

The Children of Sikkim

Supporting Sikkimese children through primary, secondary and higher education
Registered UK Charity No 1153784



TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT PERIOD 6 April 2015 to 5 April 2016

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	1 st June 2013 to period end	
Barbara Taylor		1 st June 2013 to period end	
Duncan Macdonald Finlayson	Secretary and Treasurer	28 th October 2014 to period end	
Paul Thomson		1 st March 2016 to period end	
Amy Finlayson		1 st March 2016 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 The Children of Sikkim 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 has been put on secondary education, principally through the Dr Graham's Homes school in Kalimpong, West Bengal. In the past this meant recruiting sponsors, some of whom contribute directly to Dr Graham's UK committee, which is a trust registered in Scotland. It costs approximately six times as much to educate a pupil at Dr Graham's homes as it does at Sikkim Himalayan Academy.

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Because of the inability of the Sikkim Himalayan Academy to obtain registration under the FCRA (Foreign Contributions Registration Act), funds to SHA were transmitted through and managed by Building Blocks, an educational charity based in Bangalore. However, in late summer 2015, Building Blocks said that they could no longer continue with the arrangement. As a consequence, both SKvS and The Children of Sikkim decided to discontinue funding SHA. The sponsorship income and the accumulated reserves will be directed towards supporting Sikkimese children at Dr Graham's Homes school and in further education.

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.

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Summary of main activities undertaken for the public benefit

From 2003 to end 2015 The Friends of Sikkim, succeeded by The Children of Sikkim, supported Sikkim Himalayan Academy, which was founded in 2003 by Sikkimese, Dutch and UK and individuals. It educates children from the age of 5 to 12. From January 2016 the Trust has had to adopt a different approach, which is to fund poor Sikkimese children from about 10 years and older, through schooling to age 19 and then on through higher education. Schooling is at Dr Graham's Homes school in Kalimpong just south of Sikkim. Children to send to DR Grahams have been initially drawn from Sikkim Himalyan Academy, but the Trust has contacts in several schools in Sikkim for use in the future.

Previous sponsored children have entered higher education in Sikkim, Kolkata, Bangalore and Delhi. Money for this comes from sponsors and fund raising events. In addition, accumulated reserves will be drawn down over time. All trust personnel work on a voluntary basis and meet their own expenses.

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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.

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

SECTION D Achievements and performance

During 2015/16 the charity continued to maintain and if necessary replace sponsors, who make a regular contribution to support the education of a named child. From the beginning of 2016, the charity is supporting 6 new pupils at Dr Graham's Homes school in Kalimpong. Each pupil is supported by up to 6 sponsors. Sponsorship is collected for 3 pupils at Dzongu school in Sikkim.

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. The reserves were intended for the building of a new school but the charity has had to accept that this is not feasible. The reserves will be run down gradually, to support pupils in higher education, with the exception of one bequest which may be used for a different purpose.

The income for the period was £ 8592.40. Costs were £ 7125.00. The current account held £ 7768.33 at the end of the period, and the deposit accounts £51,768.11. There is an accrued liability of £7125.00 for Dr Graham's fees.

SECTION F Other optional information

The charity has had to withdraw from funding of Sikkim Himalayan Academy because SHA has not been able to obtain registration under the FCRA. It has re-oriented towards supporting a smaller number of former SHA pupils through education at Dr Graham's Homes in Kalimpong. Sikkimese children will continue to be supported in this way and through higher education. Reserves, no longer needed for the building of a school, will be run down in support of this objective.

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	Duncan Finlayson	
Position	Chair	Trustee, Secretary	
Date	4 October 2016	4 October 2016	