

Schools of Sanctuary – preparing for Refugee Week

Birmingham City Of Sanctuary



Migrants usually have choices, refugees don't

no one leaves home unless
home is the mouth of a shark

.....

you have to understand,
that no one puts their children
in a boat
unless the water is safer than
the land

Extract from 'Home'

by Warsan Shire (a Somali-British
writer)



The Refugee Situation in the UK

Britain receives about **30,000** asylum applications each year.

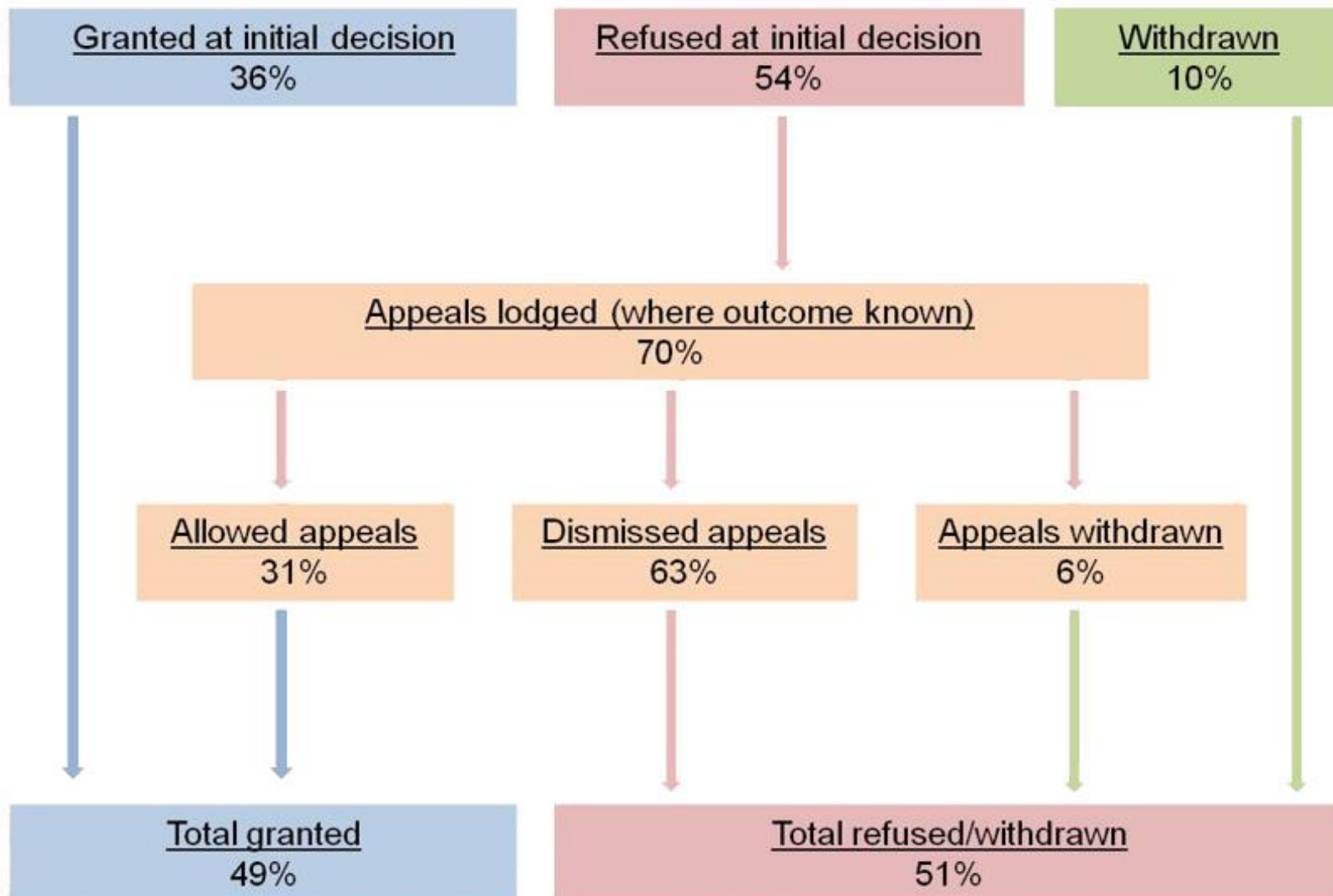
Around 90% of these applications are in-country and not at one of the ports of arrival.

Around 40% are granted refugee status, humanitarian protection, or discretionary leave to remain.

Around 35% of appeals are successful.

The number of unaccompanied minors applying for asylum has increased; in the third quarter of 2015 this amounted to **947 children**.

Total applications with known outcome
100%



What it means to be an asylum-seeker in the UK today

- Families living at 50% below the poverty line
- Insufficient benefits to maintain contact with a solicitor
- Periods of destitution between refusal and appeal, and again when refugee status is granted; or refusal with no chance of returning to country of origin.
- No choice accommodation in hard-to-let properties which are poorly maintained (managed by external contractors, in Birmingham G4S)
- Increasing imposition of huge fees, e.g. £450 for a DNA test, around £1311 per person per year for renewal of Discretionary Leave to Remain, around £1200 for naturalisation, which is not returned if the request is refused.
- And: further measures introduced in the Immigration Act 2016.

Immigration Act 2016 – the attack on families

At the present time, support for families with children cannot be removed, as long as the children were part of the initial asylum claim. The 2016 Act allows the government support to be removed and will put the entire responsibility for report on to local authorities.

The Immigration Act says the following about families with dependent children:

They will no longer be entitled to support from local authorities under Section 17 of the Childrens' Act solely because they are destitute

Local authorities will be allowed to provide support to these families in certain circumstances under Para 10a support

The Home Office wants local authorities to apply case law which states that families can avoid destitution by returning to their home country.

The Home Office has also made it clear that local authorities have no obligation to support those without any immigration status.

AND

Schools are being told to monitor the immigration status of their pupils. The pupils' parents are not obliged to provide this information.

What is a School of Sanctuary?

A school of Sanctuary is a school that is committed to being a safe and welcoming place for those seeking sanctuary.

An award from City of Sanctuary to celebrate and encourage good practice in schools



School of Sanctuary award



- .Inclusivity and welcome
- .Engage families and communities
- .Celebration and opportunity for reflective learning
- .Written evidence
- .Sanctuary seekers support with learning –stimulating lessons
- .Evaluation by appraisal group and presentation at award ceremony

Birmingham's Schools of Sanctuary

- St Chad's, Oasis Foundry, St Vincent's, St Anne's, St Clare's – have all received the award.
- Welsh House Farm, Shaw Hill, Featherstone, Washwood Heath, Hillcrest, Erdington Academy, Eden Boys' School – are working towards the award.
- Newest on board are George Dixon Primary, St Anthony's and St Bernard's.

Several of our schools contributed to an exhibition about their activities

They described their activities, including:

- Taking part in drama workshops
- Inviting an asylum-seeker to speak to a class who then produced letters and story-boards
- Preparing Welcome packs for newly-arrived asylum-seekers
- Assemblies for all year groups and clothing collections
- Romanian/Roma assembly which was taken to another school
- Organising annual “Refugee Awareness Days”

Refugee Week 2017

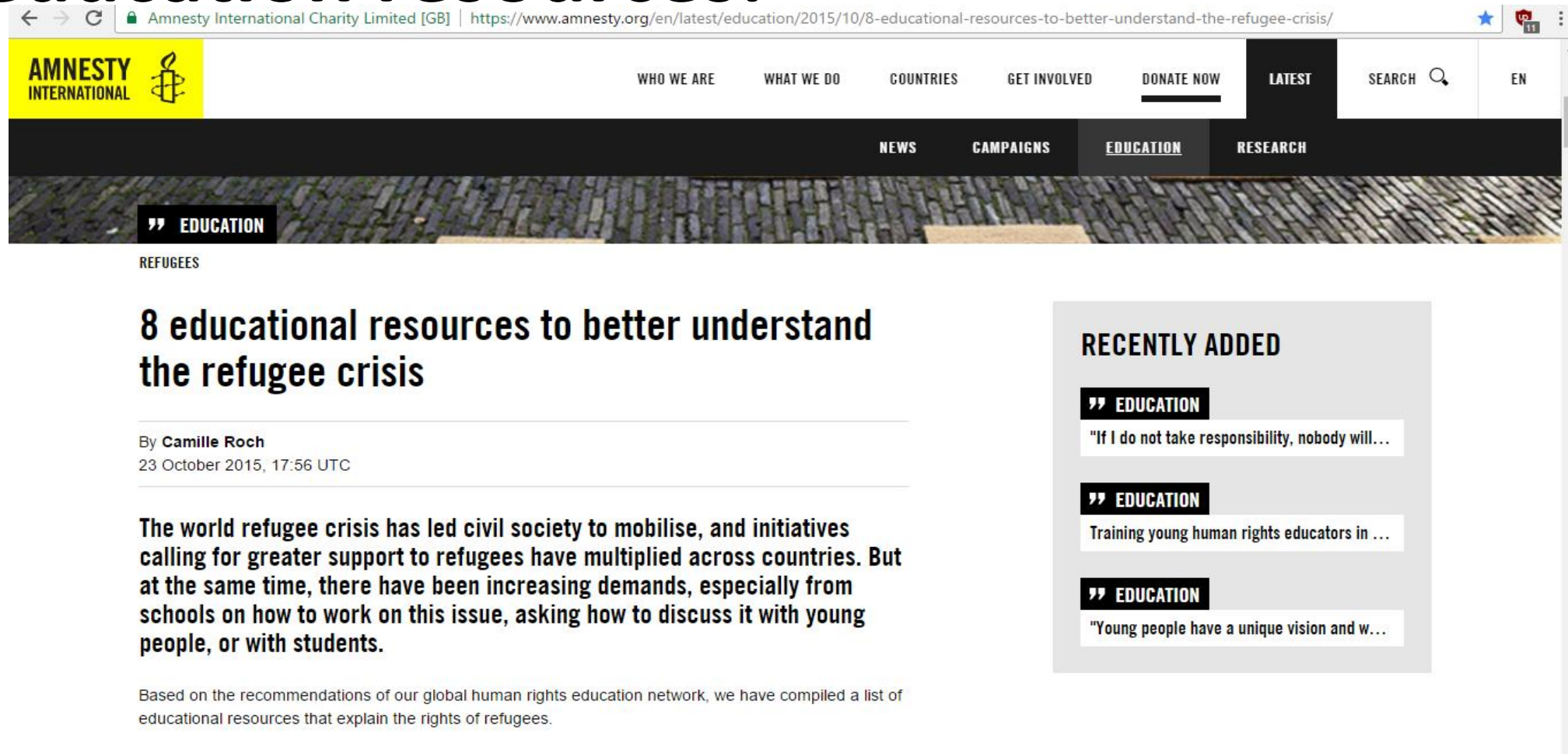
19th- 25th June

- National Refugee Week is a time when the contributions and successes of asylum-seekers and refugees can be celebrated.
- It is also a time when the stories behind their journeys can be uncovered and pupils can be encouraged to think more deeply about why asylum-seekers come to the UK, and how we treat them once they are here.

Examples of what schools can do:

- Hold a special coffee morning or similar event highlighting the cuisines of some of the nationalities present in your school
- Invite an asylum-speaker to speak to a class or a year group
- Invite a poet to work with the pupils on writing about their journeys
- Study individual countries, both about why people leave, and what they contribute here
- Hold a lesson in a foreign language so that pupils can realise how it feels when they don't understand
- Analyse the way asylum-seekers are portrayed in the popular press

Amnesty International has a wealth of education resources:



The screenshot shows the Amnesty International website. The header includes the Amnesty International logo on the left and navigation links: WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO, COUNTRIES, GET INVOLVED, DONATE NOW, LATEST, SEARCH, and EN. Below the header is a dark navigation bar with links: NEWS, CAMPAIGNS, EDUCATION (highlighted), and RESEARCH. The main content area features a large image of a cobblestone path with a black box overlay containing the text "» EDUCATION". Below this, the article title "8 educational resources to better understand the refugee crisis" is displayed, followed by the author "By Camille Roch" and the date "23 October 2015, 17:56 UTC". The article text begins with "The world refugee crisis has led civil society to mobilise, and initiatives calling for greater support to refugees have multiplied across countries. But at the same time, there have been increasing demands, especially from schools on how to work on this issue, asking how to discuss it with young people, or with students." A sidebar on the right titled "RECENTLY ADDED" lists three items, each with a quote icon and the word "EDUCATION": "If I do not take responsibility, nobody will...", "Training young human rights educators in ...", and "Young people have a unique vision and w...".

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

WHO WE ARE WHAT WE DO COUNTRIES GET INVOLVED DONATE NOW LATEST SEARCH EN

NEWS CAMPAIGNS **EDUCATION** RESEARCH

» EDUCATION

REFUGEES

8 educational resources to better understand the refugee crisis

By **Camille Roch**
23 October 2015, 17:56 UTC

The world refugee crisis has led civil society to mobilise, and initiatives calling for greater support to refugees have multiplied across countries. But at the same time, there have been increasing demands, especially from schools on how to work on this issue, asking how to discuss it with young people, or with students.

Based on the recommendations of our global human rights education network, we have compiled a list of educational resources that explain the rights of refugees.

RECENTLY ADDED

» EDUCATION
"If I do not take responsibility, nobody will..."

» EDUCATION
Training young human rights educators in ...

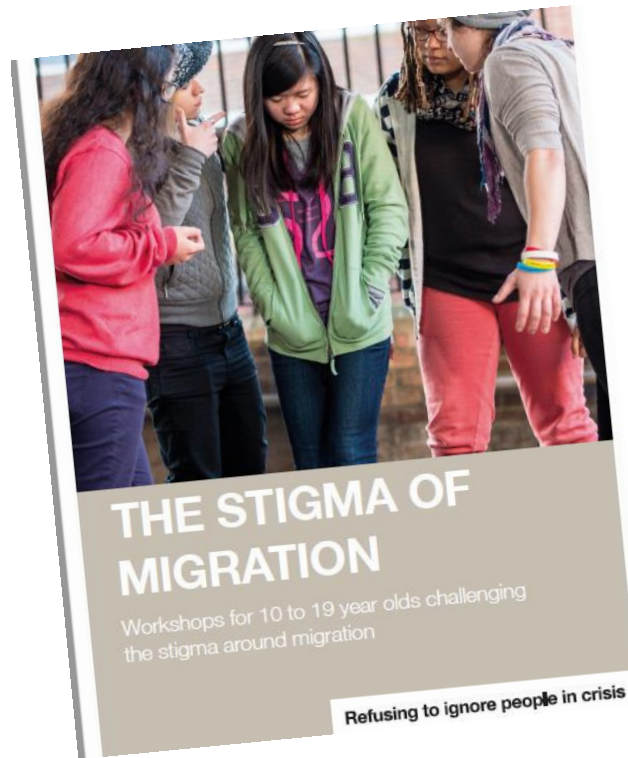
» EDUCATION
"Young people have a unique vision and w..."

These resources include:

.Seeking Safety and Time to Flee

.By drawing parallels between the lives of primary school children and those of refugees, the two resources aim to create a feeling of global interconnectedness among pupils. [Seeking Safety](#) is designed for use with eight to 12 year olds. It features eight interactive activities to understand why people flee their country, and debunk the myths and stereotypes often associated with people seeking asylum. [Time to Flee](#) is for 11 to 16 year olds. Through fictional stories it addresses why people seek asylum and the difficulties they can face when they have to settle in a new country.

In Birmingham, the Red Cross also provides free workshops for schools:



Do young people struggle to understand the issues of migration?

In 2014, the UK received 31,400 asylum applications*. What do your students understand about migrants and the stigma surrounding them?

The British Red Cross offers workshops for young people aged 10 to 19, focused on exploring stigma experienced by refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

The workshops focus on positive images and stigmatising behaviour, to help young people explore perceptions around migration. They also explore the consequences of population movement and how migrants are portrayed by the media. Giving young people this knowledge enables them to empathise with those who find themselves in this situation.

The Red Cross has many resources, including this one:

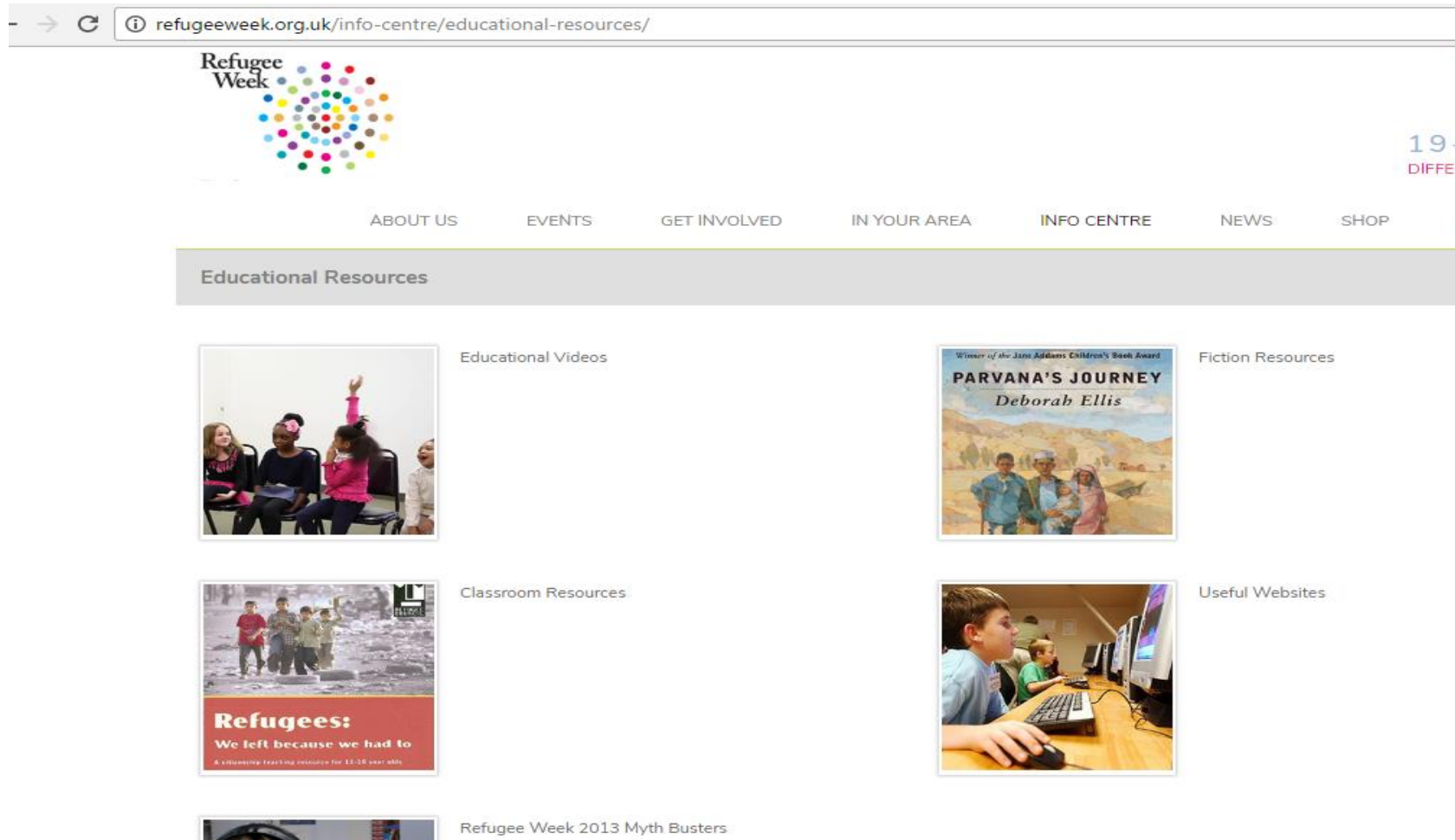
.Over Under Sideways Down

“Ebrahim is a teenage refugee, he did not choose to bid farewell to his mother for the last time and he certainly did not choose to take the long journey to be granted asylum in the UK.”

.This [comic book story](#) depicts the journey of 15 year old Ebrahim as he embarks on a journey for a safer life. The comic strip images serve as an introduction for the discussion topics and activity ideas in the resource pack.

.Teachers and educators can also search through a set of [interactive resources](#).

The Refugee Week dedicated website also has many resources:



**Please now take 10 – 15
minutes to think about what
you might do in your schools
– and then we will share our
ideas!**

Refugee Week 2017 in Birmingham Schools

- If you are organising something in your school, please tell us about it!
- If you would like support in organising something, please tell us that too!

E-mail address:

forbesbarbarae@yahoo.co.uk

Birmingham City of Sanctuary

- would like to create a network of schools which share the ethos of welcoming and creating a place of safety for all children
- so that these schools can celebrate the work they already do, extend their activities, and work with each other.

