



*Dear Friends,*

I am writing to ask for your support for the work we are doing to help strengthen our schools and keep them open.

From the regular updates in this newsletter you will know there have been a great many positive developments which have left our schools immeasurably stronger educationally and organisationally. Ofsted reports praise schools and the reputation of our schools is growing.

### *A movement under pressure*

However, in the last ten years we have lost half of our schools, mainly because of falling pupil numbers.

Many of you will know only too well that behind each school closure lies far more than the loss of a building or organisation. It is the loss of a precious community of children, teachers and parents, and of a place where childhood is protected, imagination nourished and young people allowed to grow in a more human way.

Today, many of the schools that remain are small and increasingly fragile. The wider financial pressures affecting the whole independent school sector - particularly following the introduction of VAT on fees - have made survival harder just at the moment when we had started to see encouraging signs of renewed growth.

At the same time, across mainstream education we are seeing rising anxiety, mental health difficulties, increasing levels of special educational needs and growing numbers of children who simply cannot face school. Parents are searching for forms of education that nourish not only academic achievement, but also confidence, resilience, creativity, relationship and connection.

It is becoming ever clearer that the world needs Waldorf education.

### *One parent's voice*

A father spoke to me recently about why he is giving so much of his own time and energy to help keep his child's Waldorf school alive as it faces significant pressures.

When his son arrived at the school aged eleven, he had already lost faith in education. School had become associated with anxiety, withdrawal and failure. His confidence had diminished and his relationship with learning had begun to close down.

The Waldorf school offered time, relationships, creativity, encouragement and the possibility of beginning again. Now, at sixteen, he is able to move forward into life with confidence and hope.

*His father said to me quietly: "This school saved my child and that's why I am doing all I can to keep this school open for other children."*

Similar stories are repeated across our schools and remind us what is at stake if these schools disappear.

## *The importance of increasing pupil numbers*

A critical part of helping schools survive is increasing pupil numbers. To achieve that, we must continue raising awareness and improving understanding of Waldorf education amongst parents, policymakers, educationalists and the wider public at a national level.

At Waldorf UK we are working hard to strengthen this work in an increasingly complex media landscape. Commissioning evidence-based research, contributing to government reviews, attending policy discussions and engaging with the media all help us widen awareness and reach more families.

We need to access more expert advice and support on how to communicate and advertise effectively in today's world.

## *Why we need to ask*

Thanks to the generosity of many members last year, important work in these areas has already begun and we are deeply grateful for that support. But this work is not short-term. Building understanding, credibility and visibility takes time and sustained effort.

Unfortunately, the loss of so many schools has also reduced the financial resources available to support this national work, which is why we need to ask for help.

So many of you have carried and supported our movement faithfully over decades as teachers, parents and friends of Waldorf education. Today, that support matters more than ever.

Your support will help us continue this important work and give the remaining schools a better chance not only of survival, but of growing once again.

*With gratitude and warm wishes,*

*Fran*

*Fran Russell  
Executive Director  
Waldorf UK*

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## How to donate



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### ONLINE

Visit our website OR scan the QR code  
<https://waldorfeducation.uk/support-us/donate>

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### BANK TRANSFER

One off or regular gifts can be made by bank transfer to  
Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship  
Sort Code 40-44-56 Account Number 41191217

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### POST

Send a cheque\* to Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship,  
35 Park Road, London NW1 6XT  
(\*Made payable to 'Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship' or 'SWSF')