



## CHARITY POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The school rule to 'Be Kind' is at the heart of Thomas's 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. Until recently, this was structured through two children's charities; The Thomas's Schools Foundation and The CAIRN Trust. In December 2018, following consultation with Thomas's London Day Schools community, a new charity Thomas's Foundation, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration No 1181145 was registered with the Charity Commission. Thomas's Schools Foundation and The CAIRN Trust were dissolved and their charitable activities merged into one charity, Thomas's Foundation, a single permanent school charity embodying the schools' values.

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.

Toby Thomas  
Principal

Ben Thomas  
Principal

## **AIMS**

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

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

### **What are the main areas of charitable activity?**

- External charities chosen by the schools and their PTAs
- Thomas's permanent school charity; Thomas's Foundation [www.thomassfoundtion.org.uk](http://www.thomassfoundtion.org.uk)

### **How do the schools choose their external charities?**

Charities are proposed by the staff and PTA and discussed with the Head and representatives of the Charities Committee. The charity selected delivers a presentation to the pupils so they may understand more fully the purpose of the organisation. Any current or former member of the school community may nominate a charity to the PTA as part of the selection process.

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 schools and PTA 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.

'Charity Week' brings a further focus on the activities of the chosen charities. During this time, sponsored events such as sports activities, mufti days and 'readathons' may be 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.

In addition where possible, activities are arranged for pupils to provide 'hands-on' support to local charities beyond the chosen charity of the year. Such activities have included:

- Battersea pupils running the pensioners' lunch club at the Katherine Low Settlement in Battersea
- Clapham pupils sorting food at the foodbank and Ace of Clubs for vulnerable people in the area
- Fulham Unicorn Choir singing to senior citizens in the community during an afternoon tea at St Dionis' Church
- Kensington pupils making and giving cards to the elderly at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital

### **Why does Thomas's have a permanent school charity?**

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 Thomas's Foundation:

- which strives to ensure that local children in the communities surrounding the four schools, especially those with the fewest resources, have opportunities to succeed in school and life **and**
- which aims to educate and improve educational opportunities for some of the poorest children and their communities in the mountain villages of Nepal

### **How is Thomas's Foundation supported within Thomas's London Day Schools?**

Thomas's Foundation alternates between two of each of the Thomas's schools, (Battersea and Kensington and then Clapham and Fulham) with their PTAs adopting Thomas's Foundation as their annual chosen charity every other year. (The schools and their PTAs choose an external charity to support in their intervening year). In addition, the PTAs also generously donate proceeds from the sale of second hand uniform to Thomas's Foundation. The Thomas's parent community provides an excellent and resourceful talent bank of dedicated and skilled volunteers from which the charity draw upon in the delivery of its 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 Thomas's Foundation. However, the charity has 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 an unlimited company, 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.

### **Are there any exceptions?**

In addition to the formalised appointment of school charities, schools also support their 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 regular Make a Difference (MAD) Days. From time to time, schools may respond to national appeals such as "Jeans for Genes" 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, we work 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 under one single permanent school charity, 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 the activities of the permanent school charity Thomas’s Foundation; 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 the PTA team at your school or speak to the School Office who can put you in touch with the right person.

**Examples of external charities supported by the schools and PTAs in recent years include:**

Thomas’s Battersea	Friends of Colombia for Social Aid (FOCSA) Wandsworth Food Bank Glass door
Thomas’s Clapham	Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) Place2Be Spires
Thomas’s Fulham	Chelsea and Westminster Hospital Arts Fund Canine Partners The Pluto Appeal
Thomas’s Kensington	Fireman’s Benevolent Fund Breathe Magic Walkabout
Thomas’s Kindergarten	Battersea Summer Scheme Katharine Low Settlement Thrive

**See also:** [PSHCE Policy](#), [SMSC Policy](#)

<b>This policy will be reviewed every two years</b>		
Created: May 2009	By:	Jill Kelham, Vice Principal

Latest Review: September 2019	By:	Liz Woodcock, Thomas's Foundation Executive Director, Joanna Copland, Vice Principal	Changes made
Next Review: September 2021	BY:	Joanna Copland Vice Principal	

For information about Thomas's Foundation visit [www.thomassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.thomassfoundation.org.uk) or contact Liz Woodcock, Executive Director [woodcock@thomassfoundation.org.uk](mailto:woodcock@thomassfoundation.org.uk) or call 020 3327 4177