

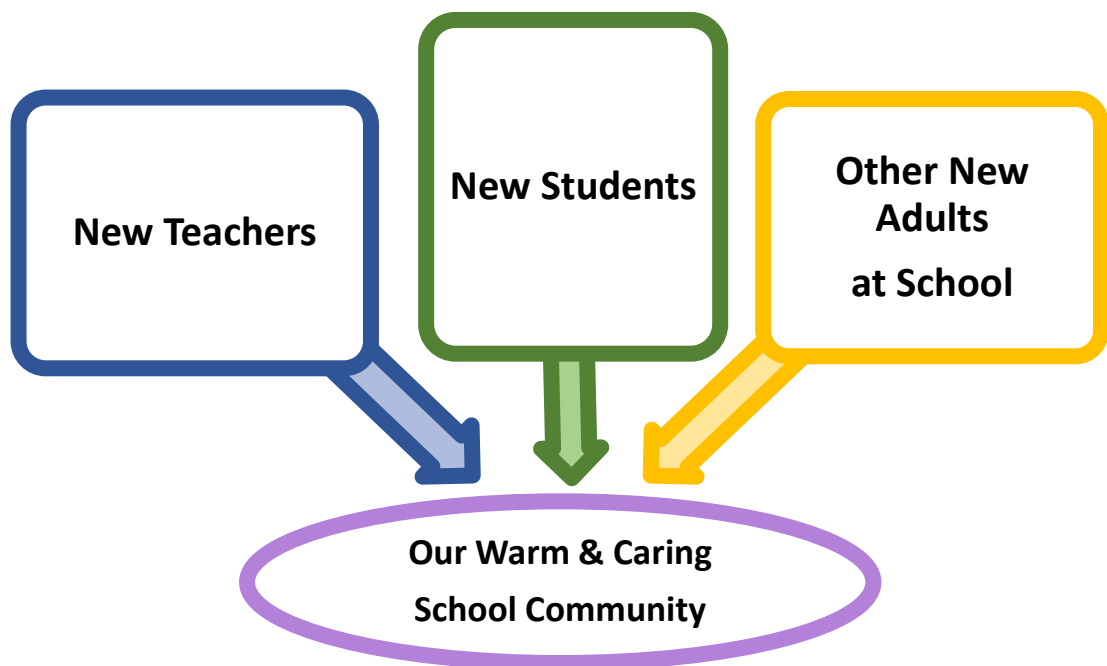
Remembering Newcomers

An activity of the "Never forget" stories

Read the two "Never forget" stories (page 8–9, *What's Up* January 2024). These two stories involve thousands of people who were forced to leave behind their homes and everything familiar. They had to flee to safety. In time, most of them would have started their lives again — newcomers at their next neighbourhoods, schools, and workplaces. We cannot say for sure, but many of them may have had happily-ever-after endings.

Even in peaceful times, there are always newcomers around us. At this time of the year, you may have noticed new students, teachers, and maybe even a new principal. (You may be a newcomer yourself.) Most have moved of their own free will. Yet, having to be with many strangers in an unfamiliar space can be daunting at first. Reach out to them. Welcome the newcomers at school.

1. Work on this activity in groups of three to five students. In the top half of each box, jot down one or two newcomers you have seen at school. In the lower half of each box, jot down two small acts that would welcome them to your school. For example, you could make and give two of them little welcome cards, say hello to another newcomer whom you've never spoken to before, invite a new student to sit at your table during recess, and so on.



2. Decide amongst yourselves who should carry out each of these welcoming acts. You can do them in twos, threes or even as a whole group.
3. When you have completed all that you set out to do, reflect on these two questions:
 - How do you feel about the ways in which you welcomed the newcomers?
 - What do you imagine their thoughts and feelings might have been in response?
4. Get back into your group for a conversation about this activity. Share your responses to the two questions above. In turn, listen hard to what your groupmates have to say. Such conversations are also essential for a strong school community.