

THE BACKPACK PROJECT TEACHER'S GUIDE

mary's
meals

a simple solution
to world hunger

The Backpack Project is a fantastic way to support Mary's Meals. So many of the children who receive Mary's Meals in Malawi come to school without the basic tools for learning. Giving the children a backpack full of educational items enables them to get the most out of their education.

We love The Backpack Project because it offers practical support to children in Malawi and raises awareness of the challenges they face. It is easy to get your whole school community involved!

STEP ONE

Get in touch with the Mary's Meals fundraising team at schools@marysmeals.org or 0141 336 7094 and we will provide advice, posters, leaflets or presentations to help you get started.

STEP TWO

Choose your backpack collection start and finish dates. The project works particularly well as an end-of-term or back-to-school project but you can pick dates that suit you. We recommend running your school campaign for around three weeks.

STEP THREE

Tell the children. Classes get very enthusiastic and pupils and parents are often keen to help. Should you wish, we will also send a volunteer speaker to your school to help launch the project.

STEP FOUR

Tell everyone! Email parents, post on social media and your school website, hold an assembly and distribute leaflets to let everyone know about The Backpack Project.

STEP FIVE

Start collecting. Some teachers focus on one item at a time. For example, the children are asked to bring in stationery one day, P.E. kits the next. On the final day, schoolbags. Lining up to hand in a schoolbag is a great way to celebrate the end-of-term and look forward to the next.

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STEP SIX

Make sure each backpack is labelled with boy or girl and a suggested age, for example, Girl, 9. Then store your filled backpacks away safely. Email schools@marysmeals.org or call 0141 336 7094 and we will organise collection from the school.

STEP SEVEN

Should you wish, one of our volunteers will visit the school to thank the children and update them on the work of The Backpack Project.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

- When asking parents and children for backpacks and contents, please encourage the recycling of used items. The only items that must be new are soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste.
- We encourage you to send used, but in good condition, schoolbags and backpacks. Please don't send drawstring gym bags.
- Please flag any backpacks that have items missing. We will top them up with extras at the warehouse before sending out to Malawi.
- If you have extra items, please send them to us in boxes with the final backpack collection.
- Don't be tempted to put in treats or extra gifts. It is important to only include items that are on the list. Every backpack is checked to make sure they have the same contents. This is important for customs reasons and to ensure fairness during distribution.
- The Backpack Project is a fantastic learning opportunity for recycling, citizenship, inclusivity, geography, organisational skills, enterprise skills, group work and well-being. It is also a great way to bring your school community and members of the wider community together.

We are always happy to answer questions and to hear about your school's success. Please contact the fundraising team on 0141 336 7094 or schools@marysmeals.org