

Bethany Child Sponsorship Q & A

What is it?

How much does it cost?

Which children need sponsors?

How do I pay?

Where does my money go?

How much of my money goes on administration?

Are volunteers paid?

Why are sponsors asked to remain anonymous?

How does anonymity work?

Can I write to my sponsored child?

What if I already write or I'm a penpal to a child I have decided to sponsor?

Can I send gifts to my child?

Can I send a donation towards buying the children special treats?

How often will my sponsored child write to me?

How do I follow the progress of my sponsored child?

Can I visit my child?

When does sponsorship end?

How does sponsoring a Bethany child differ from other sponsorship programs?

How do I indicate that I agree to abide by the policies and guidelines that Bethany has adopted?

I have a few questions to ask and/or need help filling in the forms.

I've read all the information about sponsorship and want to start sponsoring – what do I do next?

What is it?

Bethany sponsorship is an undertaking to pay a regular monthly sum which will help to support a named child – a member of the Bethany Family.

How much does it cost?

Any of the following amounts (from £5 to £33 per child per month). Whilst the full cost is £33 per child (calculated January 2006) we realise that some sponsors may be unable to afford the full amount (or maybe already sponsoring children with other charities) and so we have adopted a system of co-sponsorship so that if necessary several sponsors can give individual amounts that collectively will add up to the full cost.

e.g. Mariam Christopher (Bethany child 7yrs old) may have 4 sponsors made up as follows 1 co-sponsor £13 per month, 1 co-sponsor for £10 per month and 2 co-sponsors for £5 per month.

Which children need sponsors?

We currently have over 80 children (as of January 2006) being cared for by Bethany. A few are already fully sponsored, and some have partial sponsorship. Click [here](#) to see the up to date list of children and their sponsors and then decide which child/children you would like to sponsor and how much you would like to donate per month.

How do I pay?

There are several different ways. We prefer payment by standing order (this way you are in charge of the payments as against direct debits which are controlled by the recipient). We can send you a standing order form (or you can download one, [click here](#)). Send the completed form to your bank.

If you use an online bank account then you may be able to set up a standing order online. Please let us know (by phone, email or letter) if this is what you have done and remember that we will still need the application form if you wish this money to sponsor specific children (unless you require your donations to go towards the further development of the Bethany). Don't forget that if you are a UK tax payer then the gift aid form will also need to be returned to us ([click here to download](#)).

If you live outside the UK then you can pay by debit card or credit card (Charities Aid Foundation have provided this facility for us), unfortunately, as yet you cannot instruct them to make regular payments and so you will need to remember to make a one-off donation each month (unless you make a donation sufficient to provide sponsorship for a number of months in advance).

Where does my money go?

Your money will be paid into our general fund. Every month we send an International money order to the Tanzanian team who are responsible for the day to day running of the project. This includes the purchase and provision of food, clothing, accommodation, educational needs including text books, exercise books, paying of school fees, training fees, wages, healthcare including medical expenses, the provision of essential services, water and electricity, the care and maintenance of our two vehicles. A monthly budget is agreed with the Tanzanian team and on a two month cycle or so actual expenditure is compared with the agreed budget and any anomalies are fully investigated by a nominated member of the UK team. In this way every penny can be accounted and budgeted for.

How much of my money goes on administration?

The UK oversight team (and others who give specifically for this purpose) pay for all the administration work undertaken in the UK. This includes leaflets, flyers, posters, stamps, envelopes, all web site expenses etc etc. The only administration expenses paid from donations (out of the general fund) are those paid to:

- 1) Our bank who charge us for the privilege of using their facilities (standard charges).
- 2) CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) who deduct a small percentage of donations made by credit/debit card (to cover their expenses).

Are volunteers paid?

None of our volunteers are paid or receive any expenses or benefits (of any kind). The UK team is made up of ordinary people some with jobs and some who are retired, but all of them fund any expenses they incur. Also people who volunteer to visit Bethany in Tanzania to undertake specific tasks are expected to donate or raise sufficient funds to cover the costs incurred by Bethany for their flights and all expenses.

Why are sponsors asked to remain anonymous?

This is to safeguard the interests of the child. There is a danger that if the child knows both the name and more importantly the address of his/her sponsor then unscrupulous persons (claiming to be relatives) or other unscrupulous organisations (even children's homes!) may attempt to take the child from Bethany expecting the sponsorship to follow. We have already had experience of this. The motive is always greed of the relative/organisation and the exploitation of the child.

How does anonymity work?

Each sponsor/co-sponsor is given a unique and personalised number which is only known to the sponsor/co-sponsor and the Bethany UK team. The web site will show each child's name with the corresponding sponsor/co-sponsor number and amount presently being contributed. So therefore the child and others, by looking at the web site will only know the number (allocated to the giver) and the amount given but not the name of the sponsor or their address.

Can I write to my sponsored child?

Yes, but if you are a sponsor please don't tell the child that you are his/her sponsor (or give them your sponsorship number). Many children write to a variety of friends/penpals and letters are often encouraging and offer additional support.

What if I already write or I'm a penpal to a child I have decided to sponsor?

No problem, please continue but please accept that your sponsorship will never be acknowledged by the child you are sponsoring and that this is for the protection of the child. Please don't give your sponsorship number to the child you are sponsoring.

Can I send gifts to my child?

The short answer is no – let me explain why. Our children are encouraged to share and hold all things in common for the benefit of the family. As you can imagine, as with any family if one child is given a gift (e.g. by a relative/grandparent) yet the others received nothing then this can spoil such a sense of family and community. Whilst we teach the children that the world is an unfair place we are doing all we can to make it a fairer place. We therefore have a very strict policy on the giving of gifts (click here to see the full policy).

Can I send a donation towards buying the children special treats?

Yes – as long as the donation benefits all the children. Please indicate with your donation how you would like the money used (e.g. for small gifts at Christmas, bunk bed, table etc.). For instance if you sent a donation towards the purchase of Christmas presents and collectively there was only a small amount donated then we would probably buy small gifts (pens/pencils/books) wrap them and use them in games on Christmas day (e.g. pass the parcel).

How often will my sponsored child write to me?

Your sponsored child will only reply to a letter you send as some sponsors may not want to enter into correspondence with their sponsored child. Please be patient if you do write as it will need to be translated by one of the few staff who are able to read and write in English. It may take some weeks before you receive a reply.

How do I follow the progress of my sponsored child?

We intend to produce a brief report every year on the progress of your child. We would hope to include information from their school – how they are doing etc. How they are developing socially with their peers. How they spend their spare time. Their likes and dislikes. How they are maturing etc.

Can I visit my child?

We would be happy for you to visit the Bethany family – and we would try and help with advice regarding flights, local accommodation etc. You would be made very welcome and all our children greet invited guests enthusiastically. However, to protect our children volunteers who currently visit Bethany are subject to a strict vetting procedure and are always accompanied by a member of the UK Team. Sponsors would be subject to the same criteria and if accepted a visiting day would need to be arranged when a member of the UK team was on site (members of the UK team visit for a two week period several times throughout the year and your visit would have to coincide with one of these visits).

During your visit we would make sure that you meet and chat to many of the children (introduced by name) one of whom will be the child you sponsor. However, we would not introduce you as a child sponsor as your anonymity would be lost.

N.B. Please be aware that if you arrive at Bethany without following these procedures you will not be allowed on site. As you can imagine this is to protect our children from a very small minority of the population who may otherwise visit unannounced with the intention of taking advantage of innocent children (one of which could be the child you are sponsoring!).

When does sponsorship end?

In the normal course of events this would be when the child leaves the care of Bethany. We hope that most of our sponsors will continue to sponsor our children as they enter various training establishments or enter further education. We are hoping that some of our children will become teachers etc. whilst others take vocational training programs (e.g. joinery etc.). We will not pursue education for education's sake but only with a view to a job. At all times of sponsorship Bethany will remain their home even if they take residential courses. When we decide that they have received an appropriate education or training to obtain a job then we will help them with references etc in the pursuit of that job. When the child becomes independent then their sponsorship will end and we will inform you so that you can stop sponsorship or change sponsorship to another child. There may be other reasons why sponsorship should stop and we will inform you at the time (e.g. serious continual bad behaviour or repeated laziness or interference by unscrupulous friends or relatives).

How does sponsoring a Bethany child differ from other sponsorship programs?

Most other sponsorship programs are concerned with helping a child who has parents, relatives or friends already looking after them (in family homes) and so the money they receive is to help the family buy food, clothing, education and sometimes help fund community projects. We believe that such sponsorship is less effective in challenging some of the negative values existing in the Tanzanian culture such as the way children are treated (often neglected and treated as servants) the regard for women as second class citizens and the lack of honesty and integrity. The Tanzanian government recognises these weaknesses within the culture and is trying to address these problems.

However it is difficult to change the ways and attitudes which have been passed down over many generations. Whilst maintaining the positive values of the culture (the importance of family and friendship, good behaviour etc.) Bethany has the advantage of being able to spend a great deal of time and effort on bringing up the child to value the tenets of the Christian faith and to live those values as they are nurtured at Bethany. These include the value of all individuals as equals with an expectation that the children will value the importance of honesty and integrity etc etc.

How do I indicate that I agree to abide by the policies and guidelines that Bethany has adopted?

The sponsorship application form has a section that we ask you to sign regarding the various policies and guidelines that we ask you to accept.

I've read all the information about sponsorship and want to start sponsoring – what do I do next?

There are two forms to fill in (possibly a third if you are a UK tax payer)

- 1) Application form: download it from the website and return the completed form.
- 2) Standing order form: download it from the web site, and post the completed form to your bank
- 3) Gift Aid form (if you are a UK tax payer) this will give Bethany an extra 28p in the pound which can be used to develop the project further. Download it from the Web site and return the completed form.
(if you live outside the UK then please contact us as the standing order form and gift aid form will not apply to you although you will need to complete the sponsorship application form and return to us)

I have a question to ask and/or need help filling in the forms.

Telephone Graham on 01254 879694 anytime. If unavailable then feel free to contact any of the UK team ([click here](#) for contact details). Please remember to email us if you prefer ([click here](#) to email Bex, [click here](#) to email Graham)