**MP TOOLKIT**

Send My Friend to School encourages young people to invite their MPs to meet them in school and advocate on behalf of the campaign. However, if COVID-19 restrictions do not allow you to do this, you can always do a virtual meeting.

**Meet your local MP!**

After all your effort creating your amazing trees, it is time to make sure the message gets to your MP. A great way to do this is to invite your MP into school. Organising an MP visit is also a great chance for your students to learn about active citizenship, democracy and representation. MPs are used to receiving invitations to meet people in their constituencies and usually do their best to meet as many local people as they can. It’s their job! They won’t be surprised to be invited to your school, and may have visited already.

**Before your meeting**

**Step 1 – Find MP’s contact details**

It is best to contact your MP at their local consistency office. To find the address or email visit [findyourmp.parliament.uk](http://findyourmp.parliament.uk) and enter your school’s postcode. This will provide you with information including your MP's name, contact details and website. Most MPs have their own websites that include their contact details and news about recent constituency activities.

However, a few MPs don't have a constituency address, in which case you should write to their parliamentary address: (Name of MP), House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.

**Step 2 – Send your invitation**

Now you have your MP’s contact details you can invite them to your school. Make your email or letter precise and brief. Explain that your students are involved in the Send My Friend to School campaign, All My Friends Need Teacher, calling for the UK government to lead in supporting low- and lower-middle-income countries to prioritise the recruitment and training of teachers, with a target of recruiting 1.8 million additional teachers by 2026.

Suggest the time(s) and date(s) you’d like to meet. MPs are busy, so be prepared to be flexible about your plans. MPs are most likely to be in the constituency on Friday, but are unlikely to have enough time to spend more than one hour at your school - this is more than enough time to get your message across.

If you don’t hear back from your MP, then send a follow up email or give them a a call- ask to speak with your MP’s ‘diary secretary’ and try to make sure they’ve seen your invitation and are acting on it. If your MP isn’t available to visit your school - don’t worry, this doesn’t mean you can’t make your voices heard. You could ask to visit them at their constituency office instead.

If neither a face-to-face nor a virtual meeting are possible, please write to your MP calling for them to take action to support for All My Friends Need Teachers. See Steps 4 and 5 below

**Step 3 - Preparing for your meeting**

There's no need to be nervous! Your MP won’t expect you to be an expert and many MPs are not experts themselves. You simply need to let them know how passionate you and your students are about quality education for every child.

* Use your MP's website, or [www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com) to find out a little bit about them and what, if anything, they've said about global education.
* Plan what you are going to say and who is going to say it. You could divide your presentation into separate sections with pupils sharing out the roles.
* Rehearse - you could ask another teacher to play the role of your MP. Think about any props and visual aids you’re going to use.

**During the meeting**

**Step 4 – Present the campaign**

Explain that you and your students are part of the Send My Friend to School campaign, present your campaign messages/trees , and try to get across the main messages of the campaign:

Three main solutions have been suggested. Decide what you think. You may have better ideas which you should mention

1. Investing in teachers is vital to achieving SDG4 - the global goal on education. Yet there are still not enough teachers to support the education of all children around the world.

2. Children need good teachers if they are to learn and achieve their potential, but all too often children from underrepresented backgrounds in low-income countries, including girls, children with disabilities, and children from refugee backgrounds, have limited or no access to well-qualified teachers.

3. Likewise, teachers need high-quality training and professional development, investment in resources, and their rights to be respected if they are to help learners achieve their potential and schools are able to keep good teachers.

4. In 2022, the UK must lead in supporting low- and lower-middle-income countries to prioritise the recruitment and training of teachers, **with a target of recruiting 1.8 million additional teachers by 2026.**

**Step 5 - Ask for something**
Make sure you ask your MP to do something! The main thing we need MPs to do is pass on your message/trees to the Prime Minister calling for the UK to lead in supporting low- and lower-middle-income countries to prioritise the recruitment and training of teachers, **with a target of recruiting 1.8 million additional teachers by 2026.**

Here are some additional ideas of what you could ask your MP to do:

* Tweet about the meeting and publicise their support for the campaign – ask them to include the @sendmyfriend handle.
* Join the All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Education (a group for MPs from different political parties who are keen to support this cause).
* Write a blog/article on their website about the campaign and what action they will take.
* Ask a parliamentary question about what the UK is doing to
* Write to the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary,
* Table parliamentary questions or raise the issues mentioned with colleagues.

**Step 6 - Make an impression**

Send My Friend to School provides lots of opportunities to get creative, so think about how to make a colourful impact to go alongside your action. You could really go to town with drama, music, film and photography. Use the most powerful and persuasive facts and arguments! However, remember anything you do should support a strong message and not overwhelm it, and keep in mind how much time you have available.

**Step 7 - Record what happens**

Choose someone to take notes of any comments or promises your MP makes, and someone to take photos of your meeting, particularly if you've organised something visual such as a display, handover or stunt. Photos will really help to spread the word about your event.Then you can share your image on Twitter remembering to include the @sendmyfriend handle, on your school website, and through local media too! See [our Press Pack](https://sendmyfriend.org/resource/press-guide/) for more tips. Photos which feature children should have parental consent as outlined in the school policy

If your meeting takes place virtually, do not record it or use the recording without your MP’s consent. Similarly, your MP should not record a meeting with school students without full consent.

**After the meeting**

**Step 9 - Stay in touch**

Write to your MP to say thank you for the meeting, and to remind them of any promises made during the meeting. Your MP may well post something on their own website or blog if they have one, so include copies of photos.

Track your MP’s actions by setting up an email alert from [www.theyworkforyou.com/](http://www.theyworkforyou.com/). Find out if they speak in support of ‘All My Friends Need Teachers’. Aim to build a relationship with your MP and keep in touch with them.

**Step 10 - Spread the word**

Use one of the press release templates provided in [our Press Pack](https://sendmyfriend.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Press-Pack-2021-Education-Interrupted.docx) and send it to your local newspaper, or any popular local news blogs, along with a photo of your meeting. This should be done within a few days of the meeting.

Don't forget to publicise the meeting in your school's newsletters, website etc and let us know how it went by [sharing it here](https://act.sendmyfriend.org/how-did-it-go-1)!

 **Good luck!**