

**Date:** 26 March 2025  
**My ref:** PH/TCF/PL2425-05 parents  
**Your ref:**  
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Parents and pupils of  
schools in North Somerset

Town Hall  
Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

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Dear parents and pupils

You may be aware that Weston-Super-Mare Town Council met this week to discuss a proposal to become a recognised "Council of Sanctuary." This initiative aims to make our town a welcoming and supportive place for everyone, including those who have sought refuge here.

Unfortunately, this discussion has attracted some negative attention and protests. There was a demonstration outside the Town Hall during the meeting, and there have been a number of critical comments on social media. This indicates that there are some within our community who hold strong feelings against this proposal.

NSC understands that expressions of prejudice and intolerance, even from a minority, can have a significant impact on individuals and the wider community, particularly within our schools. Such sentiments can create feelings of fear, anxiety, and exclusion, especially for those who may already be vulnerable. It is crucial that all our schools continue to uphold values of respect, empathy, inclusivity, and to provide safe and supportive learning environments.

We are writing to all schools to:

1. **Raise awareness:** Ensure that you are aware of the situation and its potential impact on your school community.
2. **Reiterate support:** Remind you of the support available from the Local Authority and other agencies.
3. **Encourage action:** Encourage proactive steps to address any concerns and promote understanding within your school.

#### **Support available for schools:**

The Local Authority is committed to supporting schools in navigating this situation. The following resources are available:

- **Reporting:** If anyone is a victim of a hate incident they should be encouraged to report this to the police and the Local Authority.
- **UK Re-settlement Team**
  - Email: [refugeeresettlementteam@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:refugeeresettlementteam@n-somerset.gov.uk)
- **Refugee Welcome North Somerset (RWNS)**

- Phone: 07955 278016 or 01934 625416
- Email: trustees@rwns.org.uk
- Website: <https://www.rwns.org.uk>
- **Race Equality North Somerset (RENS)**
  - Phone: 0333 3355358
  - Email: office@rens.org.uk
  - Website: <https://rens.org.uk/>
- **Educational Psychology Service:** The Educational Psychology Service can provide critical incident support to schools where the normal functioning of the school is significantly disrupted. This is a high-level intervention and should be accessed through the usual referral channels. Please email [eps@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:eps@n-somerset.gov.uk) for further details
- **Community Support:**
  - **Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI):** SARI provide support for victims of hate crime
    - Phone: 0117 942 0060
    - Email: [hello@saricharity.org.uk](mailto:hello@saricharity.org.uk)
    - Website: [saricharity.org.uk](http://saricharity.org.uk)
  - **Citizens Advice:** Can provide practical advice
    - Phone (Adviceline): 0808 278 7973 (open Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)
    - • Advice Shop: The Sovereign, High Street, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1HL (Open Monday–Wednesday and Friday, 9:30am–4:00pm)

You can also get further information here

<https://saferstrongerns.co.uk/information-advice/hate-crime>) and most importantly report hate crime

<https://saferstrongerns.co.uk/report-hate-crime> )

Hate crime

The reporting of hate incidents is important and encouraged but support is available to you whether you choose to report or not.

The Local Authority is committed to working in partnership with schools to ensure that Weston-Super-Mare is a welcoming and inclusive place for all. We believe that by working together, we can address the challenges posed by intolerance and build a stronger, more cohesive community.

Yours sincerely



**Pip Hesketh**  
**Assistant Director, Education Partnerships**

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