

The School of Sanctuary Award



What is a School of Sanctuary?

A School of Sanctuary is a school that has received a Sanctuary Award from City of Sanctuary UK or a partner organisation in recognition of its good practice in fostering a culture of welcome, belonging and solidarity for those seeking safety.

An Introduction to Schools of Sanctuary



How can my school become a School of Sanctuary?

To become a School of Sanctuary, a school must take an intentional and reflective approach to reviewing and refining school practice in relevant areas and demonstrate that they have

implemented three key principles:

1. **LEARN** Schools help their students, staff and wider community learn about what it means to be seeking sanctuary and the issues surrounding forced migration.
2. **EMBED** Schools are committed to creating a safe and inclusive culture of welcome that benefits everybody, including anyone in their community seeking sanctuary and working with people seeking sanctuary to co-produce their sanctuary efforts and practice.
3. **SHARE** Schools proudly share their values and activities with their local communities and work collaboratively to build our movement of welcome.

To support schools to achieve the three principles, we have developed a set of eight minimum criteria which have been structured to fit into the three overarching principles of 'Learn, Embed, and Share', which are used for all sanctuary awards. [See here for further information about the minimum criteria.](#)

The first step for any school wanting to work towards the award is to register their interest and affirm their commitment to our vision of welcome by [signing the supporting organisation pledge](#). See [here](#) for a simplified summary of the next steps.

How long does it take to become a School of Sanctuary?

Every school is different and the journey to becoming a School of Sanctuary is unique — so there is no standard or expected length of time to complete the process.

Some schools may have a long history of supporting students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds, whilst some may have few – or no – students from sanctuary seeking backgrounds and have a lot to learn.

We expect all schools to use the journey to become a School of Sanctuary as an intentional and reflective process, helping them to review and refine school practice and strengthen community connections and engagement. This is evident in a clear application, good engagement with your Local lead or City of Sanctuary UK contact, and in your responsiveness to constructive feedback, advice and suggestions.

In general, we suggest that schools commit to spending *at least* a full academic year completing the process. As many Local Leads and City of Sanctuary UK implement application deadlines, make sure to liaise with your contact in plenty of time in advance to confirm a suitable application submission date.

What next?

1. [Sign the supporting organisation pledge](#)
2. [Review the steps to become a School of Sanctuary](#)
3. [Review the minimum criteria](#)

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