

# Supporting Afghan children in schools

3 November 2021



Refugee Education UK

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# What we will cover

- Experiences of education in Afghanistan
- Key challenges for children
- Support strategies for teachers
- Further support available

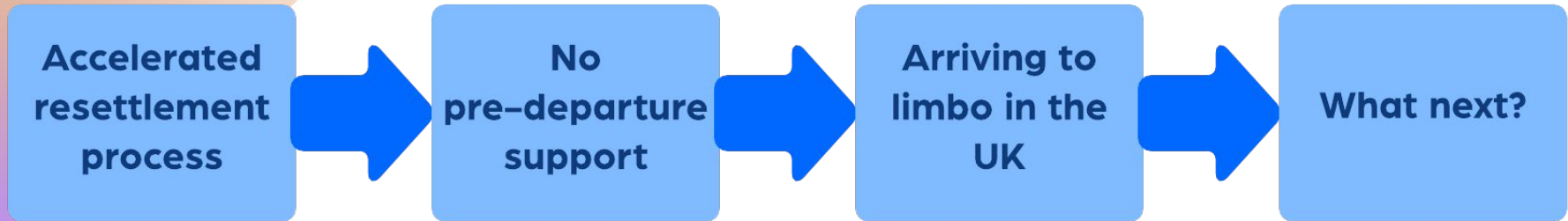


# Outcome one

recognise the impact  
of pupils' prior  
experience of forced  
displacement and  
education



# Resettlement from Afghanistan



# Education in Afghanistan: an overview

Primary school attendance rate	64%
Primary school completion rate	54%
Lower secondary attendance rate	38%
Upper secondary attendance rate	28%



Source: <https://data.unicef.org/country/afg/>



# Education in Afghanistan: key features to keep in mind



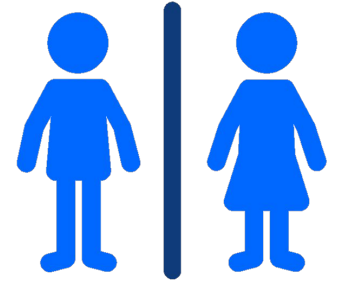
# Hear from young Afghans

Listen and read what  
two young people told  
us about the  
Afghanistan  
education system on  
our [website](https://www.reuk.org/welcome)  
([https://www.reuk.org  
/welcome](https://www.reuk.org/welcome))

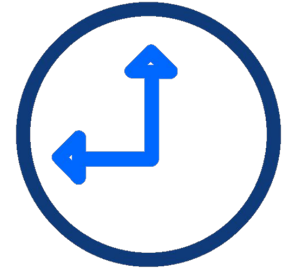




- Single sex classrooms



- Shorter school day



- Teacher-centred pedagogy

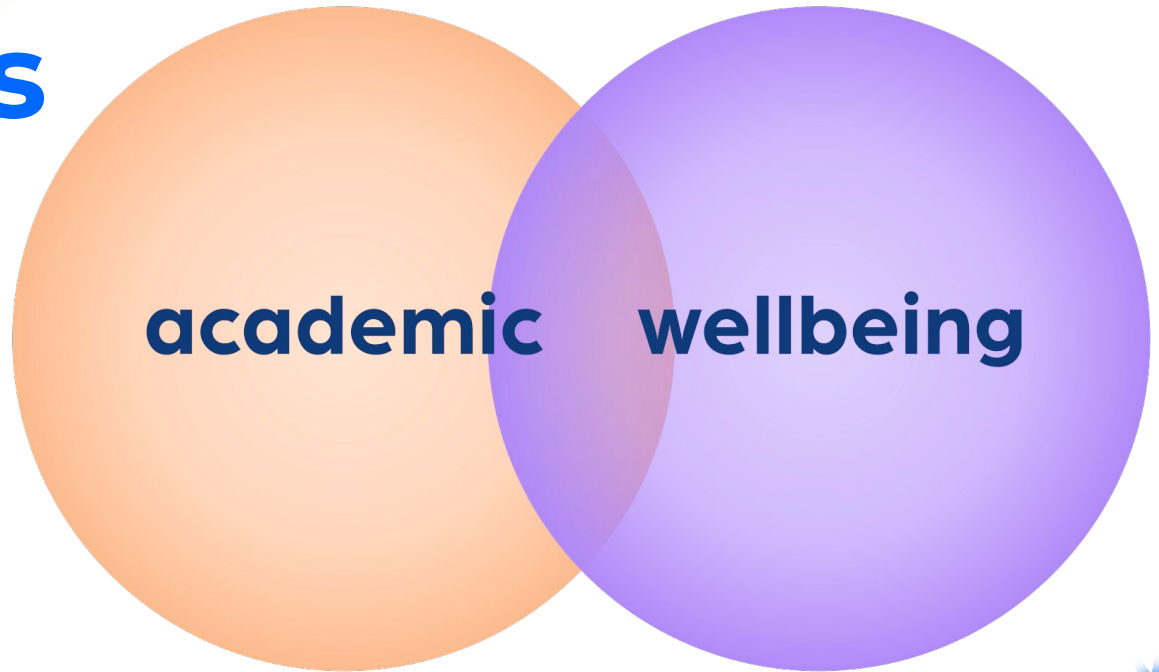


# Outcome two

develop an  
understanding of  
academic and  
wellbeing challenges  
for resettled Afghan  
children



# Academic and wellbeing challenges



# Wellbeing challenges

**what has  
happened**



**what you  
see**



# Wellbeing challenges

## What may have happened

Traumatic experiences in country of origin

Traumatic experiences on arrival

Grief and anxiety

Isolation and loneliness



## What you may see in the classroom

Fight or flight mechanism

Distance, withdrawal and disconnection

Reduced concentration and focus

Tiredness and falling asleep

Visible distress



# Academic challenges: in the classroom

- Language barriers and insufficient EAL support
- New curriculum and learning style
- Difficulties diagnosing and addressing SEND



# Academic challenges: outside the classroom

- Home environments
- Lack of parental support or engagement
- Possible poverty



# Outcome 3

develop  
compassionate and  
effective  
interventions  
appropriate to  
Afghan children's  
contexts





# Key principles for interaction

- Build trust and have patience
- Look beyond the behaviour
- Recognise language level is not ability level
- Grow children's compassion and world view
- Recognise resilience and adopt an assets-based approach



**Reflection –  
how could  
you adopt  
these  
principles?**



# Teacher approaches

## **Responding to fight or flight**

- Maintain calm - calm and gentle voice, slow movements
- Create a safe space
- Simple tasks or actions

## **Awareness of sensitive topics**

- Journeys to the UK, family, situation in Afghanistan

## **Time to talk**

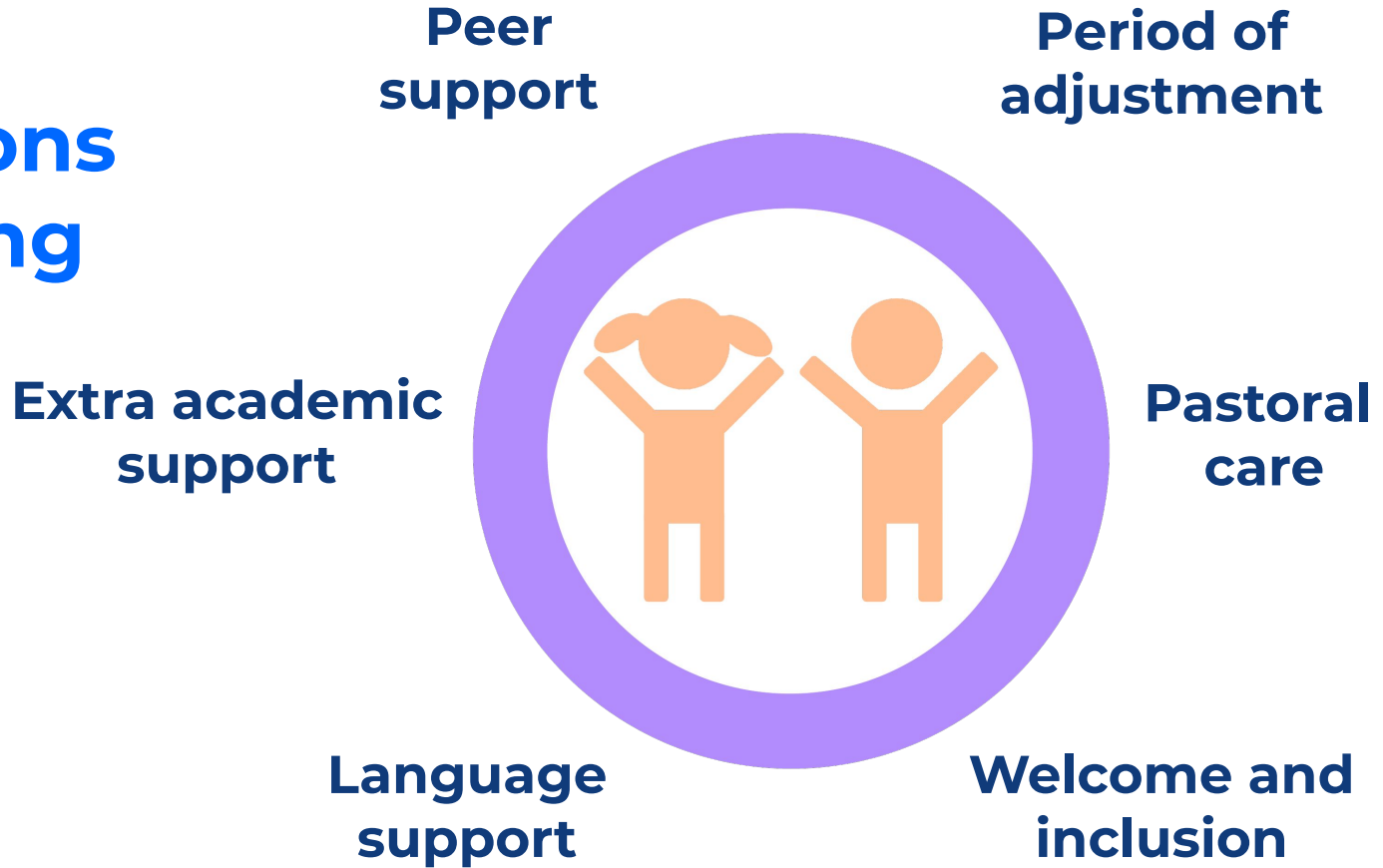
- A quiet place
- Internal or external referrals

Informed by:

<https://www.tes.com/news/how-support-afghan-evacuee-children>



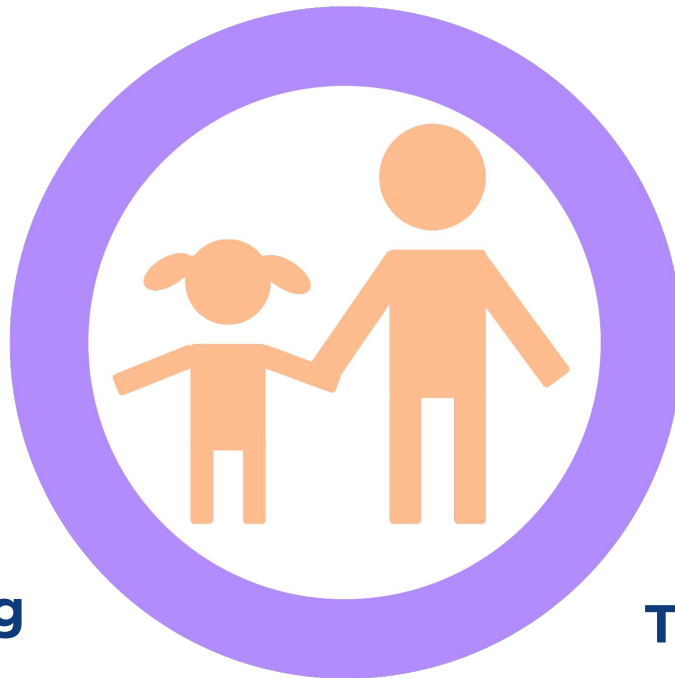
# Practical interventions – supporting children



# Practical interventions – supporting parents

Language support

Helping families adjust



Signposting to further support

Technology support



# Remember self-care



# Further information or training

- [reuk.org/welcome](https://reuk.org/welcome)
- [hello@reuk.org](mailto:hello@reuk.org)
- [reuk.org/training](https://reuk.org/training)
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# Image credits

Slide 8:

- Single sex classrooms icon is an adaptation of *Gender* by Adrien Coquet from Noun Project
- Shorter school day icon is an adaptation of *Clock* by mahdaleneyy from Noun Project
- Teacher-centred pedagogy is an adaptation of *Teacher* by glyph.faisalovers from Noun project

Slide 13:

- iStockphoto.com: classroom, DGLimages.

