

The Children of Sikkim

Registered UK Charity No 1153784
Supporting pupils at Sikkim Himalayan Academy and other Sikkim schools



TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT PERIOD 1 April 2014 to 5 April 2015

SECTION A Reference and administration details

Principal address: Fairlight
31 Lower Stoke
Limpley Stoke
BATH BA2 7FR

Trust established 1st June 2013. Registered with the Charity Commission 12th September 2013

Trustees:

Trustee name	Office	Dates acted	Appointed by
Margaret Jean Finlayson	Chairperson and Treasurer	1 st June 2013 to period end	
Michael Patrick Henry Daniel	Secretary	1 st June 2013 to 1 July 2014	
Barbara Taylor		1 st June 2013 to period end	
Duncan Macdonald Finlayson	Secretary and Assistant Treasurer	28 th October 2014 to period end	

The charity is managed by the trustees.

SECTION B Structure, governance and management

The Children of Sikkim charity is governed by a trust deed, and is constituted as a trust. New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees.

The background is that the Friends of Sikkim Himalayan Academy (FSHA) was established in UK by Magi Finlayson in 2003 as a means of supporting the school of the same name in Sikkim, North-East India. She was a founding organiser of the school, with 25 years' experience as a primary teacher. The school educates children aged 5 to 12. The UK activities consist of seeking out sponsors, ad-hoc fund raising and organising volunteers, as well as approximately bi-annual visits. These activities have operated in cooperation with a Dutch charitable trust, Stichting Kinderen van Sikkim, with 4 trustees one of which is Magi Finlayson. In July 2013 the accumulated funds of FSHA were incorporated into the trust. The name reflects the fact that in latter years a second smaller school has been established in the north of Sikkim, meaning that SHA is not the only beneficiary. Also, some of the first intake have moved on to secondary school, where they continue to be supported.

As children have grown up, more emphasis is being put on secondary education, principally through the Dr Graham's Homes school in Kalimpong, West Bengal. This means recruiting sponsors, some of whom contribute directly to Dr Graham's UK committee, which is a trust registered in Scotland.

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SECTION C Objectives and activities

The Objects of The Children of Sikkim charity

These are:

To advance the education of pupils at Sikkim School, Sikkim, North East India by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities not required to be provided by any government or local authority or any other public body.

For the public benefit to promote the education of such persons in such ways as the charity trustees think fit, including by:

1. awarding to such children scholarships, maintenance allowances, and grants;
2. providing or contributing towards the cost of teachers, equipment, buildings and boarding facilities at the school;
3. providing their education to undertake travel in furtherance of that education and to assist them by providing grants, maintenance allowances or paying fees for them to attend at any further schools, universities or colleges, or to prepare them for entry into any occupation, trade or profession on leaving any educational establishment;

To assist in such ways as the charity trustees think fit any charity in place whose aims include advancing of education of persons under the age of 25 years by developing their mental, physical and moral capabilities through leisure time activities.

Summary of main activities undertaken for the public benefit

Sikkim School otherwise known as Sikkim Himalayan Academy <http://www.sikkim-himalayan-academy.co.uk/SHA/Welcome.html> was founded in 2003 by UK and Dutch individuals. It educates children from the age of 5 to 12, then supports their continuing education. The majority of children live at the school during term-time and the school provides full board. Funding is partly from the UK and partly from a trust in Holland. The school employs teachers in Sikkim but also uses volunteers from all around the world. Volunteering is organised from the UK. Since 2003 an offset arrangement has meant that money paid in the UK for the sponsorship of pupils has been retained in the UK and passed to a reserve account to fund the building of a school; at present the school is in rented buildings. All trust personnel work on a voluntary basis and meet their own expenses.

The benefit to the public is to be able to support the education of poor and disadvantaged children in a remote part of India, which changes their life prospects. In 2013 a pupil from the school entered Delhi University as an undergraduate.

We confirm the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

SECTION D Achievements and performance

During 2014/15 the charity continued to maintain and if necessary replace sponsors, who make a regular contribution to support the education of a named child. At year end Children of Sikkim had 24 sponsors supporting 28 children at Sikkim Himalayan Academy, 3 sponsors supporting 3 children at a second school Dzongu which is aided by but not run by Stichting Kinderen van Sikkim (the Dutch Trust), and one sponsor partly supporting 1 child at a third school. Two of the sponsors are corporate. At period

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end the total number of children at Sikkim Himalayan Academy was 80. In previous academic (February to October) years under Friends of Sikkim Himalayan Academy, the charity paid for pupils in secondary education at Dr Graham's Homes, Kalimpong, West Bengal, which is close to the state border of Sikkim. However the 2014 year payment was made 2013/14 and in the 2015 academic year there were no supported pupils at Dr Graham's, so there was no payment during this accounting period. Nevertheless, the sponsorship collected by the Trust was accumulated as in previous years.

SECTION E Financial review

The charities policy on reserves is to hold a minimum equivalent to the value of one year's sponsorship. Current reserves are much more than that, because the trust was set up with substantial reserves accumulated through additional fundraising by Friends of Sikkim Himalayan Academy. These are intended for the building of a new school and will be disbursed as soon as feasible. During the period, the principal source of funds was sponsorship. Funds collected were retained for the reserve, with outgoings being met by the Dutch trust. The income for the period was £ 9491.91. The current account held £ 1,265.33 at the end of the period, and the deposit account £49,662.38.

SECTION F Other optional information

Since the purpose of the reserves is, together with the Dutch trust, to fund the building of a school, this section for the time being will report on progress in that regard.

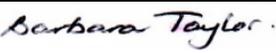
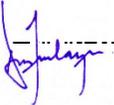
Sikkim Himalayan Academy became registered as a trust in Sikkim during the period. However the Dutch Trust, having approached the landowners to whom a down payment had been made, were asked for a very significant escalation in price. The Dutch Trust, feeling that it would be a waste of funds to try and enforce the agreement, have started to look for another site.

Transfer of funds to India from the Dutch Trust continues to be through Building Blocks of Bangalore, who do not charge a fee but claim expenses. <http://buildingblocksindia.org/>

In addition it should be noted that during the period problems with the Indian authorities continued. Trustees have not been able to visit without a business visa, which has effectively prevented visits.

SECTION G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.
Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signatures			
Full names	Margaret Jean Finlayson	Barbara Taylor	Duncan Macdonald Finlayson
Position	Chair and Treasurer	Trustee	Trustee
Date	10 November 2015	10 November 2015	10 November 2015