Don't forget about us".

At this time of unprecedented global change, *The Walk* is an extraordinary artistic response: a cultural odyssey transcending borders, politics and language to tell a new story of shared humanity – and to ensure the world doesn't forget the millions of displaced children, each with their own story, who are more vulnerable than ever during the global pandemic.

Little Amal urgently needs your help to advocate for and support young refugees.

Please support *The Walk* by donating [here](#).

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Feel like getting creative? Send us your art inspired by **Little Amal**, the GIANT puppet of a young refugee that will travel 8,000km on **The Walk** in 2021 to spread a HUGE message of HOPE.

Post photos of your drawings, paintings, sculptures, collages – or any creative project you want – on social media and tag **@walkwithamal**

We'll be sharing art submissions on our new online gallery soon for all the world to see.
Will your art be there?

#LittleAmal #TheWalk @walkwithamal

Find out more information and follow the progress of Amal on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



Below are the winners of the competition in the previous newsletter

We welcome new people to our
school;
Everybody shows respect and we
Love people from everywhere,
Care for each other,
Offer people friendship and
Make people feel safe.
Everybody is welcome in our school!

By Shania Price, age 11

St Sebastians RC Primary School,
Salford.

Welcome

Hello, Bonjour, Hola!
You are welcome here
We'll play with you, feed you
And greet you with big smiles on our
faces.
We'll learn your language and be as kind
as we can,
Because when the world learns to
welcome the world will be a happier
place!
You might feel sad or lonely but trust us
that will change.
You can teach us your language, maybe a
game and you should definitely tell us
your name!
You will learn to like it here
We'll have fun!
But for now ...
Goodbye, Au Revoir, Adios!

By Erin W age 8 Our Lady of Grace
Primary School, **Bury**

I know you feel scared and insecure
But everything will be okay
The school in the start is very confusing, everyone
screaming, talking and running,
You can't understand anything, what they are saying
And you start to have a panic attack
But you need to know you are welcome

By Maira M (a new arrival child)

Buile Hill Visual Arts College, **Salford**

Someone New

There's someone new at school,
He's from a different place.
He's fun, kind and cool,
And he likes learning about space.

He's just like me and you,
But he speaks with different words.
Actually, sometimes I do too.

It's not a problem, it's ok,
We can talk with play!

He is always welcome here.

By Evangeline Price, age 9
St Sebastians RC Primary School, **Salford.**

Just as we were about to publish this edition, the most recent lockdown measures for schools were announced and as such we would like to share some useful online resources for remote learning.

The logo for The Traces Project, featuring the text "THE TRACES PROJECT" in white capital letters on a black rectangular background, which is itself on a white card with a drop shadow.

THE TRACES PROJECT

[The Traces Project](#) has a range of different activities for different age groups, many of which can be done at home eg. the first visual arts activity is to draw pictures of your favourite things eg. favourite food, favourite book etc and then make a portrait of yourself using them as parts of the body.

[Save the Children](#) have some great ways to keep your children learning whilst having fun.....from cooking to Den Making and dancing!



Save the Children



[The Linking Network](#) can provide all schools with a wide range of amazing resources and lesson plans to use during this period of blended learning addressing issues of PSHE such as identity, community and equality. These resources will be regularly updated.

The Global Dimension Learning Wallplanner lays out Global Days and celebrations across the school year, to help educators engage their students in Global Learning and Global Citizenship. Through **discussion questions, facts, and challenges** students will expand their understanding of a range of cultures and of global challenges, past and present, and learn the importance of values in creating a more compassionate, sustainable future. The theme of the 2020-21 Global Learning Wall Planner is '**Values for a Connected World**' with each month focusing on a different value, and exploring its importance in relation to addressing contemporary global issues. The content is easily adapted and is therefore suitable for both primary or secondary students. Download your free PDF of the Global Learning Wallplanner [here](#) and teaching resources designed to expand students' understanding of each value highlighted [here](#).

The City of Sanctuary website has many more great suggestions [here](#).