



mary's
meals

a simple solution
to world hunger



Backpack Project

FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS

www.marysmeals.org

Registered Charity SCO22140

Is the Backpack Project only for schools to take part in?

No! Anyone can do it.

What do you send as part of the project?

The items we send are listed in the Backpack Project leaflet. The inside of this leaflet is designed to be easily photocopyable, in order to distribute.

What if you want to send other things that are not on the list?

Before packaging other materials, please contact us at backpacks@marysmeals.org, to check whether or not we can send it. We want to avoid sending anything that is available locally, or would unnecessarily use up precious container space. We also need to know what we are sending for the customs records, anything on the container that we have not declared can cause all the goods to be seized!

If, after contacting us, you find that we can send the goods, then please package them in a separate bag or box, marking clearly what it is.

What if you don't have a bag, or have too many of certain items?

Not a problem at all, if you have any items that don't have a bag to go in, just package these in a separate bag or box and mark it "Backpack Extras".

Do the items have to be new?

No! We are very keen that the Backpack Project costs as little as possible to take part in. Obviously some items like toothpaste and soap need to be bought, but these can be the "value" or "buy-one-get-one-free" varieties. Other things such as clothes, towels, bags, can all be second hand provided they are in good condition.

Why not buy the goods out there? Wouldn't that be better for the local economy?

Often the items we have asked for are not readily available locally, and those that are, are imported and so do not much benefit the local economy. They are sometimes also of poor quality. If we were to buy all the goods that we ask for, it would cost far more than it costs to put together a backpack of second hand and cheap items.

What size of clothes are suitable?

Anything from aged 4 to 12 is suitable.

WHAT THE BACKPACK PROJECT MEANS TO A CHILD IN AFRICA

There are 300 million chronically hungry children in the world - most don't go to school...

Research shows that basic education is the single most effective way of escaping the poverty trap....

The Backpack Project provides basic school items enabling children to attend school and learn...

Mary's Meals and the Backpack project are proving to be a simple solution to world hunger

Do you check the bags or will they be sent straight out abroad?

We will send them straight out from our warehouse, where they will then be sorted to contain the following:

- 1 tube of toothpaste, 1 bar of soap, 1 toothbrush
- 1 towel
- 1 set of clothes for either girl or boy (either shorts and t-shirt, or dress/ skirt and top, and a pair of flip flops)
- 1 notepad or jotter, two pencils, a sharpener, rubber, ruler, and a small pack of colouring pens/ pencils/ crayons
- a tennis ball
- a spoon

How do we get the backpacks to you?

For nearly all parts of the UK, we take care of all collection arrangements, just give us a call on 0141 336 7094. Collections of about 8 backpacks or more is cost effective for transport.

If the collection is from an island, or is in the very north of Scotland, we would ask for your help in getting the backpacks to the mainland or, if in the north of Scotland, to Inverness. We can then make take care of transport from there. Any queries, just give us a call.

What happens with the sacks once they reach your warehouse?

Once they reach us in Glasgow, they will be stored in wait for the next container load abroad. Backpacks will not wait more than around 8 weeks before being dispatched.

We send roughly 16 containers a year, most of which go to Malawi. Each 40 foot container fits roughly 6000 backpacks. The containers are taken to port either in Grangemouth or the South of England. From there they start their journey by sea. This takes about 4 weeks to Liberia and about 8 weeks to Malawi.

When your donation reaches us we will send you a certificate, a small token of our appreciation.

DONATING A BACKPACK

Taking part in the Backpack Project is a great way to recycle and can be used as a way of participating in the eco-school initiative as well as being an enterprise and citizenship project...

The Backpack Project isn't just for schools - anyone, any organisation, group, or individual can take part...

We have already delivered over 150,000 donated Backpacks to Malawi, Liberia, Uganda and Romania.

You will be helping the world's poorest children to attend school and learn.