



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE, DOCUMENT

Homes for Ukraine: eligible minors visa schemes

Advice for local authorities on the eligible minors visa schemes and processes for children outside of the schemes

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Background

The Welsh Super Sponsor Scheme is closed to new applications through this visa route.

The extension to the Homes for Ukraine scheme for eligible children allows some children and young people who are not travelling with, or joining, their parent or legal guardian to apply for entry to the UK.

The immigration rules for this route are at the discretion of the UK Government and may be subject to change.

Full guidance for local authorities can be found on the [UK Government's website](#).

Wales specific information

As stated, the UK Government guidance is broadly relevant to Wales, although it is drafted for local authorities in England. Consequently, there are variances in relation to legislation, checks and processes which differ in Wales. Some of these are outlined below and some of this will be useful in discussions with visa scheme beneficiaries.

Legislation and guidance

- References to Section 20, Children Act 1989 are to [Section 76\(1\) Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#), in Wales.
- References to England's private fostering regulations are to [The Children \(Private Arrangements for Fostering\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2006](#)

(legislation.gov.uk) and to **The Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018**, in Wales.

- **Welsh Government Wales Safeguarding Procedures** and the children's safeguarding **All Wales Practice Guides**.
- Welsh Government guidance on **handling cross border child protection cases**.
- Welsh Government guidance on **childcare and education from early years to work**.
- Welsh Government guidance on **renting a home**.
- Children and Families Across Borders provides **advice** to Welsh local authorities on cross-border children and family cases under the 1996 Hague Convention.

Approving sponsors in Wales

In addition to the UK Government guidance on approving sponsors, Welsh local authorities are required to complete Enhanced DBS checks on all members of a host sponsor household over the age of 16 regardless of whether the host is a relative or other known person. This is in line with the requirements of **The Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018** and is intended to provide an additional level of safeguarding into the approval process.

Sponsorship arrangement suitability assessment

The **sponsorship arrangement suitability assessment** section of the UK Government guidance provides context to some of the complexities to be considered before local authorities can decide to support or veto the sponsorship. Suitability assessments should be undertaken by registered social

workers.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and associated Codes, Regulations and guidance, highlight the importance of creating and maintaining records, including plans relating to children. While the private fostering regulations provide the most appropriate legislative basis for sponsorships under this scheme, local authorities may utilise the frameworks as set out in Parts 3, 4 and 6 of the 2014 Act for all applications on the basis that children displaced from Ukraine and travelling without their parent or legal guardian are vulnerable. Therefore, they should be considered as children with needs for care and support or children with needs for support.

Support post-arrival and ongoing checks

Children travelling via this route are likely to have experienced trauma as a result of their separation from their parent or legal guardian and from the impact of living in an environment experiencing war. Their individual needs and histories have also influenced their development. The capacity of sponsors to meet their young guest's needs will become clearer following their arrival and whether or not they are accompanied by an adult relative. This means that each arrangement will require differing forms and levels of support, guidance and advice.

Children have a statutory entitlement to advocacy via the 2014 Act. 'Active offer' advocacy can be offered to children who are not looked after but who may have needs for care and support (2014 Act, Parts 3 and 4) in line with the **Independent Professional Advocacy National Standards and Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People in Wales**. Children in Wales do not currently have a system of Guardianship. It is essential then, if the child is to be afforded the same UNCRC rights as other children in Wales, that social workers make referrals to advocacy services and, if required, the advocate uses

interpretation services.

Decision to take a child in to local authority care

Where local authorities consider that it is in the child's best interests to protect their wellbeing and provide accommodation for the child, this is likely to be under section 76(1) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Where any child arriving in Wales under this visa route becomes looked after, the local authority must make direct notification to the Ukrainian Embassy via consul_gb@mfa.gov.ua. The notification must also be copied to Welsh Government at support@sanctuary.gov.wales.

Where local authorities have determined a child needs to become looked after, UK Government is providing funding to support those placements and when they become care leavers.

Children moving to a different local authority

When an Eligible Minor or a child in Wales outside of the Eligible Minors scheme moves to a different local authority, the **Foundry system needs to be updated**.

Foundry

The Foundry data system is to be used by Welsh local authorities solely for the purposes of processing the new applications scheme. Foundry is interactive by design, requiring local authorities to notify UKVI when satisfactory checks have

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been completed, in order that a child/child and adult relative(s) receives their Eligible Minors visa and permission to travel.

The Foundry landing page can be accessed via [Homes for Ukraine Homepage](#).

Registering as a new user is completed via [Register as a New User Homes for Ukraine Service Desk Service project](#).

Guidance on requesting access and access to data (this being different stages and processes) can be found via [Homes for Ukraine How to Access Data](#).

UK Government administrators are also available to assist with queries relating to gaining access to Foundry: rcorry.ctr@palantir.com and Nicholas.Ditchburn@levellingup.gov.uk.

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For more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

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