

Sudanese children stage protest in France as UK rejects asylum claims

Protest in Biscarosse comes after UK rejected applications of 39 boys who had previously been in Calais camp

One boy in the centre recorded an audio message appealing for help from the outside world. “This is a message to you guys if you know someone who can help us,” he said. “We don’t have any right to speak out but we are children and we need better help and better support.”

Hundreds of other child asylum seekers across France who had been expecting to come to the UK were also told on Friday of the Home Office decision and given advice on making French applications. Toufique Hossain, the director of public law at the UK-based Duncan Lewis solicitors, said that the 12 children he and his team are representing were informed verbally but given no written reason for the decision, a process he described as “absolutely shocking”.

The Home Office has previously said that it would prioritise under-15s from Sudan and Syria. A spokeswoman confirmed that the transfer of children previously in the Calais camp and now in French reception centres had ended. She said that more unaccompanied children were undergoing initial screening in Italy and Greece and may be brought to the UK.