

# Classroom Activities for Newly Arrived Students

## Teacher Notes

*'Children will do better in the long term if they feel safe, calm and hopeful, if they feel a sense of belonging and connectedness to their new school, and they feel that they can manage and cope.'*

Source: Supporting the Wellbeing of Children from Ukraine in your School: Guidance for Primary Schools, (DES & NEPS 2022, p. 7)

This booklet has been designed to assist teachers in helping newly-arrived children to feel safe, calm, hopeful and connected, as well as providing them with ways to cope.

The activities aim to give children the opportunity to reflect on and share their strengths, likes and hobbies with their new teacher (and classmates, if they wish to).

The activities also provide children with the opportunity to reflect and share their recent experiences and feelings, but only if they wish to. Children should be given the choice of whether or not they would like to complete each activity. If children choose to express difficult emotions, the teacher should validate and normalise their feelings, e.g. *'I see that you're sad and that things are hard'*. The majority of the activities in this booklet are low risk in terms of children experiencing or expressing difficult emotions, with the exception of the activities on pages 6, 7, 11 and 12 (*All Feelings are OK, Expressing Our Feelings, Feeling Calm, Same and Different*) so sensitivity and awareness will be required in terms of tuning into the needs and situations of individual children.

*'If children share their experiences and emotions, respond with calm non-verbal and verbal communication, acknowledge what they have said and communicate that you are seeking to understand and there to support.'*

Source: Supporting the Wellbeing of Children from Ukraine in your School: Guidance for Primary Schools, (DES & NEPS 2022, p. 8)

Check in with the child before and after each activity to ensure that they understand it and wish to complete it.

You may wish to complete some of the activities in the booklet at whole class level or through pair work, particularly pages 2, 3, 4 and the Calm Colouring pages. The **Classroom Activities for Newly Arrived Students** booklet and/or individual pages can be downloaded at: [www.otb.ie/ukraine-support-otb](http://www.otb.ie/ukraine-support-otb)

Before using these activities with newly arrived students, teachers should familiarise themselves with the government guidelines 'Supporting the Wellbeing of Children from Ukraine in your School' which can be viewed at: [www.otb.ie/ukraine-support-gov](http://www.otb.ie/ukraine-support-gov)

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## About the Author:

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