

## Swindon City of Sanctuary Celebrates First School of Sanctuary Award

All of us at Swindon City of Sanctuary are delighted to have recently celebrated the success of Swindon's first School of Sanctuary.



Welcoming Committee members 2022-23

At the end of November 2022, Peatmoor Primary School became Swindon's first nationally accredited School of Sanctuary. On 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the whole school gathered for a special assembly at which young people and staff were formally presented with their School of Sanctuary Award. Significantly, this was **International Day of Education** [International Day of Education | United Nations](#) – one of the dates highlighted for celebration, on Swindon City of Sanctuary's **Make Every Year a Year of Welcome** calendar. To find out the story behind the calendar, click on this link [Year of Welcome Calendar - Swindon City of Sanctuary](#)

To gain the award, staff and young people at Peatmoor Primary School, who are proud to have joined the growing network of almost 400 Schools and Colleges of Sanctuary across the UK, showed excellent practice in developing and embedding a culture of welcome and inclusion throughout the life of the school and across the curriculum. Peatmoor Primary School's application was reviewed by a panel of Swindon City of Sanctuary's trustees and volunteers, and a representative from City of Sanctuary UK.

**Peatmoor Primary School's Headteacher, Mrs Libby Matthews** said: "We are so proud of this award which recognises the welcome that Peatmoor extends to all. The welcome anyone receives at Peatmoor comes from all our pupils and staff and is very much embedded throughout all that happens. Thank you to Mrs Adams and Mrs Williams who not only champion and lead on this aspect of school life, but who also



Head Teacher, Mrs Libby Matthews

gathered together all the evidence needed which they presented to the panel along with Miss Fishlock and the Year 5 and Year 6 children on our recently formed Welcoming Committee."



Welcoming Committee members presenting their reading of Brian Bilston's famous and apt poem, *Refugees*

The celebratory assembly was attended by all teaching staff; all young people from Reception through to Year 6; and some invited guests from the local community: one of the school's Trustees; the Senior Primary Commissioner of Education from Swindon Borough Council; and Trustees and Charity Manager from Swindon City of Sanctuary. Along with a few speeches and stories from some of the invited guests, all six members of the Welcoming Committee presented a performance of Brian Bilston's thought-provoking poem, *Refugees*.

At the end of the assembly, not only was the Head Teacher, Mrs Libby Matthews, presented with the School of Sanctuary Award certificate, but also, each of the six members of the Welcoming Committee were presented with Swindon's first Welcome Ambassador Awards.



Welcoming Committee with their Welcome Ambassador Awards



**Trustee and Swindon City of Sanctuary's Volunteer Schools of Sanctuary Lead, Cristina Bennett said:** "Meeting the members of the Welcoming Committee and hearing them express such passion and commitment to the importance of fairness, inclusion and welcome, was an absolute pleasure. They are clear role models for future School of Sanctuary Ambassadors in other schools in Swindon."

**Swindon Borough Council's Director of Education, Annette Perrington said:** "It is very exciting to be able to announce that Peatmoor Primary School has been awarded the School of Sanctuary Award."

**City of Sanctuary UK Regional Coordinator South-west and North-west, Maryam Taher said:** "I am so pleased to congratulate you all on being the first School of Sanctuary in Swindon and joining the national School of Sanctuary Network. This is a fantastic achievement that has never been more important."



Detail from Reception Foyer at Peatmoor Primary School