Welcome to the UK!

It's Refugee Week from 19 to 25 June, so we find out more about refugees and meet a teenager from Afghanistan who's made a new life here in the UK...

Can you imagine leaving behind all your friends and family, and travelling to a strange and unfamiliar land where you can't speak the language? Sounds scary, right? That's the reality for refugees - people who have been **forced to flee** their home country because they are in danger and are seeking protection (or refuge) in a new nation.



Meet Nageeb!

This young man from Afghanistan tells us why he left home and talks about the people who've made him feel welcome in the UK... Name Nageeb

Country of origin Afghanistan Age 17 (came to the UK age 16) Hobbies Table tennis, swimming, football

According to UNICEF. Afghanistan, in Central and South Asia, is 'the world's most dangerous place to be a child'.

When I was 15, I began working as an interpreter for my cousin in Afghanistan. I speak many languages, including Hindi, Farsi, Pashto and English, and we were interviewing people about the war in my home country, trying to give them a voice to express themselves.

But when the Taliban authorities found out what I was doing, they started sending me threatening letters. They said if I didn't stop, they were going to make me pay...

After that, I came to the UK as part of the Gateway Protection Programme [a way for some refugees to resettle in the UK without claiming asylum (see glossary below)]. It was really hard to leave my family - I had never been anywhere without them before. I cried every night for my first two weeks in the : UK. But then I was reunited with my big brother and felt secure again. It's very difficult to leave your home

town and come to live in an unknown country. Luckily, because Lalready spoke English, it was easier for me to make friends at school. My social worker helped me a lot, too, and I spent a lot of time at my local table tennis club. They really welcomed me - it became like my second home! I'm also involved in a theatre production called Borderline it's a comedy about life in the 'jungle' refugee camp in Calais!

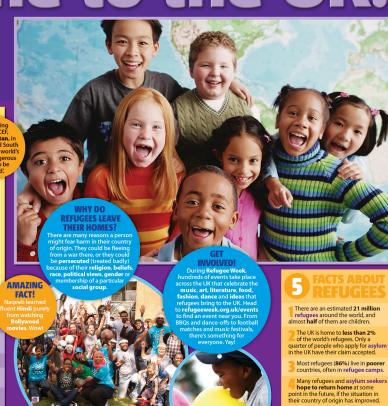
The people in the UK have been really kind but I still miss my family, especially my mum and dad. But I feel proud that I've managed to settle here and start a new life on my own. My great ambition is to go to university and become a solicitor.

GLOSSARY We clear up the confusion!

Asylum seeker—an asylum seeker is a person who has left their country of origin and applied for asylum (shelter or refuge) in another country. Every refuge is initially an asylum seeker unless they come to the UK through the Gateway Protection Programme. Refugee—someone fleeing conflict or persecution. In the UK, a person officially becomes a refugee when their claim for asylum is accepted by the government.

Refugee camp—a temporary settlement built for displaced people. The average camp houses around 11,000 people, but some are like mini cities and may hold hundreds of thousands.

Migrant – a person who has travelled to another country to improve their lives (to find work, better education, or to reunite with family), but NOT because of a direct threat or persecution. A British person who goes to live in another country is also a migrant. Unlike refugees, who cannot safely return home, migrants can return home if they wish. Illegal immigrant – someone who does not have a visa (permission) to work and live in the country they are in, or whose visa has run out. This term does NOT apply to people seeking asylum. Some people do not like the term and prefer to use 'undocumented migrant' instead.



Last year, the most UK asylum

and Bangladesh.

applications came from people from Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan