

STAND AS ONE

September 2018
Action Guide

INTRODUCTION

In the year to March 2018 there were over 1 million asylum applications in Europe. However, only 26,547 of these applications were made in the UK. Britain hosts less than 1% of the world's refugees whereas more than four out of five refugees are hosted by developing countries.



People with refugee status in Britain face severe restrictions on which family members are permitted to join them in the UK. For example, unaccompanied children who have found safety in the UK cannot 'sponsor' their closest relatives from overseas to live with them here.

The UK also forbids parents from being reunited with their adult children. Nor may elderly people, siblings, in-laws and other dependant relatives join family members in the UK. The only family members eligible for resettlement in Britain are spouses and children under 18. Oxfam and many others are campaigning to change the law to make it easier for families to reunite and rebuild their lives as valuable members of the UK community. The proposed new law is called the Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill. The Bill achieved its second reading in the House of Commons on Friday March 16th 2018. Campaigners are now focused on achieving the Bill's third reading so it will become law.

John McLaverty/Oxfam. Sept 2018

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

This guide outlines what young people can do to campaign for a change in the law that keeps refugee families apart.

1. Learn and teach others about Refugee Family Reunification

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2. Write 'Home Is...' messages

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3. Get your MP involved

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1. Learn about Refugee Family Reunification

Use the workshop resources to learn more about Families Together. Then aim to strengthen your learning by teaching others.

The first action you can take is to deliver an assembly by using the PowerPoint presentation. You may wish to adapt the text and/or include other information you've researched. Practice by making your presentation to a small group first.



Aubrey Wade /Oxfam. May 2016

2. Run a 'Home Is...' message campaign in your school

We would like as many young people as possible to write 'Home Is...' messages to their MPs and show their commitment to helping to reunite refugee families.

There are three main ways for MPs to support Families Together.

1. Ask Home Secretary Sajid Javid to change the rules that keep families apart. He can do this without a new law being passed by Parliament
2. Propose amendments to the new Immigration Bill
3. Vote in the third reading of the Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill



How to organise your campaign

- First of all think about how many students in your school will write messages. Be ambitious, but also be realistic. For example, will it be a small campaign involving just one group or class, or are you going to take the campaign to the whole school?
- Next print off as many 'Home Is...' messages from this website as you require for your campaign
- Plan how you'll explain the campaign. People usually take the everyday experience of home, family and togetherness for granted. But these rights are denied to refugees, who are often society's most vulnerable members. How will you ask students to think critically about their messages?
- Finally plan your strategy for promoting 'Home Is...' in your school: What tactics will you use? Assemblies? Peer teaching? Sessions during tutor time? A stall at lunch time?

3. Engage your MP and the wider community

Once you have collected completed messages, think about how to send them to your MP. Meeting your MP in person is ideal, but, one way or another, make sure that your MP sees your messages



commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Houses_of_Parliament.jpg

- Invite your MP to school and hand in your messages in person. You'll find your MP's contact details at www.theyworkforyou.com and the best day to plan for is a Friday when MPs are in their constituencies.
- If a meeting is not possible, put all your messages in one envelope and post them to your MP at **House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA** along with the downloadable covering letter with this resource.
- Take your campaign online. For example photograph some of the messages and tweet them. Make sure that your online campaigning follows your school's internet safety guidelines. Use [#StandAsOne](https://twitter.com/StandAsOne) and include [@oxfameducation](https://twitter.com/oxfameducation) in your social media posts