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Epsom’s Summer school sanctuary for refugees

2 August 2022

The Epsom Refugee Network has succeeded in securing for 75 students of all young ages a six-week Summer school at St Johns in Leatherhead. With the generous support of the school, 25 teachers, 30 general volunteers and donors the school provides English lessons, playtime and opportunities for refugee children fleeing war zones and persecutions to be “children again” and make friendships. Afghani, Syrian and Ukrainian children mix happily as one together with English and refugee teachers and volunteers.

Jo Sherring and Nina Kaye, on right, of Epsom Refugee Network explaining to Chris Grayling MP

Chris Grayling, Epsom and Ewell’s MP, visited Tuesday 2nd August and said to Epsom and Ewell Times’ reporter: “Epsom Refugee Network is amazing in what it has done. The school is a fantastic achievement and is making a huge difference”.

Safe environment for refugee children of different nationalities to play at St Johns School

Ukrainian volunteer Olha Zyatyk said “It is a great thing really. A huge number of children, 114 have been registered, giving them a possibility to find friends and not feel alone. We learn from each other to understand the cultural differences. All helps make a new life in a new country”.

St Johns School Leatherhead Surrey – Summer home for refugee school.

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Helping Ukrainian refugees access work

A group of Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network volunteers are supporting Ukrainian refugees to find suitable employment in the local area. Many Ukrainian refugees have professional qualifications and significant experience in areas such as: accountancy, medicine & health care, teaching and construction. In order to secure a job in the UK at the same level they have previously been working at, many have to convert their Ukrainian qualifications into the UK recognised equivalent, an ambition which is both costly and time consuming.

The Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network work support group is looking for local employers who can utilise the extensive skills and experience that these refugees bring to us now; who can offer jobs that do not require UK professional qualifications as a prerequisite to carry out associated or similar work; recognising that work offered in the UK is unlikely to be at the same level than they have recently been operating at.

If you have a vacancy that may be suitable for a Ukrainian refugee or want to know more please email: epsomrefugeenetwork@gmail.com

For any further information on local initiatives to support refugees please visit Epsom & Ewell Refugee Networkwww.epsomrefugeenetwork.org

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