

# Children's Services UK Resettlement Scheme for Refugees

Steve Crocker, Director Children's Services

# Ukraine Family Scheme

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- The Ukraine Family Scheme allows immediate and extended family members of British nationals, people settled in the UK, and certain others resident here, to come to the country. Those granted under the scheme will be granted a visa that lasts three years, giving them certainty and ensuring their future in the country.
- Launched on 14 March, the UK's Homes for Ukraine scheme allows members of the public to voluntarily host those fleeing the war in Ukraine. Following government checks, they agree to accommodate refugees for a minimum of six months in exchange for a "thank you" payment of £350.
- Locally, children's services are part of a cross-Council co-ordinated partnership with Community Action Isle of Wight and others to organise, deliver and support this scheme and these families.

# Ukraine Family Scheme

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- Council receive notification of host applications and informs CRT /MASH.
  - Good communication/meetings with SPOC in CRT/MASH who informs children's social care.
  - Children's social care undertake host and household checks at the home.
  - ID checks undertaken of host family members.
  - DBS checks submitted on all those aged 16+ living in the host home.
  - Second visits undertaken once Ukraine family is in place – we sign post to early help and Family Centres.
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- No safeguarding issues identified.

# Ukraine Family Scheme

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Number of sponsors = 56

As of 17/05/22 = 72 guests have arrived and with host families.

0-4 yrs. = 3

5-16 yrs. = 26

17-18 yrs. = 2



# Children's Services

## Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

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# Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

- The Isle of Wight is part of the mandated National Transfer Scheme.
- Local Authorities will not need to accept unaccompanied asylum-seeking children where the cohort already makes up 0.07% of the general child population.
- For the Isle of Wight this equates to 17 children (under the age of 18).
- Of the 17 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, seven are supported by the care leavers service. All the unaccompanied children open to the Isle of Wight are male, are looked after children by the IOW council, accommodated under s20 Children Act 1989 and have an allocated social worker.
- The unaccompanied children originate from a variety of countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Kuwait, and Syria. Most of our UASC have travelled to the UK by small boats from Calais, having experienced significant trauma in their countries of origin and often including witnessing the death of a parent.

# Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

- All unaccompanied children receive the same statutory services and support as other looked after children including health assessments, dental and optician checks to ensure any unmet health needs are addressed ensuring they remain fit and healthy. Dietary needs are also carefully considered.
- Most of the children are Muslim, and the social work teams ensure that they receive a copy of the Quran, a prayer mat and have access to the local mosque and are supported to celebrate the festivals that are important to them.
- All unaccompanied children are supported to access appropriate legal advice in order to make a claim for Asylum with the Home Office and are at varying stages in this process, with a number of our children being granted 5 years leave to remain in the UK pending final decisions.



# Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

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- The Isle of Wight made the decision that the unaccompanied asylum seeking children allocated to the Isle of Wight would be placed on the mainland.
- This is to meet their cultural needs and to live with carers who share a similar ethnic and cultural background, and where possible are able to communicate with the young people in their language.
- All the children who are under the age of 18 are in the London area, with a high number placed in Croydon.
- Whilst these children and young people are in the London area, the Isle of Wight retains full statutory responsibility for them and we meet with them regularly.



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