

STOKE NEWINGTON SCHOOL

Refugee Policy

Rationale

Stoke Newington School welcomes refugee students and is committed to a whole school approach to ensure that they benefit from equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum to enable them to develop and succeed in their education.

Definition of 'Refugee'

A refugee is someone who has fled from her/his own country, or who cannot return to it, 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' (J.Rutter: Refugees in the Classroom, 1994). An asylum seeker is someone in search of safety and refugee status. It is not possible to be certain of the legal status most of our students have and we cannot require families to give us such information. When we use the term 'refugee' we include 'asylum seeker'.

Refugees in Stoke Newington School

At any one time a proportion of our students are refugees or asylum seekers. These students originate from a wide range of countries. It includes almost all our Kurdish students and many of our Turkish and Turkish Cypriot students. Most Vietnamese, Chileans, Congolese, Angolans, Somalis, Ethiopians, Eritreans, former Yugoslavians and many Sri Lankans have entered the country in search of refuge. (see Appendix A)

Needs of Refugees

In common with other newly arrived bilingual students, refugee students have English language and learning needs and will need to adjust to an alien culture and education system. Some may be high achievers with a good educational background. Others may have missed out on educational opportunities and may not have developed basic literacy and concepts in their Mother tongue. They may have endured hardship and may be suffering from trauma similar in some ways to abused children. It is important to recognise the central role a caring school can play in welcoming such students, helping them to settle into the local community and enabling them through educational achievement to gain confidence and self esteem.

Aims

1. To ensure that refugee students are welcomed and integrated into the school.
2. To support refugee students so that their educational, personal and social needs are met and they can achieve their full potential.
3. To recognise and value the experience of refugee students to facilitate the positive contributions they can make in broadening the experience and understanding of all our students.

4. To enable all students to appreciate one another and foster mutual understanding.

To do this through:

- Appropriate reception and induction procedures
- Specialist counselling, welfare and medical support
- Partnership with parents
- Development of links with community groups and services
- Development of appropriate curriculum materials to support language and learning development
- Dealing with refugee issues within the curriculum in a sensitive and positive way
 - Provision of appropriate inset

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

Students spend much of their time with their peers. All students gain from mutual support, respect, understanding, care and friendship.

Students will:

- Be allocated as buddies to new students
- Be encouraged and trained to provide peer group support for language and learning development
- Be able to provide support for speakers of the same language
- Develop an understanding of and respect for the culture, language, beliefs and experiences of refugee students

Form Tutors

The form tutor has a central role to play in the induction support, development and welfare of refugee students within the tutor group.

Tutors will:

- be aware of cultural differences which may make it difficult for some students to adapt to the social and moral codes of behaviour
- keep themselves informed of the backgrounds of individual refugee students within their tutor group (e.g. ethnic origin of both parents; possible reasons for being here; religion; mother tongue; previous education)
- allocate buddies to new students and induct buddies into their role
- support students in their induction into the school
- liaise with the Turkish/Kurdish parental support worker; the Inclusion dept. and EMA regarding any concerns about welfare or progress
- make links with parents and encourage their support and involvement
- promote an atmosphere of support and understanding within the tutor group

Subject teachers

Subject teachers are responsible for ensuring that refugee students have access to the curriculum, have opportunities to develop the language and learning skills needed to make progress and achieve and have their experiences recognised and valued.

Subject teachers will:

- be aware of the kind of experiences and difficulties which may have been faced by refugee students prior to coming here and of their needs in adapting to the demands of the school and the curriculum
- find out about students' previous experience in the subject
- ensure that refugee students are in an educationally and socially supportive working group, particularly when they are new to the school
- use a range of teaching & learning strategies to ensure their subject is accessible
- use a range of EAL strategies to ensure that refugee students develop the language and learning skills required to make appropriate progress in their subject
- make opportunities to raise the awareness of the whole class about refugee issues
- liaise with EMA team, form tutors and Turkish/Kurdish parental support worker as appropriate

EMA (Ethnic Minority Achievement)

The EMA team has a key role to play in the induction and support of refugee students.

The EMA team will:

- be involved in the initial reception of refugee students and meet with parents/carers
- undertake an initial assessment of students' educational experience and needs and inform YCC, tutor and subject teachers
- work with year teams to implement a buddy scheme for mid-term transfers
- provide support for identified students
- work with departments in developing accessible materials and strategies to develop language and subject skills
- monitor the progress of refugee students and report to YCC, tutors and subject teachers
- liaise with the Inclusion department regarding special educational needs of refugee students
- liaise with outside agencies concerned with refugee welfare
- develop home/school liaison and mentoring through the Turkish/Kurdish parental support worker

The Inclusion Department

The Inclusion Department is responsible for assessing and providing inclusion for the special educational needs of students: emotional, behavioural and learning.

The Inclusion department will:

- be aware of the special educational needs which might be experienced by refugee students because of trauma, breaks in education, being in a new environment
- work with the EMA team, the Turkish/Kurdish Support Worker (TKSW) and the Educational Psychologist to assess and provide for the special educational needs of refugee students.

- ensure that the needs of individual refugee students are raised and discussed at Student Support Network meetings (SSN)
- work with appropriate outside agencies, including any with special expertise in refugee issues
- ensure that information on the special educational needs of refugee students is communicated to Year Curriculum Co ordinator (YCC), form tutors and subject teachers

Year Curriculum Co-ordinators

Year Curriculum Co-ordinators need to have an overview of the backgrounds, needs and progress of refugee students in their year group and to be involved in dealing with any major concerns.

Year Curriculum Co-ordinators will:

- be aware of cultural differences which may make it difficult for some students to adapt to the social and moral codes of behaviour of the school
- keep themselves informed of the backgrounds of refugee students within their year group (e.g. ethnic origin of both parents; possible reasons for being here; religion; mother tongue; previous education)
- ensure that tutors are informed of issues regarding refugee students in their tutor group and that induction procedures are taking place, including the buddy scheme
- work with the EMA team and the Turkish/Kurdish Support worker to ensure appropriate reception and induction procedures for refugee students
- liaise with the EMA team, the Inclusion dept. and the Turkish/Kurdish Support Worker as appropriate regarding the needs of and concerns about individual students

Heads of Department

Heads of Department need to ensure that department policy and practices support the educational social and personal development of refugee students. Heads of Department will:

- ensure that all members of the department are aware of and adhere to the school's Refugee and Equal Opportunities policies
- as part of their monitoring, ensure that the needs of refugee students are being identified and met and that progress is being made in language and learning development
- endeavour to develop curriculum content which facilitates students' understanding, interest and appreciation of cultures and experiences which are different from their own
- ensure that EMA/Inclusion dept. issues relating to refugee students are on the departmental agenda

Support Staff

Support staff play a central role for students inside and outside lesson time and in receiving students and their parents into the school.

Support staff will:

- be aware of the backgrounds and experience of the refugee population of the school

- be aware of the possible needs of refugee students
- be aware of the kinds of experiences and difficulties which may have been faced by refugee students
- be aware of cultural differences which may make it difficult for students and their parents to understand and adapt to the demands and requirements of the school
- welcome and support refugee students and their parents

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team has an overall responsibility for ensuring that refugee students gain the maximum benefit from their education at Stoke Newington School.

The SLT will:

- monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Refugee Policy
- provide opportunities for INSET on issues relating to the education and welfare of refugee students
- ensure that opportunities are provided for the participation of the parents/carers of refugee students and their community groups

Governors

The Governors have responsibility for ensuring that the school makes appropriate provision for refugee students.

The Governors will:

- be aware of the refugee population of the school and the backgrounds, experiences and needs of refugee students
- support the refugee policy and monitor its implementation through annual reports from Link Governor and the EMA department
- encourage participation of parents of refugee students and members of relevant community groups
- take account of the refugee population of the school and its needs when considering resourcing, staffing and recruitment issues

Parents

We encourage and welcome parents into the school by ensuring that:

- communications are sent out in Turkish and other community languages where possible
- interpreting and support for parents is provided
- parental participation at Parents' Evenings is encouraged and supported
- information about the English educational system is provided
- parents are empowered to support the needs of their children; eg. Parents group

Outside Agencies

We need to ensure that relevant outside agencies are involved and work with us in supporting refugee students. Where possible we will look for any specialist services for refugee students.

In particular we need to consider:

- The school nurse and doctor and medical services

- Counselling provision
- The Educational Welfare Service
- Social Services
- Special Educational Needs services

The Community

We seek the support of appropriate community groups who are able to support the school and its refugee students and parents.

We will:

- be aware of local community groups and their roles and maintain contact
- develop links with appropriate community groups to increase our own awareness and understanding and to get support for our refugee students and their parents
- involve community groups where possible in cultural events and curricular activities

Chair's Signature: *Signed by C Stagg* Date: 23rd January 2014

Print Name: Caroline Stagg

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This policy review date: January 2014

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