

Becoming a School of Sanctuary

*Activity & Resource Pack for
Irish Post Primary Schools*

Dear teacher...

We hope you find the activities and suggested resources in this pack useful. The intention here is to bring your school's "Sanctuary journey" into the teaching space. The Schools of Sanctuary programme is based on three principles- Learn, Action and Share. This book naturally focuses on the "Learn" piece but there are lots of actions you can take (and probably have already taken!) to create sanctuary learning spaces also- take a peek at the "Action" section of our [Learn, Action, Share booklet](#).

Guidance:

Teachers will readily identify where there may be potential for sensitivity among their students in some of the exercises suggested here. We ask teachers to always be mindful of the lived experiences of students in their classroom. Even when referring to a particular country, ethnic group etc, students can feel "spotlighted". Teachers might find it helpful to:

- let the students themselves know in advance
- plan to ensure that students are not put on the spot or feel compelled to participate or share
- plan for methodologies where students can opt in/opt out
- plan for what to do if a student gets upset during the lesson

As always, children and young people can amaze us with their resilience, openness and their innate sense of justice. We urge teachers not to be afraid of the "difficult" topics, not to have taboos in the classroom and the school. Let students and teachers figure it out together - we are all learning all the time how to build a better and brighter future for everyone.

This pack was designed in summer 2023. We will endeavour to update this pack in line with any and all curriculum changes in the coming school year and beyond.

Thank you, teachers!

Contents

Wellbeing in the School/Centre	4
Wellbeing in Junior Cycle:	
CSPE	5-6
SPHE	7
Other Junior Cycle Short Courses	8
Transition Year & LCVP	9
Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas:	
Maths	10
Geography	10
Sciences	10
History	11
Business Studies	11
Home Economics	12
Visual Art	12
Music	14

Wellbeing in Post-Primary Schools/Centres

If being a School of Sanctuary is being a place where students are safe, welcome, included, valued and supported, it is clear that 'sanctuary' is very closely linked to 'wellbeing' in many ways. One derives from and mutually benefits the other.

In serving many of the remits of wellbeing for the whole school community, schools are inherently engaging with the Sanctuary Principle of 'Action'

- **Culture & Environment**- schools take actions to create a safe, welcoming, representative and inclusive environment for all students, especially vulnerable groups
- **Policy & Planning**- wellbeing promotion is served through anti-racism and anti-bullying policies; planning and facilitating the contexts and needs of the student body also fosters wellbeing
- **Relationships & Partnerships**- the voice of the minority student is heard and understood by teachers and peers, their families are welcomed and facilitated, links with sanctuary-related organisations in the community that support student and teacher wellbeing can be forged.
- **Curriculum**- this is covered comprehensively in the following section

Sanctuary in your school's wellbeing planning and SSE:

Your school's Sanctuary journey and the points of connection therein may inform the planning and evolution of your wellbeing programme or vice versa. Planning could consider how:

- the Sanctuary portfolio can be aligned with and act as a testimony or addition to the Wellbeing SSE. Indeed, the portfolio should be considered a 'living document', one that could therefore be an ongoing reference for the school's Wellbeing process.
- additional allowable Wellbeing hours can be used to strengthen student understanding of and participation in the school's Sanctuary journey.
- local community organisations might be able to give additional wellbeing/sanctuary supports.
- your school could connect to a Member or Champion school in the SoSI network that can share its practice and ideas.

Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle

In two of the three pillars of all Junior Cycle Wellbeing programmes, the **CSPE** and **SPHE** short courses are ideal ways to bring the 'LEARN' principle of the Sanctuary journey into the classroom. In **Transition Year**, the learning can continue and be reinforced, with more emphasis on co-curricular activities and related interdisciplinary projects

These short courses have the potential to directly empower and benefit refugee and ethnic minority students. Ensuring EAL accommodations are in place to maximize the participation potential of EAL students is important. When devising plans, be it with or without student input, it's also important to bear in mind the guidelines to sensitivity on page 2.

CSPE



Strand 1: Human Rights

It is a criteria of the SoSI charter that students learn a little about the 'International Protection' system and understand the basic terminology of that system. Our [SoSI "Definitions & Facts"](#)

[resource](#) addresses this very purpose (and might make a nice printed poster!).

It's also important that students learn some of the terminology important to your school's Sanctuary journey. What do the terms 'intercultural' and 'diversity' mean? What's the difference between equity and equality?



Students will be learning about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in this hugely significant educational piece, there is a wealth of intersectionality of sanctuary learning.

- Discuss how just, equal and wonderful the world would be for everyone if all nations lived up to the standards of the UDHR! How does Ireland rate in those standards?
- Explore all of the Articles of the UDHR that, if denied to someone, might force them to flee their homeland. Discuss the impact that climate breakdown is predicted to have on patterns/trends of forced global migration.
- Reflect and discuss **Article 14 'The Right to Seek Asylum'** and learn more about how this right is effected in Ireland. What happens when someone seeks asylum in Ireland?
- Closely related to Article 14 is the [1951 Geneva Convention](#), an important piece of international law that provides the internationally recognised definition of a 'refugee' and outlines the rights that refugees have.



Our specially curated YouTube playlist has useful age-appropriate videos about the UDHR and the 1951 Geneva Convention. See the [playlist here](#).

Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle

Strand 2: Global Citizenship



In learning about Global Citizenship, students can explore how poverty and inequality contribute to social problems, migration and forced migration.

- Think about the history of migration and forced migration, especially in the contexts of Ireland's own history of colonialism, religious persecution, famine etc. Think about the legal freedom of travel and movement that some global citizens have in comparison to others and explore the potential reasons for that difference.
- Understand the statistics of 'forcible displacement'. The differentials are important. For example, of the 108.4 million forcibly displaced people in the world (as of the end of 2022), 62.5 million were internally displaced, i.e. they are still in their home country but living in refugee camps etc. <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/statistics>
- Learn about some of the organisations here in Ireland that work to uphold human rights and to bring about meaningful social change. Students can even get involved in some of their advocacy work.

Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission



Irish Refugee Council



Frontline Defenders



Amnesty International Ireland



Pavee Point



Immigrant Council of Ireland



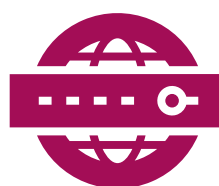
More teaching resources for Strand 2:

- Ombudsman for Children: '[It's Your Right](#)', a rights-based online game for 13+
- Amnesty Int. [Ireland: Post-Primary-School-Pack.pdf \(amnesty.ie\)](#)
- UNHCR: [Teaching About Refugees, 12-15 years](#)
- NYCI: [Global Rights, Noble Goals](#)

Strand 3: Exploring Democracy



This strand offers students a really valuable chance to think about modern Irish democracy and the role of the media therein. It's important to learn that Ireland, a 'parliamentary republic', ranks very high, by international standards of democratic stability and trust and, importantly, freedom of the press. The contrast between these democratic freedoms and the lack of freedoms in the troubled and impoverished countries that people flee from is stark.



Students could explore how different countries are visually represented in the media (print and digital). Compare, for example, the first ten images that come up in an image search for Afghanistan with ten for, e.g., Spain. Discuss why there are such differences of tone and how the negative images make you feel. It could be interesting to examine how different media outlets present different images.

Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle



The 'Exploring Democracy' strand could be valuably linked to the 'Checking the Facts' strand of the Digital Media Literacy short course (if students are not already taking that course). Online

misinformation and hate is fueling huge problems in how people understand and treat refugees. It's vital that students understand the nature and motivational factors of misinformation.



Check out these relevant short videos from SoSI's 'Wear Red Day' 2023 presentations:

- 1) [Mark Malone explains how misinformation and hate is spread online \(7 mins\)](#)
- 2) [Matthew Collins talks about how his youth was consumed by racism \(16 mins\)](#)

We recommend Doras Luimní's **Anti-Rumours Resource**, which aims to dispel myths and misconceptions around the topic of immigration and migration.

[Download resource](#)

SPHE

This short course offers a School of Sanctuary valuable ways to ensure that solidarity, empathy and understanding is afforded to students who may feel vulnerable, marginalised or unable to speak up or speak out. It is much harder for EAL students to express themselves in the English language so think about ways for them to share in their home language if necessary.

Strand 1: 'Understanding Myself and Others'

The Sanctuary theme can be seamlessly interwoven into this. The opportunity to discuss some of the 'hard' topics of bias, racism, exclusion etc is here and should be embraced.

Students can discuss how combating these in their school and community and working to create more inclusive environments and cultures will help their school to become a true School of Sanctuary.



Students' SPHE projects could benefit your school's Sanctuary journey hugely. There is great potential for students to learn, explore and express how SPHE is part of the 'bigger picture' of the whole school community. Co-curricular events and guest speaker visits (e.g. a Sanctuary Ambassador) could be linked to the project.

An awareness campaign (posters, podcasts, peer to peer research, surveys) on any of the below themes would be fantastic!

- Online misinformation, understanding it, dealing with it
- How to deal with racism, [how to report a racist incident](#), being an ['anti-racist'](#)
- Researching and celebrating the multiculturalism of the school

Strand 4: 'Emotional Wellbeing'

This is inextricably linked to a student's experience of sanctuary. Understanding how to support themselves can be a complex area for students with trauma from displacement, racism and more. This is where the school's pastoral care and partnership with other care agencies plays a role. Despite such complexities, these students can still participate in and benefit from this learning experience- just ensure that there is a clear 'opt-out' measure in place for all students.

Through this strand, their peers can sensitively learn how to support such students whose needs are more challenging and how to understand their feelings and behaviours. Learning to respond safely to racism and bullying in both the school and the wider community is a key theme here as well and links into the Sanctuary principle of 'Learn'.

Other Junior Cycle Short Courses

DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY

As outlined in the 'Exploring Democracy' strand of CSPE, strand 3 of DML, *Checking the Facts*, is a good opportunity for students to understand how misinformation is created and spread and how it contributes to social division. Misinformation and harmful stereotypes create and worsen problems for many marginalised groups- refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants, Irish Travellers, Roma, transgender people. In short, misinformation tends to target and scapegoat minorities. Asking 'why' to this question could be an interesting topic for students.

ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE

Drama, music, art, poetry, film, photography, dance- if even one of these could be explored through a Wellbeing and Sanctuary lens, what a wonderful thing it would be!

Think about the points of inspiration for the artistic expression of wellbeing, sanctuary, inclusion, diversity and equality. Representation is important and it's empowering for all. Artists who are refugees or migrants or who are members of the Irish Traveller community can be hugely inspiring to young people who do not "see" themselves in art. Interactions with artists from such communities can therefore change how **all** young people view the purpose of art, understand its potential to express meaningful social sentiment and appreciate its contribution to personal and collective wellbeing.

GUEST SPEAKERS/FACILITATORS

As suggested in the Wellbeing guidelines, guest speakers and facilitators can bring insight to students. In the area of Artistic Performance, as outlined above, finding artists that represent minority communities and diversity is good practice for a School of Sanctuary. In Digital Media Literacy, check out the work of the fantastic [Gorm Media](#) and reach out to them for a guest speaker, if suitable.

Having guest speakers and facilitators to speak about racism, displacement or marginalisation is very powerful and can open up the space for these conversations to happen among students. SoSI can arrange for a Sanctuary Ambassador to visit your school or deliver an online presentation. A Sanctuary Ambassador is someone with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in Ireland. They are supported by SoSI to share their stories sensitively and age-appropriately and to reflect on the challenging but positive experience of moving to and starting a new life in Ireland.



Schools with Creative Schools grants (or those considering a grant application) could think about how to link it to Wellbeing through artistic performance and to the wider ethos of Sanctuary in their school.

Transition Year

TY students are well placed to contribute to and enhance the school's Sanctuary journey. TY students on your school's diversity or sanctuary committee could potentially be tasked with some tasks like event photography, helping with the portfolio, driving campaigns etc.



TY students undertaking their Gaisce Award could explore how their contribution to the school's Sanctuary journey could be used as part of their 'Community Involvement'.

The [UNHCR's Young Champions for Refugees programme](#) and [Amnesty International Ireland's Education & Activism programme](#) are great TY opportunities and even offers some work experience possibilities!



In many schools, the TY musical is a BIG deal!. How can participation in this big event be as inclusive as possible? Is language a barrier? Is the choice of musical itself a barrier? It

could be an interesting exercise for students to think about the language and content of the chosen musical- does it promote stereotypes or bias? Involve students in these discussions and let them lead in decision-making insofar as is musically possible at least!

WORK EXPERIENCE & CAREER INVESTIGATION (ALSO APPLICABLE TO LCVP)

- Think about how a 'buddy system' as part of your school's wellbeing/sanctuary planning may support students who may face difficulties in acquiring a work placement/ experience opportunity. As well as possibly facing prejudice in the search, minority and vulnerable students often simply do not have the 'social capital' needed (the local knowledge base, the networks of connection through family members, relations etc) to find the opportunities.
- Students who do have that social capital may be able to help their peers by suggesting ideas for placement/experience, making introductions if possible, helping with applications. Think about some of the organisations named above- they may be open to supporting work placements/ experience. Also, all [Local Development Companies](#) have 'social inclusion' remits so they may be able to assist students who may face barriers.
- The requirement for 'work clothes' may be a barrier for some students. In collaboration with students, think about how a sensitively framed buddy system could help with that too.
- As per the notes about Guest Speakers/ Facilitators above, if a school is bringing in external contributors to talk to students about preparing for the world of work, consider what these contributors represent. Naturally, these possibilities are limited, but we can never underestimate the power for vulnerable or minority students to 'see' themselves in a guest speaker/facilitator.
- If companies/organisation are offering TY workshops etc to your school, ask them about their diversity and inclusion policies and how they factor in minority representation and intercultural awareness in their interactions with students.

Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas

MATHS



Learning about International Poverty Lines (absolute poverty and relative poverty) can help students to explore statistics, data, large numbers and fractions, currency exchange rates etc.

Ensure you are working with up to date figures (which change frequently). [This fact sheet](#) on poverty lines is from February 2023.



More important statistics! Learn about the numbers of people who are displaced throughout the world and in what numbers they are living in different countries etc. Again, figures change regularly but [this UNHCR report](#) is from May 2023. Keep up to date with UNHCR's latest "[Figures at a Glance](#)"

GEOGRAPHY

Junior Cycle:



In Strand 3 'Exploring People, Place and Change', a number of learning units are specific or related to the 'learning' of sanctuary:

3.2 investigate the causes and consequences of migration, 3.3 examine population change in Ireland and in a developing country, 3.6 identify global patterns of economic development, 3.7 compare life chances for a young person in relation to gender equality, health care, employment and education opportunities in a developed and a developing country.

Geography teachers might like to contextualise these four learning outcomes in the school's sanctuary ethos/journey. For example, an exercise looking at 3.7 will inherently reveal the reasons why people in developing countries feel they have no choice but to leave their home in search of a better life. Examining the impact, positive and negative, of Western consumer choices on people in developing countries is also good learning for students (3.6)

Senior Cycle:

In Elective Unit 5, 'Patterns and Processes in the Human Environment' and the Optional Units 6 and 8 (Higher Level), there is specific scope for students to learn about the reasons people may choose to or be forced to leave their home. Colonialism, cultural oppression, systems of international trade and commerce, climate change are all contributing and/or factors to instability in developing countries.

SCIENCES

Did you know?



There are lots of famous scientists who are/were refugees. Many fled Europe during the Nazi regime. The most famous one of this era is certainly

Albert Einstein but others include Max Born (Nobel-prize winning physicist), Edith Bulbring (pharmacology) and Carl Djerassi (inventor of the first contraceptive pill). Sergey Brin, the co-founder of Google, is also a refugee and has been outspoken in his advocacy for refugee and migrant rights.

Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas

HISTORY

Colonialism, migration, social inequality and injustice all permeate the topic of Irish history; the parallels between the history of Irish people seeking sanctuary and those who now seek sanctuary in Ireland are striking. In centuries of global historical contexts, forced migration or internal displacement comes up again and again, from Jewish war refugees to First Nations/Native American peoples in North America.

The term 'refugee' itself dates back to the 16th century, when the [Huguenots fled France](#) following the St Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1572.

Did you know?



The founder of Whatsapp, Jan Koum, fled Ukraine with his mother in 1990, when he was just 16 years of age, as his family were in fear of the dangers of the Cold War and Jewish persecution. They moved to the USA, where Koum first worked as a grocery store cleaner to help his family earn some basic income.

BUSINESS STUDIES

There are multitudes of barriers to employment for refugees and other ethnic minority migrants and groups- bureaucracy, language, lack of social capital, prejudice and bias, lack of recognition of prior education or work experience and much more. Entrepreneurship in business and self-employment is therefore often a key necessity in the lives of these groups- 'needs must' as the famous saying goes. [This article](#) has some interesting statistical information on this area.



Think about all of the shops and services (including online) that are set up by and often specifically serve migrant communities in Ireland, e.g. a halal butcher, Asian food shops etc. It could be an interesting project for Business Studies students to do some research on this in their local community/region.

Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas

HOME ECONOMICS



When learning about food budgets, a particularly poignant exercise would be to research what you could afford in the supermarket in Ireland if you only had €38.10 available to spend every week. This is the amount that people seeking asylum in Ireland receive as a weekly expenses allowance (*as of Sept 2023*) (*Please note that food is provided in accommodation centres but there are many problems with this provision*)

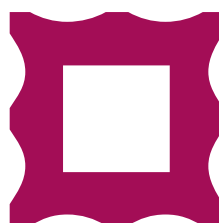


Exploring, sampling and cooking food from lots of different regions and countries is always a great feature of school's Intercultural Days but it's a key aspect of 'Individual and Family Empowerment'. Sharing food experiences and traditions is a powerful intercultural tool and often a significant aspect of a student's family's place of origin and cultural identity. Consider how to harness this simple intercultural wealth in Home Economics in conjunction with days or occasions of importance for students, e.g. Diwali, Eid, Africa Day, Chinese New Year etc.



There are global consequences to the consumer choices we make every day in our lives. As well as sustainable and ethical food choices, think about the same standards in the context of fabrics and fashion. In the Textile & Craft strand, the theme of Individual & Family Empowerment can also be strengthened in allowing space for cultural identity through choice of fabrics, style etc.

ART



Explore some fascinating insights from the Tate Gallery (UK) into how artists express the nature of moving or migrating. <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/migration-art>



The [Centre for Creative Practices](#) is dedicated to connecting and promoting migrant art and artists and supporting culturally diverse arts communities and practices in Ireland. Through this organisation, schools may learn about an artist in their locality or region who could visit the school as a guest art facilitator.

The **Chester Beatty**, is a museum and library in Dublin. The museum's collections are displayed in two galleries: "Sacred Traditions" and "Arts of the Book".

Both displays exhibit manuscripts, miniature paintings, prints, drawings, rare books and some decorative arts from the Persian, Islamic, East Asian and Western Collections. The Chester Beatty is home to one of the most significant collections of Western, Islamic and East & South East Asian artefacts.

These [Chester Beatty online resources](#) are a fantastic way for schools to engage with art and culture from all over the world, offering opportunities for students to learn more about the rich global histories and heritages. We highly recommend a school visit to the Chester Beatty if possible!

Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas



Did you know?

Salvador Dali fled his native Spain in 1940 to escape the ravages of World War 2. He settled in New York and....the rest is artistic history

[Explore other refugee artists in history](#)

Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas

MUSIC

An **intercultural approach to music education** promotes active musical engagement through performing, listening and composing activities.

Opportunities for rotating leadership roles (e.g. the conductor, solo performer, sound designer) to develop agency and recognition.

Valuing all contributions, multiple musical genres, as well as the many ways of making music in and out of school.

Sensitivity to diverse religions and cultures. Stereotyping (e.g. of musical preferences) should be avoided.

Connecting to local musical communities for creative, community-led, integration opportunities (for example, workshops, performances, project-based work).

Did you know?



There are lots of famous rock/pop musicians who are/were refugees. The most famous one is Freddie Mercury (who features on the Senior Cycle Course A set works).

Others include Rita Ora, M.I.A., K'Naan, Regina Spector, Bob Marley, Wyclef Jean. Famous refugee composers include Arnold Schoenberg, Kurt Weill, Béla Bartokfam, Igor Stravinsky.

1. Composing

Consider soundscapes! Soundscapes focus on the sounds of everyday life. Composing one as a class, in small groups or individually opens up many creative possibilities in the classroom.

- As a first step, journaling or creating sound lists helps students actively listen to the world around them. Guided questions might include: How do I hear my school? What does home sound like? What does the sound of (the kitchen/playground/street/etc.) mean to you?
- Students can collect sounds using recorded environmental or found sounds as well as vocal or instrumental sounds to create a collection of audio clips. These clips can then be used to create a soundscape that tells stories relevant to the young person's experiences.
- Technology such as Audacity, Soundtrap or GarageBand are useful to consider for layering, editing and remixing but equally, the soundscapes could be performed live.
- Soundscapes could be paired with visuals such as photographs, collage etc. or by creating a graphic score.

Linking Sanctuary to Other Subject Areas

2. Listening and Responding

As well as browsing through Youtube and Spotify, the following sources are useful:

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings



World Music Central



BBC3 World Music Archive



The Irish Traditional Music Archive



Active responses to the music might include:

- *Movement* - a balance of structured responses such as tapping, clapping, foot tapping etc. and more spontaneous, expressive responses.
- *Listening maps* - sound is captured visually (e.g. shape of the tune, silences, beat and structure of the music). These maps can be done individually, in pairs, in small groups or as a whole class activity.

3. Performing

[The Song Seeking Songbook](#): This collection of songs includes opportunities to interact socially, improvise and interpret, as well as enjoy the music together. Pieces can be simplified according to your class level and group.

We are grateful for this contribution on an intercultural approach to music to Dr Ailbhe Kenny, Associate Professor in Music Education at Mary Immaculate College and an Irish Research Council Laureate.

[More about Ailbhe](#)



Schools of
Sanctuary

<https://schools-ireland.cityofsanctuary.org>



Places of Sanctuary Ireland



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY