

## Make Schools Safe

### Introduction

Schools should be safe, happy and welcoming places for all children, everywhere.

But for many millions of children around the world school is anything but safe, happy and welcoming. For example,<sup>1</sup>

- 28.5 million children go to school in countries affected by war and armed conflict
- Every school day there are at least 15 life-threatening armed attacks on schools
- 150 million girls have experienced gender-based violence at school
- At least 246 million children have been bullied at school
- 875 million children go to school in places at high risk of earthquakes.



An Iraqi policeman inspects a school damaged by an airstrike in the town Shura. It was retaken from ISIS after two years of being controlled by the group. The area's eight schools were all taken over by ISIS as military bases, recruitment and training centres, and bomb factories. *Photo: Sam Tarling/Oxfam. December 2016.*

<sup>1</sup> Send My Friend to School (2018) Safe From Harm: Protecting Every Child And Teacher At School

In 2015, the United Nations launched Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 and promised to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. Meeting this target is challenging. In 2017, 264 million children, adolescents and youths were still missing out on primary and secondary school, and many who attended school did not receive a good quality education.

The reasons for so many children missing school are complex. However, agreement is growing that achieving a good quality education for all is not possible unless action is also taken to make schools safe, secure and welcoming places for all children.

School safety takes two main forms;

- Safety from attack or military occupation during wars and conflicts
- Safety from violence in or around schools in countries which are at peace. Examples are sexual violence, bullying and corporal punishment.

## What is the Safe Schools Declaration?

The Safe Schools Declaration is a commitment made by countries to show their support for the protection of education during conflict. It is sponsored by Norway, and has been signed so far by 74 countries. In April 2018, the UK agreed to sign the declaration.

The Make Schools Safe Campaign urges the UK to implement the Declaration. The campaign also calls on countries to implement additional policies which will make schools safe for all children in times of peace as well as war.



Children at primary school in Jalawla, Iraq/Kurdistan. The town is getting back on its feet a year after ISIS was driven out, and the school has been restored and reopened. It is safe again. *Photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith/Oxfam. November 2016.*

## Send A Sign to the Prime Minister

Here's a step by step guide to how young people can make a difference.

- Visit <https://sendmyfriend.campaignion.org/teacherpack> and register to download your school's teacher pack. Registration should be done by a teacher or other adult.
- Learn about the Make Schools Safe campaign and writing Make Schools Safe signs by sharing our PowerPoint presentation, doing the issue tree activity and writing your own signs.

Don't worry if writing signs leaves people feeling angry, and involves difficult choices. Making school safe for every child is a big task. There are no right or easy answers.

- Work together to lead the Make Schools Safe campaign in your school. Your target is to make as many young people as aware and knowledgeable as possible, and collect as many completed signs as you can. Young people could present assemblies and peer teach other classes to do the issue tree activity and write Make School Safe signs.

Our [skills toolkit](#) provides all the guidance young people need to organise action and lead a campaign. There are additional learning resources at [Send My Friend to School](#).

- Arrange a meeting with your MP to hand in your school's signs and ask her or him to pass them on to the Government asking the UK to implement the Safe Schools Declaration and Make Schools Safe.

Our [Meet your MP toolkit](#) tells young people all they need to know about meeting your school's MP

Good luck!

## Links and resources

Send My Friend to School: [www.sendmyfriend.org](http://www.sendmyfriend.org)

The Campaigning Skills toolkit: [www.sfyouth.eu/index.php/en/sfyouth-toolkit/skills-topics](http://www.sfyouth.eu/index.php/en/sfyouth-toolkit/skills-topics)

The Meet your MP toolkit: [www.sendmyfriend.org/resource/meet-your-mp](http://www.sendmyfriend.org/resource/meet-your-mp)

Send My Friend to School (2018) [Safe From Harm: Protecting Every Child and Teacher at School](#)

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack: [www.protectingeducation.org](http://www.protectingeducation.org)

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