



Charities at Thomas's

A Document for Parents, PTAs, Staff and Pupils

Introduction

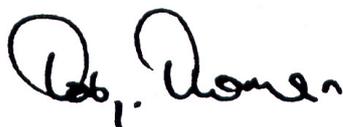
The school rule to 'Be Kind' is at the heart of Thomas London Day Schools ethos.

We believe passionately in engendering a sense of social responsibility and a culture of being givers not takers in each school community. One of the ways in which our school rule has found expression at Thomas's has been through the creation of opportunities for pupils, parents and staff to learn about and to support charitable causes.

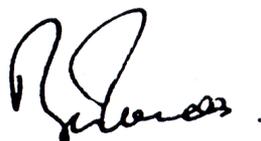
The charitable aspect of the schools' ethos began with the selection of charities by the schools, staff members and PTAs. With the subsequent establishment of two permanent children's charities; The Thomas's School Foundation and The CAIRN Trust, it has since grown in both scope and complexity, leading to the appointment of a Group Charities Coordinator in 2009.

We are extremely proud of Thomas's long standing record of helping a very wide range of charities in achieving their objectives. However, we are under no illusion that this record has only been made possible through the hard work of the PTAs and the support, commitment and generosity of many Thomas's pupils, parents and members of each school community.

The aim of this policy is to explain the schools' current involvement in charitable activities. We hope that by doing so pupils, parents and members of staff will be encouraged to continue the tremendous tradition of support for the charitable aims of Thomas's London Day Schools.



Tobyn Thomas
Principal



Ben Thomas
Principal

Charities at Thomas's London Day Schools

What are the charitable aims of Thomas's London Day Schools?

- 1) To broaden the education of pupils at Thomas's beyond the school curriculum by providing educational and practical charitable experiences.
- 2) To improve educational opportunities for less advantaged children, both in the UK and in Nepal, through Thomas's two permanent school charities.
- 3) To put the most important school rule, 'Be Kind,' into practice.
- 4) To engage pupils, parents and staff in the schools' chosen charities.
- 5) To raise awareness of and funds for the schools' chosen charities.

What are the main areas of charitable activity?

- 1) External charities chosen by the schools and their PTAs
- 2) Thomas's two permanent school charities; The Thomas's Schools Foundation (TSF) and The CAIRN Trust. These charities are described in more detail in the following pages.

How do the schools choose their charities?

Each school, led by the PTA team, chooses a charity or charities to support, for a period of at least one year. Any current or former member of the school community may nominate a charity to the PTA as part of the selection process. Shortlisted charities present their causes to the pupils, who then vote in favour of their chosen charities.

During their time at Thomas's, we use our best endeavour to expose pupils to a diverse range of charitable causes. A small selection of some of the charities chosen by the PTAs can be found on the following pages.

What active involvement do the pupils have with the chosen charities?

The PTAs work closely with the chosen charities to develop a varied and extensive calendar of engaging fundraising activities for pupils, parents and staff. Throughout their time, chosen charities visit the schools in order to raise awareness of their work and interact with the pupils.

Where possible, activities are arranged for pupils to provide 'hands-on' support to their chosen charity. Such activities have included:

- Battersea pupils running the pensioners' lunch club at the Katherine Low Settlement in Battersea
- Clapham pupils visiting the children's ward at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital to meet patients and present the distraction boxes that they had made
- Fulham pupils attending Age Concern's lunch club to make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and decorate the library, funded by the school
- Kensington Reception pupils spending a morning at the local fire station.

'Charity Week' brings a further focus on the activities of the chosen charities. During this time, sponsored events such as gym circuits, obstacle courses, swimming events and 'readathons' are organised so that pupils can fundraise for their chosen charity. The money raised by the pupils is then presented to the charity in an assembly or at an event; giving the pupils an opportunity to understand how the charity will make best use of the funds they have been instrumental in helping to raise.

Why does Thomas's have two permanent school charities?

Thomas's offers a high standard of broad curriculum education for children in London. However, it is aware that this opportunity is not always available to all children. As a way of giving back to the community, Thomas's London Day Schools aspires to help school children both locally and internationally through the establishment and permanent support of two charities:

- **The Thomas's Schools Foundation (TSF)** - which strives to ensure that local children in the four schools surroundings, especially those with fewest resources, have opportunities to succeed in school and life (www.tsfoundation.org).
- **The CAIRN Trust** - which aims to educate and improve educational opportunities for some of the poorest children and their communities in the mountain villages of Nepal (www.cairntrust.org).

How are these two permanent charities supported at Thomas's?

Within a four year rotational period, each Thomas's school and their PTA adopt both TSF and CAIRN individually as their annual chosen charity. The PTA Chairs kindly volunteer to act as ex-officio Trustees on both the TSF and CAIRN's board during their two year tenure, offering an essential contact with Thomas's.

In addition, the PTAs also generously donate proceeds from the sale of second hand uniform to both charities. The Thomas's parent community provides an excellent and resourceful talent bank of dedicated and skilled volunteers from which both charities draw upon in the delivery of their activities and programmes.

Where do the two permanent school charities get their funding from?

The Thomas's school community provides a vital source of fundraising for both TSF and CAIRN. However, over the last two years, both charities have also been successful in securing project funding from various external sources, e.g. trusts and foundations, corporate partners, suppliers and local businesses.

Is this all to do with meeting the requirements of the Charity Commission?

No. Unlike many independent schools, the legal entity of Thomas's London Day Schools is a partnership, not a charitable trust. There is therefore no legal obligation on the schools to pass a test of public benefit. Involvement in charitable activities has always been and continues to be quite simply a core part of the ethos of the schools.

Who coordinates the schools' charitable activities?

The Thomas's Group Charities Coordinator works closely with each of the schools, the PTAs, their chosen charities and the two permanent charities to ensure that all three areas of charitable activity are co-ordinated and complementary.

Are there any exceptions?

In addition to the formalised appointment of school charities, schools also support the local church through church service and harvest collections. All the schools offer pupils the opportunity to volunteer their skills and time to local charities and businesses during an annual Make a Difference (MAD) Days. From time to time, schools may respond to national appeals but these are usually of a more ad-hoc or short term nature.

What if I already have a preferred charity?

At Thomas's, we acknowledge that many parents and members of staff already have preferred charities that they support or in which they have an active involvement. Supporting our chosen charities is voluntary and there is no obligation to make donations or to get involved. At the same time, we welcome – indeed, rely on - the support of parents, pupils and staff to make our charitable areas a success.

How often will I get requests for charitable donations?

This will vary across the schools. However, the Thomas's Group Charities Coordinator works closely with each of the schools and PTAs to ensure that all areas of charitable activity are co-ordinated and complementary. By concentrating our charitable efforts on two main areas of charitable activity, we hope to ensure that parents and staff are not subjected to excessive charitable requests.

How can I get involved with charities at Thomas's?

There are many ways to get involved, ranging from volunteering your time e.g. at cake sales and Christmas Fairs; volunteering your skills e.g. as part of an organising committee or supporting one of the permanent school charities; to fundraising or making charitable donations.

One of the more fun ways in which you get involved with charities is by attending social events organised by the PTA, such as Quiz Nights or Wine Tastings.

Who can I talk to?

To discuss any aspect of the schools' charitable activities, please contact either your PTA Team or the Thomas's Group Charity Coordinator, Rachna Purdie, on 07799 061 157 or at rpurdie@thomas-s.co.uk.

Examples of external charities chosen by the schools and PTAs

Charities supported by the schools in recent years include the following:

Thomas's Battersea

Chernobyl Children's Lifeline
Farms for City Children
Football For Peace
Kipungani School (in Africa)
Magic Breakfast
Molly's Fund
Rays of Sunshine
Riding for the Disabled
The Orangutan Foundation
The Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust

Thomas's Clapham

Cricket for Change
Greenmead Trust
Honeypot
Linden Lodge
Oak Lodge
Paralympics GB
The Starlight Children's Foundation
The Vines

Thomas's Fulham

Actionnaires Club
Age Concern, Hammersmith and Fulham
Chelsea and Westminster Hospital Health Charity's Arts Programme
Community Sports Foundation
Guide Dogs For The Blind
The Starlight Children's Foundation

Thomas's Kensington

Back Up
Demelza
Great Ormond Street Hospital
Greenhouse Schools
Motivation
The Daughters of Divine Charity
The Fireman's Benevolent Fund
The Sick Children's Trust

Thomas's Kindergartens

Battersea Summer Scheme
Chelsea and Westminster Hospital Play Specialist
Starlight Children's Foundation
Make a Wish
POD

Overview

The Thomas's Schools Foundation (TSF), strives to ensure that children, especially those with fewest resources, have opportunities to succeed in school and life by:

- Identifying, supporting and funding educational and extracurricular activities for local children
- Providing funding for means-tested bursaries for children to attend Thomas's London Day Schools.

History

TSF was established in 1999, as a charity supporting local children in the four Thomas's communities of Battersea, Clapham, Fulham and Kensington. Although it has a similar name and logo, the Foundation is independent from Thomas's and is governed by independent Trustees.

Programmes

The Foundation works with the local community in a variety of ways. Programmes are developed in partnership with local primary schools and community centres, with whom the Foundation ensures there is a need for assistance. It currently offers 48 community programmes that are making a difference in the lives of thousands of children by giving them access to opportunities they otherwise would not have.

Examples of some of the programmes include clubs in sports, music, art, drama and ICT; creative writing and storytelling workshops; outdoor plays activities and breakfast clubs to ensure children are equipped for the school day.

TSF also offers means-tested bursaries of up to 90% for children to attend one of the four Thomas's London Day Schools. Over the past ten years more than 30 children have had a Thomas's education because of this pioneering programme. Short-term assistance is also available to current Thomas's London Day School families who encounter unexpected financial difficulty.

TSF at Thomas's London Day Schools

The Foundation plays an integral part in the development and delivery of the Community Days at Thomas's, where pupils and parents can help out in a variety of community programmes across London.

Literacy is an important area of focus for the Foundation. Thomas's parents can volunteer to read with children in many of the TSF's partner schools on a weekly basis, giving one-to-one assistance that is desperately needed to improve reading levels and, in turn, to help boost the self-esteem of the children. The Foundation hosts a "Readers' Cup" at Thomas's which is a live reading competition for pupils from local school.

More information about the activities of the Foundation, including information for prospective applicants for support, is available on the Foundation's website (www.tsfoundation.org), from the schools' offices or from:

Thomas's Schools Foundation, PO Box 46805, London SW11 3WJ.
Telephone: 020 7978 0911. Email: enquiries@tsfoundation.org



(Registered Charity No: 1120038)

Overview

The CAIRN Trust's mission is to improve educational opportunities for 14,000 of the poorest children and their communities in Nepal by 2014.

History

CAIRN was established in 2007 by the Thomas's founding Principals, David and Joanna Thomas. However, the Thomas's family connection with Nepal goes back over 40 years when David served as an officer in the 2nd Gurkhas and took his family on trek in the Himalayas. It was through regular contact with the villages and families of these cheerful, strong and resilient people that made the Thomas's determined to help the poorest children in Nepal. Building on over thirty five years of educational expertise and excellence gained from Thomas's London Day Schools, CAIRN is improving education in the poorest country in South East Asia.

Programmes

In Nepal, education is still not compulsory and deemed very much a luxury. CAIRN works holistically, in partnership with local communities, to improve the educational offering within rural villages through three key programmes:

- **CAIRN Schools & Libraries** – the advancement of educational infra-structures through the construction and installation of nursery, primary and secondary schools and libraries. The school buildings provide mainly the children but also the entire community with a basic and much needed access and resourced route to gaining an education in the remote Himalayas.
- **CAIRN Educational Awards (CEA)** – the provision of essential educational supplies e.g. uniforms, school bag, books and stationery crucial for learning, to the poorest children. The recipients' progress is monitored and addressed quarterly both at home and school through a team of dedicated and trained social workers who also provide invaluable mentoring support. The Awards alleviate the financial burden of education on parents enabling families to ensure that their children can attend school regularly, thereby completing their primary and secondary education.
- **CAIRN Communities** – the identification and delivery of appropriate support for children within our educational communities who require further assistance to continue attending school. Examples of previous support provided include emergency food packages, medical support and income generation schemes.

Currently, CAIRN is transforming the lives of over 11,000 of the poorest children in Nepal through the delivery of:

- **13 Schools**
- **16 Libraries**
- **1, 000 children's** education through the CEA programme
- **4 Nursery Schools**
- **1 Hostel**



The CAIRN Trust at Thomas's London Day Schools

Each Thomas's school has at least one sister school in Nepal that it has funded the construction of and a village community that it continues to develop and support.

CAIRN works through a number of communication channels to strengthen the links between Thomas's pupils and the pupils in our Nepalese schools e.g. postcards and bookmark exchanges. Working through a teacher network of CAIRN Coordinators, each school hosts an annual Nepal Day, offering Thomas's pupils the unique opportunity to learn about the diverse culture of a developing country. Each school also appoints a pupil to become the CAIRN Prefect who supports the Coordinators in developing exciting learning opportunities and new ways of engaging the entire Thomas's pupil community.

The Kids Hut is a dedicated children's area on the CAIRN website, where pupils can gain practical knowledge of Nepal and the charity's work.

Thomas's families and staff are offered the opportunity to experience CAIRN's projects first hand during an annual two week trek to Nepal during the Easter holidays.

CAIRN has an extensive sporting and events fundraising calendar allowing parents and staff to support the charity, whilst staying fit.

More information about the activities of The CAIRN Trust is available at www.cairntrust.org, or from The CAIRN Trust, Monmouth Court, Southampton Road, Ringwood, BH24 1HE. Telephone: 01425 481506. Email: info@cairntrust.org